

HAI PROGRAM INSIDER

California Department of Public Health (CDPH)

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Careers as an Infection Preventionist

Infection prevention is a growing field that is crucial to keeping healthcare settings safe for patients and staff. Infection preventionists (IPs) work to prevent healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) by educating healthcare personnel and monitoring adherence to HAI prevention practices.

IPs are responsible for tracking and reporting diseases, and working with public health agencies to respond quickly to outbreaks of communicable disease.

The work that IPs do is essential for ensuring collaboration among healthcare administrators, nurses, clinicians, and the public, to promote safer health care.

Read on to learn more about career paths as an IP in healthcare settings.

Recommended Experience:

- Registered nurse (RN) or bachelor's degree in microbiology, epidemiology, or infectious-disease related fields
- Experience in clinical or public health settings including hospitals, skilled nursing facilities (SNF), public health agencies, and outpatient clinics
- Understanding of data collection and analysis

Careers as an Infection Preventionist, cont'd

Roles of an Infection Preventionist

1) EVALUATOR

- Perform surveillance
- Investigate HAI outbreaks
- Educate and evaluate adherence to infection prevention and control (IPC) measures

2) EXPERT IN HAI PREVENTION

- Identify weak points in HAI prevention programs
- Collect and analyze data
- Design campaigns to improve prevention



3) CONSULTANT

- Influence policy around Environmental Health and Safety procedures, construction, visitation policies, emergency procedures, pandemic response
- These are just a few examples IP consultations



4) LIAISON & EDUCATOR

- Educate patients and offer community-based classes
- Liaise with families, visitors and patient caregivers
- Work with local public health departments
- Respond to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) guidelines
- Foster collaboration



5) MENTOR AND LEADER

- Set examples for proper IPC procedure
- Guide ethical decisions and interpret regulations
- Mentor interested students or nurses



Learn more about [careers as an infection preventionist](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/HAI_LiaisonIP.aspx)
(www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/HAI_LiaisonIP.aspx)



Pathways for Infection Preventionists

Education

- *Bachelor's degree in:
 - Nursing
 - Epidemiology
 - Microbiology

Specialized training and certification in IPC

*varies by healthcare facility type; e.g., acute care hospital (ACH) versus skilled nursing facility (SNF)

Backgrounds

Training/experience in nursing, other clinical work, public health, laboratory work, and medical technology

Settings

Hospitals, SNFs, behavioral health units, public health organizations, outpatient clinics

Professional Organizations

- Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)
- The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA)
- Certification Board of Infection Control (CBIC)

Salary Estimates

- Assistive Roles \$50-60K/yr
- Infection Preventionist \$65-125K/yr
- Epidemiologist \$65-125K/yr
- Lead Infection Preventionist/Project Manager \$70-200K

Learn more about [careers as an infection preventionist](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/HAI_LiaisonIP.aspx)
(www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/HAI_LiaisonIP.aspx)

Recent Updates



Ebola Preparedness

In November, 2022, CDPH offered a webinar on Ebola Preparedness in collaboration with Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. The [webinar recording](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7ZiFPBFwfs&t=180s) (www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7ZiFPBFwfs&t=180s) is available online as well as the [webinar slides](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/EbolaPreparednessWebinar_CDPH_CedarsSanai_111022.pdf) (PDF) (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/EbolaPreparednessWebinar_CDPH_CedarsSanai_111022.pdf). Although the most recent Ebola outbreak in Uganda was declared over in January, 2023, healthcare facilities need to maintain ongoing preparedness to identify, isolate and inform regarding Ebola and other emerging special pathogens.

Enhanced Standard Precautions for SNFs 2022

In October, 2022, CDPH released updated [Enhanced Standard Precautions guidance for SNFs](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/CDPH%20Document%20Library/Enhanced-Standard-Precautions.pdf) (PDF) (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/CDPH%20 Document%20Library/Enhanced-Standard-Precautions. pdf). Some of the key changes include:

1. Updated summary of epidemiology of targeted multi-drug resistant organisms (MDRO) demonstrating increased prevalence in California
2. Consolidated risk factors for MDRO colonization and transmission to include presence of unhealed wounds and medical devices, in alignment with CDC's most recent recommendations for Enhanced Barrier Precautions
3. A process for transition from Transmission-Based Precautions for individuals colonized or infected with MDROs during an outbreak to Enhanced Standard Precautions after the outbreak has been contained
4. Added chlorhexidine (CHG) bathing considerations
5. COVID-19 considerations for room placement and cohorting

Stay tuned for the updated Enhanced Standard Precautions webpage with a robust toolkit and materials, to assist in preventing MDRO transmission!

