



Press Release

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CDC to Distribute \$40 Million in Recovery Act Funding to Help States Fight Healthcare-Associated Infections

Money marks first time Congress appropriates HAI prevention funds specifically to states

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) today announced plans to distribute \$40 million to state health departments to help prevent [healthcare-associated infections \(HAIs\)](#). Funded by the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#), the money will be distributed through cooperative agreements to 49 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico to maximize prevention efforts such as:

- Creating or expanding state and local efforts to implement recommendations in the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services HAI Action Plan](#)
- Increasing health care facilities' and health departments' use of [CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network](#), a surveillance system that allows HAI data to be tracked, analyzed and compared for prevention efforts
- Hiring and training public health staff to promote and lead HAI prevention initiatives
- Complementing HAI investments from other HHS agencies

“Americans expect to get better when they go to the hospital, not worse” said [HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius](#). “Unfortunately, every year, thousands of Americans die from illness they contract after they enter the hospital. Thanks to Chairman David Obey’s leadership, the Recovery Act includes critical resources that will help fight these infections and keep patients safe.”

Efforts will focus on HHS priority targets such as bloodstream infections, surgical site infections and catheter-associated urinary tract infections, and will address pathogens such as [methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* \(MRSA\)](#) and [Clostridium difficile \(C. diff\)](#). The investment represents the first time Congress has appropriated HAI prevention funds specifically to states.

“We expect these programs to strengthen tracking and prevention of healthcare-associated infections, enhance facility accountability, provide data for informed policy, and ultimately save lives,” said [CDC Director Thomas R. Frieden](#), M.D., M.P.H. “Funding critical prevention efforts at state and local levels represents a significant investment toward elimination of HAIs and improved patient safety.”

CDC estimates that every year, Americans contract 1.7 million infections while being treated in hospitals. These infections are associated with approximately 99,000 deaths annually. In addition to the significant toll on patients’ lives, HAIs represent an estimated \$30 billion in added healthcare costs.



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HHS has addressed HAIs by coordinating efforts across the Department and creating the HHS action plan which includes five-year national prevention targets to reduce and prevent much of the significant burden to our nation. One of the goals of the HHS Action Plan is to collaborate effectively with public and private sector partners to accomplish the large-scale prevention of HAIs.

For instance, CDC is collaborating with several states that have demonstrated that implementing CDC's HAI prevention guidelines and using NHSN to monitor progress can achieve major decreases in HAIs.

Prevention success can be characterized in a number of ways. Some states have shown quick reductions after implementing prevention efforts, and others have sustained low infection rates over an extended period of time. For example, in the first six months of 2009, compared to 2008, hospitals in Tennessee achieved a 30 percent reduction of bloodstream infections associated with central lines (a catheter, or tube, that is inserted into a major vein or artery, and that ends up close to or in the heart). In another instance, intensive care units in a New York state hospital group achieved a 70 percent reduction of central line-associated bloodstream infections and sustained these rates for a three-year period.

“Many states and localities have lacked the resources and personnel needed to appropriately address the HAI burden,” said Marion Kainer, M.D., M.P.H., director of the Tennessee Department of Health Hospital Infection and Antimicrobial Resistance Program, and HAI prevention lead for the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists. “This investment will provide a unique opportunity to make prevention of HAIs a national accomplishment.”

Background on HAI Investments in the Recovery Act

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Public Law 111-5 (ARRA) was signed into law on February 17, 2009. Within the Recovery Act, \$50 million was appropriated to support states in the prevention and reduction of healthcare associated infections (HAI). The [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#) will use \$10 million to improve the process and frequency of inspections for ambulatory surgical centers, while CDC will allocate \$40 million to states to create or expand state-based HAI prevention collaboration efforts, enhance state abilities to monitor and track HAIs, and build within health departments a workforce trained in HAI prevention. For more information on the Recovery Act: www.recovery.gov. For more information about CDC's HAI Recovery Act funding: www.cdc.gov/hai/recoveryact.

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