

# IMPROVING HOME NUTRITIONAL PRODUCT ORDERING AND DELIVERY

## **Where we've been...**

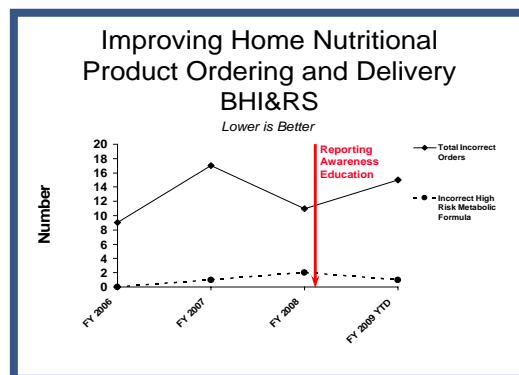
**H**igh-risk enteral formulas are specialized metabolic formulas that can cause injury or even death if given to the wrong patient. Serious events reported by other healthcare facilities prompted Baystate Home Infusion & Respiratory Services (BHI&RS) to examine existing processes for any weaknesses that could allow such an event to reach or impact the patient and then to redesign them. The redesign team examines ways of reducing the risk and is focused on improving the safety of ordering, selecting, and delivering high-risk formulas and medications.

## **Where we are now...**

Based on the team's feedback, several interventions have been put in place to improve the safety of the processes. High-risk enteral formulas were separated from general stock through warehouse redesign with new shelves and signage. A designated, color-coded section of shelving was established to separate and highlight special handling, and to separate all look-alike, sound-alike formulas. A time-out procedure was initiated to double check high-risk enteral orders and verify that the correct formula was selected. A new package labeling system was developed and implemented to ensure that multiple packages for the same patient delivery could be easily identified by the driver or nurse. In response to the increase in events, we added another intake coordinator who handles all the oral enteral product referrals, allowing for faster processing and getting the needed formula to the patient. We also assigned the job of picking orders in the morning to one staff member in the warehouse. That has increased the accuracy of our enteral deliveries and reduced the risk of patient harm from receiving the wrong formula. Additionally, we formed a Nutritional Product Line Group to meet every 2 months, led by a dietician and consisting of representatives from the warehouse, sales and public relations, intake, and quality control, to focus on our enteral product line and improving customer service.

In addition to those safeguards, we have instituted a process to eliminate errors made at the creation of the delivery ticket. The supply clerk checks the initial ticket with the order and then cross-checks it with a clinician. The formula delivered to the home is double-checked with the patient and/or caregiver to ensure the delivery is correct.

Since this project began, there has been an overall decrease in incorrect orders, specifically high-risk metabolic formulas. In FY 2008 and 2009, there were 3 incidents of incorrect high-risk enteral formulas delivered or ingested. No serious patient harm occurred. The rise has led to increased monitoring to ensure that accurate prescribing, ordering, warehouse picking, and delivery are completed.



## **Where we are going...**

Metabolic enteral products represent a risk to patient safety if the incorrect product is delivered. We have successfully applied the focus that we previously placed on the medication dispensing process to the ordering, selection, and delivery of enteral formula. Future efforts by the redesign team will be directed towards continued reduction of injury to patients.