Colorado State Sepsis Initiative

Objective

To reduce sepsis mortality in Colorado, saving over 10,000 lives and $200 million in lower healthcare costs over the next five years.

Background

Sepsis kills over 3,000 Coloradans annually, more than breast cancer, stroke, and automobile accidents combined. Timely diagnosis, along with the administration of IV antibiotics and fluids, can reduce the mortality rate by 50% or more. These are simple solutions that can be implemented quickly with focused healthcare community efforts.

The Coalition for Sepsis Survival (C4SS) has three key initiatives: 1) Public Awareness, 2) Research, and 3) Hospital and Healthcare Provider Grants.

Public Awareness: Sepsis is the third leading cause of death in the US. However, 50% of the US population has never heard the word. This may account for greater than 80% of sepsis patients presenting to hospital ERs, often at the end stage of their medical condition, where mortality increases at 8% every hour a sepsis diagnosis is delayed. In August 2016, C4SS initiated a twelve-month Public Service Announcement program that is airing on over 230 Colorado radio and TV stations to educate the public in recognizing the symptoms of sepsis.

Research: Across the US, the sepsis hospital mortality rates vary from less than 10% to over 40%. Within Colorado, the reported sepsis hospital mortality varies from 7% to 29%. C4SS is in discussion with over 40 Colorado hospitals proposing a statewide study, the Colorado Hospital Sepsis Survival Study, to determine the factors behind this wide variance and to identify practical solutions that individual hospitals can cost-effectively implement for reducing sepsis mortality and morbidity.

Healthcare Provider Grants: Regardless of a hospital’s or a healthcare provider’s financial condition, C4SS plans to offer education grants and low-cost financing to assist hospitals in implementing sepsis performance improvement programs. As part of this program, we are developing an “Endorsed Vendor” list. These are companies that C4SS will review and, as appropriate, endorse as recognized product and/or service providers that have demonstrated achievement in assisting hospitals and healthcare providers in reducing sepsis mortality and morbidity.

Organization

C4SS is a non-profit organization founded by Mr. and Mrs. William Younkes, who have provided the initial funding. C4SS estimates that $10 million in funding, or $1,000 per patient life saved, will enable Colorado to reduce the State’s average sepsis mortality rate from 17.4% to less than 15%, making Colorado number one in the US with the lowest sepsis mortality rate.

C4SS is not seeking funding from State or Federal sources. We believe fighting sepsis is a community objective where we all must work together. Accordingly, we are seeking funding from the Colorado community, including hospitals, charitable healthcare focused trusts, local businesses, and private donors. To donate, please visit our website at FightSepsis.org.