



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

PO BOX 360  
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0360

[www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)

JON S. CORZINE  
Governor

HEATHER HOWARD  
Commissioner

April 29, 2008

Dear Hospital Chief Executive Officers:

Recent legislation, the "Health Care Facility-Associated Infection Reporting and Prevention Act" (N.J.S.A. 26:2H-12.39 through 2.45) requires the Department of Health and Senior Services (the Department) to develop rules for public reporting of health care associated infections with the advice of the Quality Improvement Advisory Committee (QIAC). Those rules were published for public comment in the New Jersey Register on April 21, 2008. We have established an ambitious schedule for the implementation of the statute and initiation of the reporting system with final action on those rules expected during 2008 and initiation of hospital reporting in January 2009.

In anticipation of final approval of those rules in late fall 2008, the Department is notifying general hospitals of the proposed selection of the CDC National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) for submission of health care associated infections and the selection of specific measures for reporting patients starting in January 2009. Based on the advice of the QIAC, the Department had identified the following measures for submission: central line associated blood stream infections in all ICUs, surgical site infections related to CABG and surgical site infections related to abdominal hysterectomy. This choice of measures is based on considering a broad range of issues and is consistent with national directives.

In addition, related legislation (N.J.S.A. 26:2H-12.35 et seq.) requires hospitals to submit information on MRSA to the Department. As previously described in correspondence from Dr. Eddy Bresnitz, Deputy Commissioner/State Epidemiologist, on February 1, 2008, it is our intention to use NHSN for that separate reporting process. The Department anticipates that MRSA reporting will be operational after the appropriate NHSN module becomes available.

The Department will cooperate with CDC to provide hospitals with technical training on the relevant protocols at a training session in early fall. In order for hospitals to prepare for that training and for both public reporting and MRSA reporting, I encourage hospitals to enroll in NHSN and begin reporting information on the required measures for their own review.

The prevention of health care associated infections is a national as well as state issue. We appreciate the efforts of New Jersey hospitals to make care safer as well as your cooperation in beginning the reporting process. Hospital infection control staff have been involved in advising the Department on these decisions and will continue to be involved in the development of this process.

If you have questions on public reporting, please contact Frances Prestianni, PhD, at 609-530-7470 or [frances.prestianni@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:frances.prestianni@doh.state.nj.us). If you have questions on MRSA reporting please contact Corey Robertson, MD, at 609-588-7500 or [corey.robertson@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:corey.robertson@doh.state.nj.us).

Sincerely,

Heather Howard  
Commissioner

c. Cynthia Kirchner, Senior Policy Advisor to the Commissioner  
Eddy Bresnitz, MD, MS, Deputy Commissioner/State Epidemiologist