

July 1, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

The Premier healthcare alliance applauds the Administration for issuing an executive order to combat antibiotic resistance and convening a White House Forum to gather all stakeholders and share antibiotic stewardship strategies that address this critical public health issue.

Premier, Inc. is a leading healthcare improvement company that unites an alliance of approximately 3,400 U.S. hospitals and 110,000 other providers to transform healthcare. With integrated data and analytics, collaboratives, supply chain solutions, and advisory and other services, Premier enables better care and outcomes at a lower cost. Premier also plays a critical role in the rapidly evolving healthcare industry, collaborating with alliance members to co-develop long-term innovations that reinvent and improve the way care is delivered to patients nationwide. This includes initiatives to improve antibiotic stewardship and advance the goals of appropriate antibiotic use.

We are pleased that antibiotic stewardship has received the attention it deserves by becoming a key component of the White House's national strategy. Antibiotic resistance, patient harm such as hospital-acquired infections (HAIs), adverse drug events and excess costs can all be serious consequences of inappropriate antibiotic therapy in healthcare.

The prompt initiation of antibiotics to treat infections has been proven to reduce mortality and save lives. However, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), up to half of patients treated in the U.S. receive unnecessary or inappropriate therapy, including multiple antibiotics when either one or neither would be the best approach. Moreover, there has been an increase in antibiotic resistant bacteria worldwide.

As a national leader in conducting initiatives to improve antibiotic stewardship, Premier worked with the CDC to study unnecessary antibiotic use in hospitals. The research pointed clinicians to the three specific redundant intravenous drug combinations used to treat anaerobic infections that accounted for 70 percent of inappropriate prescribing and unnecessary costs. This widespread use of these three duplicative antibiotics in U.S. hospitals could have led to an estimated \$163 million in excess costs. We

published these findings in September 2014 to help hospitals focus their efforts to improve antibiotic stewardship.

Premier and its members recognize the growing threat of infections and other microorganisms becoming resistant to antimicrobial agents. This new national initiative further builds on our alliance's ongoing commitment to reduce HAIs, including those acquired due to antibiotic resistance. Premier co-develops technology solutions, advisory services, educational webinars, best practices and collaboratives alongside healthcare providers to reduce preventable harm from inappropriate antibiotic use.

In working with health system members, we've found that antibiotic stewardship programs (ASPs), the electronic surveillance of antibiotic use and provider collaboration are proven strategies to reduce antibiotic resistance. For instance, since 2010 the approximately 350 hospitals participating in our national QUEST® quality improvement collaborative have prevented 21,700 instances of harm. Provider collaboration helps target specific quality and safety improvement areas, accelerate change and avoid preventable harm.

Moreover in 2011, NHSN developed an Antimicrobial Use and Resistance (AUR) Module to provide a mechanism for facilities to report and analyze AUR data as part of local and regional efforts to reduce antimicrobial resistant infections. PremierConnect® Safety, Premier's clinical surveillance analytics, were the basis for the pilot program with 27 hospitals to integrate AUR data and report it to NHSN.

In May 2015, Premier pledged to support the National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria by implementing additional antibiotic stewardship initiatives over the next five years to slow the emergence of antibiotic resistant bacteria, detect resistant strains, preserve the efficacy of our existing antibiotics and prevent the spread of resistance infections. Premier will be focusing its efforts on the first two goals of the National Action Plan: (1) Slowing emergence of resistant bacteria and prevent the spread of resistant infections, and (2) Strengthening national surveillance efforts to combat resistance.

As one of many efforts to align our work with these goals, Premier is launching a data-driven initiative within QUEST that focuses on specifically reducing the overuse of the three IV combinations identified in its recently published research. The initiative will take place from August 2015 – June 2016 with goals to reduce inappropriate use of redundant anaerobic antibiotic combinations by 20 percent and to implement at least three of the CDC core elements for ASPs. QUEST members will use Premier's collaborative methodology to target specific quality and safety issues to combat inappropriate antibiotic use. This methodology leverages timely and actionable data to define and share evidence-based practices, pinpoint opportunities and assess progress.

In addition, Premier is enhancing PremierConnect Safety to offer the AUR NHSN reporting capability to all future and current health system users. Approximately 1,000 facilities use PremierConnect Safety to monitor and protect patients from infections, harmful drug interactions and other adverse events.

Learnings, metrics and best practices from the QUEST initiative, Premier expertise in implementing ASPs, and data from PremierConnect Quality and Safety will be repurposed and offered as part of Premier advisory services to health systems, in publicly accessible forums on our Safety Institute® website, as part of our free AdvisorLive® webinar series, and in healthcare publications, including peer-reviewed literature.

We again commend the Administration on its ambitious agenda to address the escalating threat of antibiotic resistance. We appreciate our long-standing partnership with your department on this and other safety issues and believe that with our collaborative methodology, data analytics capabilities and the scale of our alliance, we can do more to help the Administration reduce inappropriate use of antibiotics and unnecessary healthcare costs.

For more information, please contact Gina Pugliese, RN, MS, FSHEA, Vice President, Premier Safety Institute, Premier at 708.203.5013 or Gina_Pugliese@premierinc.com.

Sincerely,



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