

## Rice earns patient safety excellence award



Rice Memorial Hospital has earned a Minnesota Hospital Association (MHA) Patient Safety Excellence Awards for its work on preventing retained objects in the operating room.

Patient safety is a top priority for Rice Hospital staff and other Minnesota hospitals. That's why Rice joined the SAFE ACCOUNT initiative, where Minnesota teams are

working collectively to prevent retained objects by both the counting of and accounting for all items used during invasive procedures, especially in the operating room.

"Hospitals that receive these awards are to be commended—the bar is set very high," said MHA Patient Safety Vice President Tania Daniels. "Hospitals that qualify have achieved measurable and meaningful progress toward implementing best practices to drive down adverse health events."

The SAFE ACCOUNT award is the fifth MHA Patient Safety Excellence Award that Rice Memorial Hospital has earned since the first initiative was established in 2007. They received a SAFE COUNT award in January 2009; a SAFE FALLS award and a SAFE SKIN award in October 2008; and a SAFE SITE award in April 2009.

For more information about the MHA Patient Safety Excellence Award initiatives, please visit [www.mnhospitals.org/index/patient](http://www.mnhospitals.org/index/patient).

### The SAFE ACCOUNT Initiative

*Implementing the SAFE ACCOUNT roadmap involves many steps:*

**S—Safe Account teams.** Hospitals establish SAFE ACCOUNT champions, and adopt an interdisciplinary team approach for implementation.

**A—Access to information.** Teams verify the completion of each step of the process in "real-time," and audit the effective completion of the account process.

**F—Facility expectations.** Hospitals set expectations for implementation of the process for any O.R. procedure. The full surgical team is accountable for preventing retained objects.

**E—Educate staff.** Hospitals provide education for all clinical staff involved in the O.R. procedures.

#### ACCOUNT

##### **Team Accountability:**

—**Communication.** Teams communicate using standardized processes and standard nomenclature for objects as well as visual communication.

##### **Accounting for Items:**

—**Pre-procedure.** Teams account for any items left behind from a previous case. Account for using radiopaque soft goods, and account for items being intact.

—**The Count Process.** Teams perform specific steps of the counting process, following best practices. They maintain an optimal environment for accurate counting.

—**During the Procedure.** Teams account for placement of "tucked" and "packed" items as well as account for countable items added after the baseline count. They also account for items being intact.

—**End of Procedure.** The surgical team is accountable for all counted items involved in the procedure. Any equipment and miscellaneous items are accounted for. Team ensures removal of any items intentionally retained during the procedure, designated for removal before the end of the procedure or following the procedure. Methodical wound exploration is performed. Account for any remaining items as the end of the procedure.

—**Reconcile Discrepancies.** A standardized and systemized process is in place to attempt to reconcile any discrepancies in the counts or the accounting of items.