

## IMPROVING MONITORING & REPORTING OF CRITICAL LABORATORY RESULTS

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

**T**he timely monitoring of laboratory test results and the timely reporting of those results, especially if the results should contain a critical value, is crucial to the safe and effective provision of home infusion therapy. With a desire to improve the safe and effective provision of home infusion therapy to our patients and in response to the Joint Commission's National Patient Safety Goal regarding the reporting of critical results, BHI&RS performed an assessment of the current practice of laboratory result monitoring and reporting. Monitoring and reporting of laboratory results to the prescriber has always been part of the BHI&RS practice although specific standards for the timeliness of such activities were not well defined.

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

A baseline assessment was completed of the services we provide and the associated laboratory tests that are needed to support those services. Based on the results, BHI&RS identified which laboratory tests posed the greatest risks to patients, confirming that they should be reported as critical results. Critical results are predefined values/interpretations that may indicate a possible life-threatening situation, significant morbidity, or serious adverse consequences for the patient that necessitates immediate clinical attention or treatment. Time targets were then agreed upon and adopted for the monitoring and reporting of the defined results. The BHI&RS time targets are: test results obtained within 24 hours of the sample being drawn, and the result, if critical, will be reported to the prescriber within one hour. The pharmacists keep a log of response times based on the above targets. BHI&RS also receives a report of critical results of BHI&RS patients from Baystate Reference Laboratories (BRL) to double-check the pharmacist's logs to ensure all values are being captured. Assessment of the compliance with these standards is monitored and reviewed with the pharmacists on an ongoing basis to continue to refine our reporting process and to increase the adherence to the time targets. This continued feedback has resulted in improvement of compliance with these important patient safety standards.

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

BHI&RS will be working with BRL to obtain the critical results report on a daily basis in order to use it as an additional reminder for this crucial function of patient care. Continuous monitoring against the time targets and sharing of results with our provider partners will help identify additional opportunities for improvement. These steps will allow us to continue to improve patient safety and efficacy with regard to the provision of home infusion services.