NEW

Acute Care Hospitals (ACH) Infection Prevention (IP) Online Training Course

The HAI Program is pleased to introduce a new self-guided infection preventionist course designed specifically for ACH. This course is available online and runs for 20 hours, which can be granted as continuing education credits for participants who finish the course. The curriculum is designed to provide guidance for planning and implementing effective IP programs in ACH. Focusing on strategies for combating HAIs including central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI), *Clostridioides difficile* infections (CDI), catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI), surgical site infections (SSI), COVID-19, and pneumonia, participants will learn how to analyze hospital HAI data to create IP programs, track and report adherence to prevention measures, and provide feedback to hospital staff.

This course features 6 more hours of instruction than the previous in-person course. The new information includes:

- Antibiotic Resistance, Antibiotic Stewardship, and Outbreaks and Unusual Occurrences (includes a Foodborne Illnesses module)
- Other Infections and Specialty Area Infection Prevention Considerations
- Performing a Facility Risk Assessment & Writing IPC Plan and Adult Learning Principles
- Resources for Acute Healthcare Facility Infection Preventionists
- Communications
- Acute Care Adventures: From Surveillance and Beyond (Practice Quiz)

The course also includes optional office hours which is a good opportunity for participants to ask questions and reinforce learning material. These office hours will be held Tuesdays from 10:00am - 11:00am on Zoom and are moderated by HAI Program infection preventionists. In addition to course review, sessions may also feature guest speakers and case study applications.

Register and access the course via the [IP Training for ACH Online Course Landing Page](https://reg.learningstream.com/view/view_month.aspx?as=76&wp=908&aid=HAIP) (reg.learningstream.com/view/view_month.aspx?as=76&wp=908&aid=HAIP)

 <p>A-IP Course with and Introduction to Implicit Bias ACH An Introduction to Implicit Bias Objectives: Implicit Bias Define the term "implicit bias" Discuss how implicit bias affects a real-world situation ...show more</p> <p>Join Wait List</p>	 <p>B-The Role of the Infection Preventionist and Core Infection Prevention Practices ACH The Role of the Infection Preventionist Objectives: - Describe the role of infection preventionists (IP) in health care - Discuss relationships imp ...show more</p> <p>Register Now</p>	 <p>C-Standard and Transmission-based Precautions ACH Standard Precautions Objectives: -Describe all 6 elements of Standard precautions -Review adherence monitoring results and tools for select Standard ...show more</p> <p>Register Now</p>
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Register for an Infection Prevention training course



[Infection Prevention Training for Skilled Nursing Facilities Online Course](https://reg.learningstream.com/view/view_month.aspx?as=76&wp=427&aid=HAIP)

(reg.learningstream.com/view/view_month.aspx?as=76&wp=427&aid=HAIP)

Course registration is currently on hold until the course is updated. The new course will be 16 hours in length, released later Spring 2023.

This online course provides practical guidance for implementing an infection prevention program in a SNF using evidence-based guidelines for preventing HAIs including CLABSI, CDI, CAUTI, COVID-19, and pneumonia. Participants will learn how to measure staff adherence to infection prevention care practices and educate and provide feedback to staff. Participants will also learn how to use their facility HAI data to focus infection prevention strategies, conduct an outbreak investigation, and how to implement the essential activities to prevent employee infections. The course includes online office hours to allow participants to ask questions live and provide a flexible experience.

[Local Health Department \(LHD\) Infection Preventionist Online Course](https://reg.learningstream.com/view/view_month.aspx?as=76&wp=443&aid=HAIP)

(reg.learningstream.com/view/view_month.aspx?as=76&wp=443&aid=HAIP)

This course will be updated and available late Summer 2023.

This online course provides foundational infection prevention and control training for infection preventionists (IP) and IP specialists working in local health departments. Participants will learn evidence-based recommendations for preventing healthcare-associated infections including CLABSI, CDI, urinary tract infections (UTI), pneumonia, and SSI, as well as the basics of microbiology and antimicrobial resistance, and steps for investigating HAI outbreaks. Participants will learn skills and tools for performing facility-based infection control assessments, measuring adherence to infection prevention care practices, and providing feedback to staff. Participants will also learn how to use facility HAI data to focus infection prevention strategies and how to access additional resources and available support for LHD IPs. This 14-hour self-paced course is designed for public health professionals to work around their schedule and does not have to be completed in one session.

