
Abstract:

Objectives – The risk nurses face related to exposure to blood borne pathogens associated with IV therapy are daily challenges. Providing a product with the least risk of exposure is the responsibility of the healthcare organization. Where the two meet creates an environment that fosters a safe work environment and raises the awareness that safety is everyone’s job.

Project – Following identification of exposure rates from IV catheter stylets the Carilion Clinic undertook a project to improve the practices and provide a higher level of safety for its staff.

Results – Following staff evaluation and selection of a new IV catheter, the exposure rate related to contaminated IV catheter stylets dropped from 13 in 2005 to 2 in 2007. Numerous other practices and products related to IV therapy were reviewed and improved upon following the catheter conversion as well.

Conclusions and implications for practice – A higher level of safety can be achieved when nurses are involved in the selection of a product, staff education, and support from leadership.

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