Memphis, TN – March 6, 2014: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a report this week warning that many hospitals across the country overuse or misuse antibiotics, fueling the growth of drug-resistant bacteria and adding to a significant long-term public health threat. The CDC findings led Comprehensive Pharmacy Services (CPS), the nation’s largest hospital pharmacy services provider to more than 400 hospitals and health care facilities, to issue an alert on antibiotic abuse and offer a best practice prevention program to all hospitals.

“We’ve known for years that over utilization of antibiotics is not just a problem; it is a serious public health threat which warrants the CDC’s attention, and it’s why hospitals need to continuously and vigilantly address it,” said Len Gray, Pharm D, Regional Vice President for Clinical Services and Data Management for CPS. “Organisms are remarkably resilient and can quickly develop resistance to overused antibiotics, with multidrug resistant infections creating the potential of a ‘super bug’ that poses additional threats to patients.”

Gray explained that hospitals need to achieve three key strategic goals to effectively reduce the overuse of antibiotics: deploy strategies to reduce or reverse antimicrobial resistance; prevent antimicrobial-related toxicity; and reduce inappropriate antimicrobial use and health care-associated infections.

CPS has been providing pharmacy services to hospitals for more than 40 years, and has developed an evidence-based antibiotic stewardship program focused on best pharmacy practices for hospitals to follow, which include:

1. **The Team:** Establish a multidisciplinary antimicrobial stewardship team that includes a physician, pharmacist, clinical microbiologist or lab rep, IT specialist, and infection control. This team should meet periodically and collaborate with key departments throughout the hospital.

2. **Protection Protocols:** Implement protocols for surveillance and prevention from multidrug-resistant organisms and the potential for super bugs and other infections that can put patients at risk.

3. **Clinical Guidelines and Pharmacy Interventions:** Maintain guidelines and drug use criteria for antimicrobial therapy, including appropriate empiric therapy, dose optimization, and therapy de-escalation.

4. **Competency Assessment:** Assess the pharmacist’s ability to perform a list of core functions critical to preventing antibiotic overuse.

5. **Implementation:** Fully implement the plan across the organization, ensure sustainability through ongoing monitoring and provide hospital staff with continuous education on effective use of antibiotics, infections, multidrug-resistant organisms and prevention strategies.

About Comprehensive Pharmacy Services:
Employing over 1,800 pharmacy professionals, CPS is the nation’s largest provider of pharmacy services to more than 400 hospitals and healthcare facilities leading to sustainable improved quality and reduced cost. CPS services include pharmacy consulting, inpatient and outpatient pharmacy management, telepharmacy and transition of care services. For more information, visit [www.cpspharm.com](http://www.cpspharm.com)

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