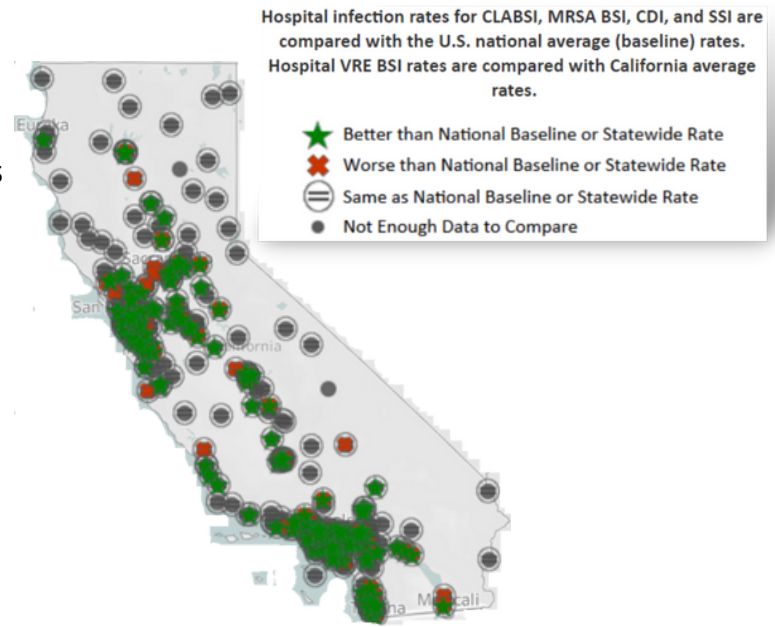
Interactive Maps

[My Hospital's Infections Map](#)

(www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/HAI_map.aspx)

HAIs occur as an unintended result during patient care. Public reporting of HAI data allows Californians to assess the quality of care in hospitals. The HAI interactive map provides HAI data for five infection types of HAI from all California acute care hospitals. Public reporting of hospital HAI data allows Californians to assess the quality of care in hospitals and make more informed health care choices.

All acute care hospitals must report to CDPH all cases of CDI, CLABSI, MRSA BSI, VRE BSI, and SSI (CA Health and Safety Code 1288.55).

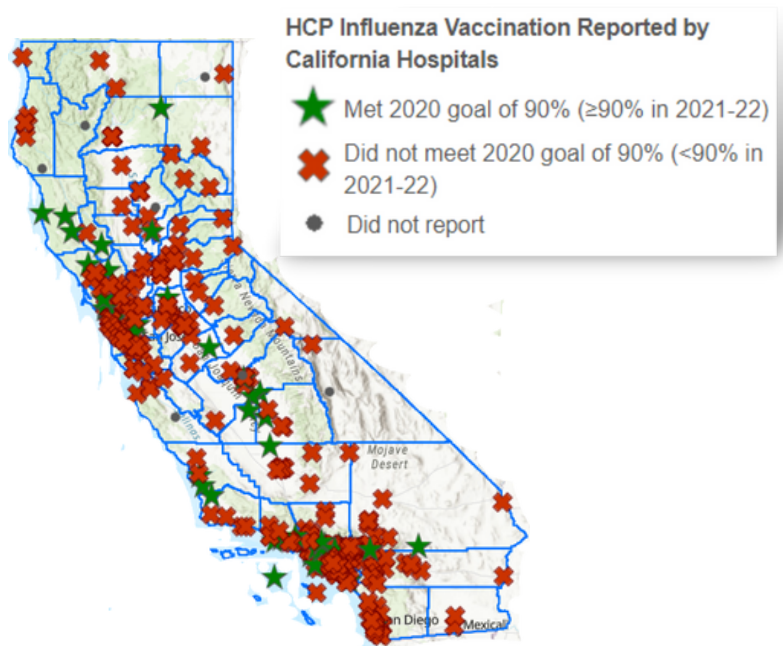


[Healthcare Provider Influenza Vaccination Rates in California Hospitals Map](#)

(www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/HCP_FLUmap.aspx)

Health care providers (HCP) in hospitals should receive annual influenza vaccination to protect their patients, their families, and others in the community. HCP flu vaccination rates are an important measure of a hospital's health care quality. The map shows HCP flu vaccination rates reported by California hospitals for the 2021–22 flu season.

Note: During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, universal masking was required statewide for all HCP regardless of their influenza vaccination status. Therefore, in this map we did not include information on individual county-level masking requirements for HCP who declined influenza vaccination.



Get Involved

[Project Firstline](#)

(www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCO/HAI/Pages/ProjectFirstline_Resources.aspx)

Project Firstline is a CDC-funded initiative that provides infection prevention and control education and training to frontline healthcare workers. In California, Project Firstline has an 8-module training program for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA). CNA may review course content on the Project Firstline resource page; SNF leadership may also use the content to train CNA at their individual facilities. A Toolkit and Implementation Guide is forthcoming. Join the [Project Firstline distribution list](#) (cdph-marketing.powerappsportals.com/HAI/HAI-Registration/) to receive announcements.

[Antimicrobial Stewardship Program Honor Roll](#)

(www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCO/HAI/Pages/Honor_Roll.aspx)

The HAI Program is pleased to recognize top performing antimicrobial stewardship programs in California. The goals of the ASP Honor Roll are to promote optimal use of antimicrobials, prevent emergence of AR and CDI, and to showcase California healthcare facility ASP that not only follow national guidelines, but also demonstrate outcomes and engage their local healthcare community.

Contact Us:

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www.cdph.ca.gov/HAI