

# Treating Blood Infections Tops Annual Hospital Cost Increases

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Posted on: 03/24/2010

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Hospital costs for treating septicemia increased by an average of nearly 12 percent each year from 1997 to 2007, according to the latest News and Numbers from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Costs for treating this potentially deadly blood infection increased from \$4.1 billion in 1997 to \$12.3 billion in 2007.

After adjusting for inflation, the agency also found other conditions that saw high annual increases in hospital costs in each of the 11 years between 1997 and 2007:

- Osteoarthritis, up 9.5 percent each year (\$4.8 billion to \$11.8 billion).
- Back problems, up 9.3 percent each year (\$3.5 billion to \$8.5 billion).
- Acute kidney failure, up 15.3 percent per year (\$1 billion to \$4 billion).
- Respiratory failure, up 8.8 percent per year (\$3.3 billion to \$7.8 billion)>

Overall, the most important driver of cost increases in the hospital was the greater intensity of services provided during a hospital stay, which grew 3.1 percent per year from 1997 to 2007. This greater intensity of services accounted for 70 percent of the total increase in hospital costs.

This AHRQ News and Numbers summary is based on Exhibit 4.2 in HCUP Facts and Figures 2007, which provides highlights of the latest data from the 2007 Nationwide Inpatient Sample, a part of AHRQ's Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project.

Reference: Treating Blood Infections Tops Annual Hospital Cost Increases. AHRQ News and Numbers, March 18, 2010. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, Md.