

## Infectious Disease: Health-care Associated Infections (HAI)

The California Department of Public Health is establishing an infection surveillance, prevention, and control program to reduce healthcare-associated infections (HAI) in California. Legislation has been enacted that requires the reporting of major HAIs, including methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* and vancomycin-resistant enterococcal bloodstream infections, *Clostridium difficile* infections, all central line associated bloodstream infections, and infections following orthopedic, cardiac, and gastrointestinal surgery, which began January 1, 2009. Certain prevention measures are also reported. Some of these data are being reported through the CDC National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), while others are reported directly to CDPH. There are 455 hospitals licensed in California, and approximately 400 are currently enrolled in NHSN. The program also provides advice to healthcare facilities on a variety of problems related to HAI, and conducts an outbreak investigation at least once per year. The Fellow will have substantial input in determining the projects they pursue, but will participate in a variety of short and long-term analytic projects and acute outbreak investigations.

Day-to-day activities will include participation in weekly surveillance meetings with program staff where current surveillance issues, consultations, outbreaks and investigations are discussed, participation in weekly Division of Communicable Disease Control meetings where a wide range of communicable disease issues are discussed, participation in meetings with state, local health department, and healthcare facility partners so that a broad perspective on public health function is provided, and participation in periodic APIC (Association for Professionals in Infection Control) meetings (there are 12 APIC chapters in California and a statewide coordinating council; CDPH staff are active in these organizations).

Analysis of surveillance data and evaluation of the surveillance systems will be available for any of the wide range of HAI data being collected by the program. Intervention projects are currently planned for the control of norovirus outbreaks in skilled nursing facilities, of which 100-200 are reported in a typical year in California (there are approximately 1500 nursing homes in the state), and for the surveillance, prevention and control of *Clostridium difficile* disease in California hospitals; roles as lead investigator or participant are available for either of these projects. Collaboration with the Division's Immunization Branch on transmission of vaccine preventable diseases in healthcare facilities, and with the Tuberculosis Control Branch on transmission of tuberculosis in healthcare facilities is available on a regular basis. The program supplies infection control expertise to the Department's pandemic influenza and bioterrorism preparedness programs; a major exercise is conducted at least annually and the fellow will be expected to participate in at least one of these.

Assignment Location: Richmond, CA

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