

Ventilator-Equipped  
Skilled Nursing Facility (vSNF)  
Workgroup to Prevent Multi-Drug  
Resistant Organisms (MDRO)

## **Project Plan**

The vSNF Workgroup to Prevent MDRO (vSNF Workgroup) aims to support and equip California vSNF with tools to address the challenges associated with MDRO infections and safely care for their residents, and to ensure that core infection prevention practices are in place to prevent MDRO emergence and transmission in vSNF.



## Background

vSNF are at high risk for MDRO because medical device and antibiotic use in their resident populations predispose them to MDRO transmission and infections. The *C. auris* outbreak affecting multiple vSNF in southern California highlights the need for a proactive approach to preventing emergence and spread of MDRO such as *C. auris* in these settings. The spread of MDRO can be prevented by strengthening basic infection prevention practices of hand hygiene and environmental cleaning and disinfection.

## Goals

The Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services, Orange County Health Care Agency, and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) Program are partnering to convene a 1.5 year-long project to support infection prevention practices in vSNF. Our goals are as follows:

1. Improve hand hygiene and environmental cleaning and disinfection in vSNF by implementing a quality improvement (QI) project that includes an adherence monitoring program
2. Observe a measurable improvement in adherence to hand hygiene and environmental cleaning and disinfection practices
3. Increase awareness and knowledge of MDRO in vSNF
4. Build relationships among local health departments and local vSNF

## Structure

Each participating vSNF will obtain leadership approvals to participate and form a team to carry out an infection prevention quality improvement project at their facility. The HAI Program will provide on-site infection prevention assessments, templates, tools, and support for the duration of the project. HAI Program and local public health will convene in-person workshops to provide infection prevention education, strengthen relationships and create a forum for participating vSNF to share expertise and strategies for overcoming challenges.

## Benefits

Participation in the workgroup will provide your staff with:

- **Periodic onsite infection prevention assessments.** The assessments will be conducted onsite by a CDPH HAI Program Liaison Infection Preventionist (IP) with participation of local public health and key staff from the participating vSNF. The initial assessment will focus on IP program infrastructure and adherence monitoring of core infection prevention practices. Subsequent assessments will track progress from the previous assessment. Assessments will be scheduled every six months for a total of three in-person assessments.

- **Assistance with development of a quality improvement (QI) project.** QI project templates and training will be provided to assist each participating vSNF with development and implementation of a QI project. In addition, HAI Program Liaison IP will provide mentorship and schedule monthly (or more frequent) calls with participating facilities to assist with their QI projects.
- **Participation in workshops.** These in-person sessions are educational and interactive sessions designed to spark discussion about best practices and barriers to implementation among local vSNF colleagues. Workshop education will largely focus on core infection prevention strategies (hand hygiene and environmental cleaning and disinfection) and on common themes from the onsite prevention assessments. Other topics may include:
  - Strategies for engaging all members of the healthcare team, including leadership
  - Quality improvement project implementation (including sharing of project templates)
  - Strategies for sustaining improvements
  - Case studies
  - Train the Trainer activities

BRN continuing education (CE) units will be offered. In-person workshops will be scheduled every nine months for a total of three workshops.

- **Access to experts in infection prevention at the HAI Program and local public health.** Participating facilities will have one-on-one support from HAI Program staff, and will build relationships with their local public health department. The HAI Program and local public health will invite speakers to share their expertise and experience during the in-person workshops.
- **Opportunities to discuss and share** best practices, challenges, and lessons learned regarding infection prevention programs with a network of local vSNF. These discussions will enable facilities to share tools to assess infection control protocols in individual facilities, implementation and evaluation strategies, and ways to collect and use data to focus infection prevention activities. **Sharing infection prevention strategies with others demonstrates that your facility is committed to learning and providing the best quality of care for your residents and community.**

## Facility Commitments

As a member of the vSNF Workgroup, vSNF staff will commit to:

- **Obtaining appropriate leadership approvals** and endorsement to participate in the vSNF Workgroup.
- **Participating in an onsite assessment** and actively engage all team members in education and training sessions.
- **Committing to a QI project** and developing an adherence monitoring plan to track hand hygiene and environmental cleaning and disinfection practices, and gather a team to carry out QI project items.

