Biomedical and Health Informatics Lecture Series

Tuesday, March 10, 2009
12:00 – 12:50 p.m., Room T-531

Mark Del Beccaro, M.D.
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Pediatrician in Chief, Chief Medical Information Officer
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"Alert Fatigue – Are You Tired? – Are Your Patients Safe?"

The Institute of Medicine report "*To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System*" was released in 1999 and spurred a debate in the public and health community on how to improve patient safety. Subsequently the Leapfrog group included Computerized Provider Order Entry (CPOE) to their scorecard as a measure of a health care organization's quality and safety ranking. Several studies have concluded that medication errors can be prevented by including clinical decision support with CPOE. Despite these studies showing improvement in safety during the ordering process, there is increasing concern over unintended consequences and "alert fatigue."

In this talk, Dr. Del Beccaro will describe issues related to alert fatigue and how Seattle Children's undertook a series of interventions using Plan Do Check Act cycles to iteratively look at the alert frequency and to design and implement interventions to reduce alerts while maintaining safety. He will also describe how the alert burden varies by provider role.

Dr. Mark Del Beccaro received his undergraduate education at Stanford University and his MD degree from the University of Washington. He completed his pediatric residency and was the chief resident in pediatrics at the University of Washington and Children's Hospital. Dr. Del Beccaro has had over 15 years experience in clinical systems selection, design, and implementation and has helped lead Children's organization to a successful implementation of an EMR that included a hospital wide CPOE rollout in 2003.

He currently integrates his roles as Chief Medical Information Officer with his duties as Professor and Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs for the Department of Pediatrics and the Pediatrician in Chief at Seattle Children's. His clinical practice is in the Emergency Division at Seattle Children's.

Dr. Del Beccaro is involved with several national IT groups including the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Clinical Information Technology (COCIT) Executive Committee, serves as the Chair of COCIT's Policy Committee, and he also serves as a workgroup member for the HL-7 pediatric special interest group and the HIMSS pediatric special interest group.