



Illinois Hospital Association



Metropolitan Chicago  
Healthcare Council

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Executive Officers, Member Institutions

FROM: Kenneth Robbins, President, Illinois Hospital Association  
Kevin Scanlan, President, Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council

SUBJECT: Standardization of Color-coded Wristbands

Illinois hospitals are involved in numerous initiatives to enhance patient safety, improve the delivery of care, and improve patient outcomes.

While the patient record remains the most complete and accurate source of information for hospital personnel, the use of color-coded wristbands with text is one of multiple communication strategies that may be used to alert hospital personnel to allergies, risk to fall, and end-of-life wishes. Standardization of colors with use of text promotes consistent interpretation of the alert as the patient moves through the organization, or personnel work in another facility.

In keeping with emerging national trends, where organizations elect to use color to communicate alerts to caregivers regarding allergies, do not resuscitate, and risk to fall, the Illinois Hospital Association (IHA) and Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council (MCHC) recommend the voluntary adoption of standardized wristband colors **with text** to indicate:

- Allergies – Red
- Do Not Resuscitate – Purple
- Risk to Fall – Yellow

MCHC and IHA will present Webinars on this topic later this summer, and will provide a toolkit to support organizations that choose to standardize wristband colors and text. Toolkits will be available on CD and distributed free-of-charge to all hospitals later this fall.

For additional information, contact:

Becky Steward  
Manager, Patient Safety Collaborative  
Illinois Hospital Association  
630-276-5585  
[bsteward@ihastaff.org](mailto:bsteward@ihastaff.org)

Dawn Niedner  
Program Manager – Patient Safety  
Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council  
312-906-6164  
[dniedner@mchc.com](mailto:dniedner@mchc.com)