## Timeline

### Recruitment

- Beginning in **January 2020**, the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services and Orange County Health Care Agency will invite all skilled nursing facilities with ventilator care to participate. Recruitment packets will be emailed to leadership at each invited vSNF. The recruitment packet will include an introduction letter detailing pertinent specifics of the project and a commitment form.
- vSNF will be asked to return the commitment form to their local health department by **February 27, 2020** to confirm interest and leadership approval. The commitment form will also request facilities to identify up to four key staff members who will actively participate in the project.

### Kick-off Workshop

- On **March 3, 2020**, the HAI Program will convene representatives from each enrolled vSNF to an in-person kick-off workshop, to be held at a central location. The meeting is scheduled for 1-5PM.
- The meeting will allow key staff at participating facilities to meet each other as well as stakeholders from the CDPH HAI Program and local public health departments.
- HAI Program staff will give an overview of the project, goals, and expectations; there will also be a training on how to design and convene a quality improvement project in the vSNF setting.
- Participants who are eligible can register to attend for BRN continuing education units. Registration information to follow.

### In-person Workshops

- Throughout the project period (March 2020 – September 2021), the vSNF will meet in-person at education workshops (three total), the first of which being the Kick-off Workshop.
- Workshops will address topic areas identified as problematic during the prevention assessments or barriers to infection prevention progress. These in-person meetings will be a platform for facilities to discuss and share best practices, challenges, and lessons learned regarding infection prevention and adherence monitoring programs, and will enable facilities to share tools to assess infection control protocols in individual facilities, implementation and evaluation strategies, and ways to collect and use data to focus infection prevention activities.
- In-person workshops will be scheduled in March 2020 (kick-off workshop), December 2020, and September 2021.
- Participants who are eligible can register to attend the workshops for BRN continuing education units.

### Prevention Assessment Visits

- The HAI Program will schedule onsite facility visits to take place after the kick-off meeting. These visits will be ongoing, depending on the number of facilities enrolled. Initial facility visits will be scheduled in **March and April 2020**, intermediate visits in **October and November 2020**, and final assessments in **July and August 2021**, depending on region.

- During these onsite visits HAI Program IP will conduct observational assessments and interview key personnel at each participating vSNF to understand the status of the facility's current infection prevention plan. Initial visits will likely be one half day long; subsequent visits will be 1-2 hours long depending on items that need to be reviewed.
- Prevention assessments will focus on characteristics of infection prevention practices and safety culture, adherence to core infection prevention strategies, and effectiveness of environmental cleaning, and will help identify facility strengths and areas where improvement is most needed.
- Upon completion of the initial prevention assessment, a feedback report will be given to the key personnel to help with development of a quality improvement project.

#### Train the Trainer Visit

- In the month following the initial prevention assessment visit, each facility will convene a Train the Trainer session where HAI Program IPs will provide training materials directly to facility staff.
- Train the Trainer content will vary depending on the needs of the facility and will largely be based on the prevention assessment visit outcomes.
- Additional Train the Trainer content will be shared during the In-Person Workshops.

#### Quality Improvement Project and Mentorship Calls

- The HAI Program will aid each participating vSNF in developing an infection prevention action plan tailored to facility needs, using the feedback report as a guide.
- Each participating vSNF will be asked to incorporate an aspect of adherence monitoring into their quality improvement project, particularly hand hygiene or environmental cleaning and disinfection, and will monitor adherence during the project period.
- The QI project may be a new project or an extension of current initiatives being worked on in your facility at the time of the initial infection prevention assessment.
- Individual facilities will meet with their assigned HAI Program Liaison IP via phone or in-person visits for monthly (or more often) mentorship meetings, depending on scheduling and facility needs. Mentorship calls will be scheduled directly with the assigned HAI Program Liaison Infection Preventionist.

Thank you for your interest in the vSNF Workgroup. Together, we can provide safer healthcare settings for all of California.