FOR THE RECORD

Cost of acute care hospital stays

Canadian acute care hospitals spend an average \$6983 to treat a patient for a night, the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) says.

In its first analysis of national data on hospital spending by patient stay and medical condition, CIHI says patient stays in acute care hospitals accounted for 47% of overall hospital spending in 2004/05. Moreover, treating just 5 medical conditions in acute care facilities accounted for 57.6% of the \$17.046 billion cost of acute care inpatient hospital stays.

Leading the way were diseases of the circulatory system, which accounted for 19%, or \$3.294 billion, of inpatient costs and an average cost per stay of \$11 260.

That was followed by injuries and mishaps, like falls or poisoning (10.2% and an average \$9405); respiratory system diseases (9.5% and \$8629); cancer (9.4% and \$10 650); and digestive system diseases (9.2% and \$6732).

By clinical grouping, the highest unit cost was treatment for congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities, at \$13 822, but those are among the lowest volume procedures performed in acute care hospitals.

The report (www.cihi.ca) examined 2.4 million hospital stays outside of Quebec. It assessed treatment costs, including nursing, meals and drugs, but not costs related to emergency care, day surgery, long-term care, hospital clinics or fee-for-service payments to physicians.

Adverse events disclosure

The Canadian Patient Safety Institute has unveiled non-binding disclosure guidelines for adverse events.

Predicated on the proposition that "all harm must be communicated to patients, irrespective of the reason for the harm," the guidelines sketch the

recommended elements and processes of a disclosure policy. Those include who, when, where and what to disclose, as well as how disclosure should be conducted.

Among the recommended elements is "an expression of sympathy or regret," as well as the provision of practical and emotional support for the patient, the guidelines state.

But they also stress that "it is essen-

tial during any disclosure discussion that speculation, opinion or attribution of blame does not occur," and that an apology to patients by health care providers "should not be taken as an admission of legal responsibility."

The guidelines are available at: www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca. — Wayne Kondro, *CMAJ*

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Beaudet named CIHR president

There'll be no lack of managerial experience in the next president of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Federal Health Minister Tony Clement reached into the provincial bureaucratic ranks to find a new head for the granting council by choosing Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec President Dr. Alain Beaudet as the replacement for Dr. Alan Bernstein.

Beaudet, a neuroscientist who since 2005 has been at the helm of the Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec (the successor to the Quebec Medical Research Council), will assume his new post July 1.

"His proven track record as a leader in brokering partnerships between federal and provincial health research organizations and funding agencies makes him well-suited for his responsibilities as President, and will ensure the Institutes' continued stewardship in research," Clement said in a press release.

Beaudet was previously scientific advisor (1999–2000) and director of scientific affairs and programs (2000–2004) at the Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec before assuming the agency's presidency. He received a medical degree (1971) and a PhD in neuroscience (1977) from the Université de Montréal. He did postdoctoral training at the Centre d'études nucléaires in Saclay, France (1977–1979) and the University of Zurich's Brain Research Institute in Switzerland (1979–1980). In 1980, he began teaching in McGill University's Neurology–Neurosurgery and Anatomy–Cell Biology departments and from 1985 to 1992, he was assistant director of research at the Montreal Neurological Institute. Beaudet was also president of the Canadian Association for Neuroscience from 1995 to 1997. Among his laurels is the Order of Academic Palms distinguished Officer's award from the government of France. — Wayne Kondro, *CMAJ*

Yves Barrière, Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec

Dr. Alain Beaudet will assume the presidency of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research on July 1, 2008