



Support CDC tools to detect HAIs and target prevention efforts

Take action: Click [here](#) to send a letter to Congress.

About the request: Sending your own letter to Congress will reinforce the [letter](#) sent by APIC and 29 other organizations dedicated to HAI elimination. These groups called for support of the President's budget request of **\$31.5 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) and the Prevention Epicenters Program** in the Fiscal Year 2014 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Background on healthcare-associated infections (HAIs):

- **HAIs are among the leading causes of preventable harm and death in the United States.**
- **One in 20 hospitalized patients** in the United States develops an HAI.
- In addition to the incalculable cost of patient suffering, HAIs **increase U.S. healthcare expenditures by more than \$30 billion a year due** to complications, prolonged hospitalizations, and delayed recovery from the condition for which the patient was originally hospitalized.

NHSN and the Prevention Epicenters Program:

- NHSN, our national HAI tracking system, and the Prevention Epicenters research program, are **critical tools to address scientific gaps in HAI detection and prevention.**
- NHSN helps us identify HAIs and understand the extent of the HAI problem.
- Existing HAI prevention strategies are limited by the current state of the science, and as a result cannot prevent all HAIs even when fully implemented. Prevention Epicenters conduct the research necessary to address scientific gaps regarding HAI prevention and to better target solutions to protect patients from harm.
- CDC's efforts to fight antimicrobial resistance are an essential part of our national strategy to **protect patients from the threat of potentially untreatable infections.**
 - A recent issue of CDC's [Vital Signs](#) noted that infections due to carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE) bacteria that are resistant to nearly all available antibiotics are becoming more common. CDC Director Dr. Thomas Frieden noted that these "nightmare bacteria" **kill up to one-half of patients who get bloodstream infections from them** and have now been reported in 42 states.
 - NHSN funding **will allow CDC to target multidrug-resistant organisms and to measure antibiotic use**, which is vital to improving outcomes for patients and reducing healthcare costs.

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Who are APIC's members and what do they do?

APIC Members, known as infection preventionists (IPs), work in healthcare facilities to reduce HAIs by:

- Tracking and monitoring healthcare-associated infections and other infectious agents within healthcare facilities.
- Developing evidence-based infection prevention policies to provide a safe environment for patients.
- Educating the public and healthcare personnel about infectious diseases and how to limit their spread.
- Ensuring compliance with standards and regulations designed to protect patients and healthcare workers.
- Helping healthcare facilities prepare for emergency situations such as an influenza pandemic or acts of bioterrorism.
- Reporting communicable diseases to the CDC.