Project Overview

Implementing standardized measurement of infections in nursing homes: challenges and facilitators

There are over 1.5 million residents in nursing homes, many of whom experience high rates of preventable adverse events due to infection. Infections caused by *Clostridium difficile* (CD) and multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs) are both serious and common. Standardized measurement of infections is critical to improving health, enhancing patient safety, and reducing morbidity and mortality. Standardized measurement allows facilities to compare their performance to others and facilitates national estimates of incidence and prevalence. One solution to improving measurement of infections is to enroll nursing homes in the Long Term Care Facility (LTCF) component of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).

The National Healthcare Safety Network, the gold standard measurement system for infection rates in the U.S., provides a free, systematic way to track infections, identify problematic trends, measure progress with prevention strategies, and help reduce the prevalence of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs). The LTCF component of NHSN was released in 2012, however fewer facilities have enrolled to date than had been expected. Little is known about the challenges nursing homes face when enrolling and collecting NHSN data and what facilitators are needed to overcome barriers.

To address this gap, The Joint Commission’s Department of Health Services Research is conducting a twelve-month study entitled *Implementing standardized measurement of infections in nursing homes: challenges and facilitators*. Supported through a research contract from CDC’s Antibiotic Resistance Solutions Initiative ([https://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/solutions-initiative/microbiome-innovations.html](https://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/solutions-initiative/microbiome-innovations.html)) (contract #200-2016-92276), the goals of the project are to:

1. train and initiate NHSN Laboratory-identified (LabID) Event module data collection in a new cohort of nursing homes,
2. measure organizational and individual characteristics and perceptions known to affect the ability to successfully implement quality improvement initiatives; and
3. prospectively identify challenges and facilitators to implementation and analyze these factors relative to organizational characteristics.

The results will benefit several stakeholders and inform policy makers of the readiness of nursing homes to implement standardized measurement of infections nationally. The ultimate goal is to prevent CD and MDRO infections and improve the quality of care for vulnerable residents in nursing homes.

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