



Division of Public Health Services

ADHS HAI Program

Office of Infectious Disease Services

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Attn: Administrator, Director of Nursing and Infection Preventionists

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one out of every twenty hospitalized patients in the United States contracts a Healthcare-Associated Infection (HAI). The deaths and costs associated with HAIs are equally staggering. In a 2002 study using National Nosocomial Infections Surveillance (NNIS) system data, 98,987 deaths were caused by HAIs over a period of twelve years. The overall annual direct medical costs of HAIs to U.S. hospitals ranges from \$28.4 to \$33.8 billion. (CITE) Improved communication about infections among healthcare systems may serve to reduce hospital readmissions.

To address the HAI problem here in Arizona, the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) HAI Advisory Committee is working on improving communication regarding infection control during patient transfers between hospitals and skilled nursing facilities. When the presence of a Multidrug-Resistant Organism (MDRO) is noted clearly on a patient transfer form, appropriate practices can be implemented to prevent disease spread, for timely diagnostics, and to care for patients appropriately.

After researching potential ways for facilities to communicate about patient infections, the committee recommends that healthcare facilities draw attention to an infectious process for any patient by implementing the following:

Attach the recommended Isolation/Precaution form developed by the HAI Advisory Committee to the top of the transfer packet for all transfers between skilled nursing facilities and hospitals.

The ADHS HAI Advisory Committee recommends implementation of the above practice in your infection prevention program. Should you need further clarification please send an email to the following e-mail address: HAIProgram@azdhs.gov

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Regards,

ADHS HAI Advisory Committee