



Accreditation of the Health Sciences Centre with Choosing Wisely Canada Hospital Designation

Objective

To have the Health Sciences Centre (HSC) in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), achieve the Choosing Wisely Canada (CWC) Hospital designation for Quality Improvement (QI) Status.

Practice Points

1. CWC has developed a Hospital Designation Program which recognizes hospitals that are incorporating QI efforts around reducing low-value care into their organizational strategy.
2. There are two designation streams hospitals can work towards achieving: (1) QI Status and (2) Leadership Status. To achieve each status, participating sites must earn all required credits through the implementation of Choosing Wisely projects.

Methods

Quality of Care NL/Choosing Wisely NL, in partnership with leadership from NL Health Services (NLHS), applied for CWC Hospital Designation. In order to fulfill the criteria for QI status, the application described three ongoing projects implemented within the HSC: Using Blood Wisely, Using Labs Wisely, and Drop the Pre-Op.

Results

Using Blood Wisely

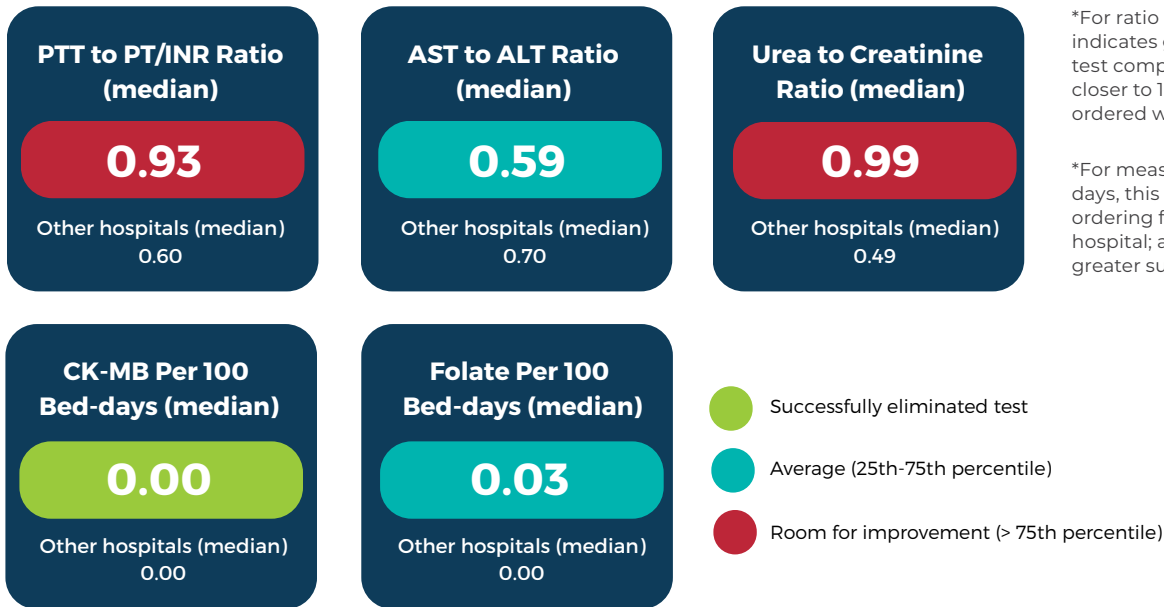


- Inappropriate blood transfusion practices are common in hospitals. This puts significant strain on Canada's blood supply and exposes patients to potential harm.
- The HSC submitted repeat audits, met CWC benchmarks, and has been designated as a Using Blood Wisely Hospital, thereby fulfilling the designation of a CWC Hospital.

Using Labs Wisely



- Laboratory testing represents the single highest volume of medical activity. While the majority of laboratory tests provide diagnostic insights important to patient care, not all tests are needed.
- Low-value lab tests can exhaust health care resources and lead to false positives, unnecessary follow-ups due to incidental findings, and potential harm to patients.
- Since 2022, the HSC has submitted data to CWC to generate reports displaying hospital comparisons.



*For ratio measures, a ratio closer to 0 indicates greater success in reducing the test compared to the coupled test. A ratio closer to 1 indicates the test is still often ordered with the coupled test.

*For measures calculated per 100 bed-days, this reflects the frequency of test ordering for every 100 patient days in hospital; a value closer to 0 indicates greater success in reducing the test.

