

Clearfield Hospital receives grant money

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CLEARFIELD — Even one death from hospital acquired infection is considered one too many. Thanks to a grant from the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council and the Highmark Foundation, Clearfield Hospital will be able to decrease the risk of hospital acquired infections even more.

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Surveillance service

Marc P. Volavak, executive director of PHC4, presented a check for \$36,000 to the Clearfield Hospital at a press conference Thursday.

"Clearfield Hospital is the representation of where the majority of Pennsylvanians get their health care," Volavak said. "Most of Pennsylvania's health care is made up of community-based hospitals in rural communities, just like Clearfield."

MedMined provides data mining analysis and related technical, clinical and financial consulting services to the health care community. The data mining surveillance service is currently used by 195 hospitals in 26 states, covering more than 2.5 million hospital admissions yearly.

Before implementing MedMined, the staff at Clearfield Hospital had to track infections manually. The new technology will allow the staff to identify and address potential prob-

lems much more quickly. There was also no way to compare the infection rates to pin-point a specific cause.

"One cannot change what one cannot measure," Volavka said.

All Pennsylvania general acute care hospitals were eligible to apply for the project and applications were evaluated and selected based on the hospital's economic needs, location, and commitment to employing contemporary infection control practices.

Although Clearfield Hospital's hospital acquired infection rate is low at only 1 or 2 percent, anything which can lower those statistics even more can only be good for the patients.

"It's a win-win situation," hospital President and CEO Robert B. Murray said. "Patient safety is paramount at Clearfield Hospital. The addition of the MedMined service will further reduce the chances of hospital acquired infections and we're eager to implement new processes to elevate patient care and improve outcomes."

Also speaking at the conference were Kim Smolko, infection control manager for the hospital, and state Rep. Camille "Bud" George, D-Houtzdale.