



Support a \$12 million increase in the CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) in Fiscal Year 2013 to Help Prevent Deadly Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAIs)

HAI Background: One out of every 20 hospitalized patients in the United States contracts a healthcare-associated infection (HAI).

The most recent official estimate of the incidence of HAIs in U.S. hospitals indicated that **1.7 million patients were infected** in a single year, accounting for **nearly 99,000 deaths**.

Experts in infection prevention and patient safety advocates agree that it is important to have a clearly defined, scientifically sound system for reporting HAIs that will **ensure fair comparisons between facilities** and **ensure the accuracy of publicly reported data**. The National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) is that system.

NHSN Background: Most inpatient facilities reimbursed by Medicare are required to report specified healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) via CDC's NHSN. Additionally, data from other care settings and additional infection types will be phased in soon. This will increase the consistency and quality of HAI prevention data reported at the federal level.

However, without additional funding, increasing the number of facilities reporting into NHSN from 3,000 in 2010 to an expected 16,500 in 2013 will strain the capacity of NHSN. Despite the system's importance in our nation's efforts against deadly HAIs and the growing number of facilities reporting into the system, funding for CDC's NHSN has been flat since FY 2010.

Our Request: We are asking for your **support for a \$12M increase in the Fiscal Year 2013 budget for the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN)** so CDC can:

Modernize the NHSN information technology platform to accommodate the enormous NHSN expansion and enhance electronic data collection

- This will allow CDC to better serve the NHSN users who are infection prevention experts by improving the system's functionality and making it easier for the end user.
- This is important because if infection prevention experts are busy dealing with outmoded technology, they are taken away from important interventions designed to protect the lives of patients.
- The growth of NHSN is great news for patients, but it means there is also tremendous need for the CDC to invest in additional server capacity to accommodate the data management and analysis requirements of the system's users.

- In order to reduce data collection burden on NHSN users, CDC must expand electronic data collection using electronic health record systems.
- Decreasing data burden through electronic reporting will help infection prevention experts focus on providing the best possible care for patients.

Continue expansion of healthcare-associated infection (HAI) reporting by facility and infection type

- Patient advocates and infection prevention experts have called for increased access to credible HAI data.
- For this to happen, CDC must increase public access to this data by providing the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) with NHSN facility-level data on the CMS Hospital Compare website.
- CDC must continue to prioritize HAI prevention by providing NHSN data to state health departments, CMS quality improvement organizations, state hospital engagement networks, and hospital associations in the well-respected Comprehensive Unit-Based Safety Program (CUSP) initiative.
- CDC must also continue to support state health departments in fulfilling public reporting requirements.

Develop innovative evidence-based healthcare-associated infection (HAI) prevention strategies and ensure accurate, timely, and complete data are reported to NHSN

- Working through Prevention Epicenters, CDC must develop novel strategies to detect and prevent emerging problems, such as infections caused by antimicrobial-resistant organisms and inappropriate antimicrobial use.
- CDC must develop innovative surveillance methods (i.e., revised metrics, validation, best practices) to ensure fair comparisons between facilities and to ensure accuracy of publicly reported NHSN data.
- CDC must develop new interventions to prevent the transmission of HAIs across healthcare settings to ensure the safety of patients wherever care is delivered.

APIC is an organization representing more than 14,000 infection preventionists. Who are infection preventionists?

Infection preventionists (IPs) are infection prevention experts who dedicate their careers to preventing HAIs. Working in healthcare facilities, they:

- Develop proven policies to ensure a safe environment for patients.
- Ensure compliance with standards and regulations designed to protect both patients and healthcare workers.
- Lead and participate in healthcare quality improvement efforts directed at HAI prevention.
- Track and monitor activities to identify HAIs and other infectious agents.
- Provide credible HAI data to state and federal agencies.
- Serve as leaders in emergency preparedness for events such as an influenza pandemic or acts of bioterrorism.
- Educate the public and healthcare workers about infectious diseases and how to limit their spread.
- Report communicable diseases to the CDC.