Figure 1. Comparing Usage of Selected Hospital Laboratory Tests at HSC to Other Canadian Hospitals According to CWC’s Recommendations for Using Labs Wisely, 1 Jan 2018–31 Dec 2022

- Creatine Kinase (CK-MB) has been successfully eliminated at HSC.
- Folate and AST (aspartate aminotransferase) to ALT (alanine transaminase) ratio testing are within average testing levels as compared to other hospitals across the country.
- PTT (partial thromboplastin time) to PT/INR (prothrombin time test/international normalized ratio) ratio and urea to creatinine ratio indicate that these tests need to be uncoupled in order to reduce overuse.

Drop the Pre-Op



- The Drop the Pre-Op toolkit was created by CWC to support the implementation of interventions designed to reduce unnecessary pre-operative tests and visits.
- In 2016, the HSC identified pre-op testing for low-risk surgeries as an area of low-value care and undertook an initiative to adopt the Drop the Pre-Op toolkit.

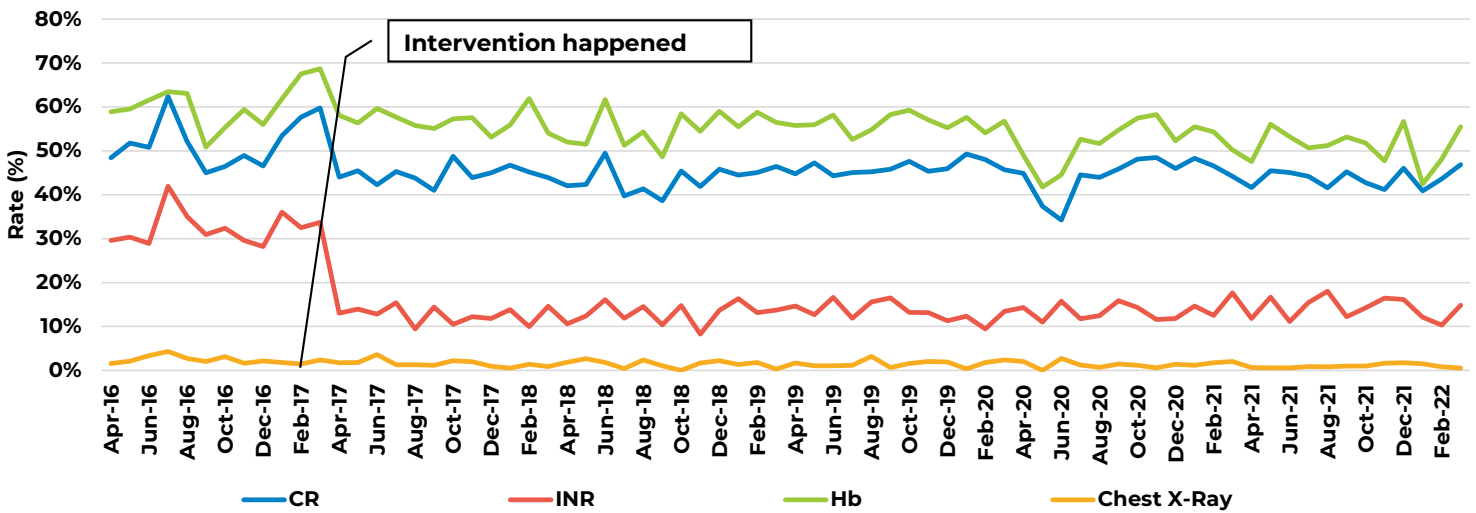


Figure 2. Rates of Pre-operative Tests for Low-Risk Surgeries at the HSC, Apr 2016–Mar 2022

- Testing patterns demonstrated reductions in all pre-operative tests examined post intervention. There was a significant and sustained decrease in creatinine (CR) tests (13% absolute reduction), INR tests (19% absolute reduction), and hemoglobin (Hb) tests (12% absolute reduction).

Conclusions

1. In Jan 2024, the HSC successfully achieved the designation as a CWC Hospital (QI status), demonstrating a continuing commitment to reducing low-value care and quality improvement measures.
2. To improve patient care and reduce unnecessary health care expenditure, NLHS should aim to incorporate CWC initiatives into their strategic planning for hospitals.

