Council for Outbreak Response: Healthcare-Associated Infections Antibiotic-Resistant Pathogens

Website – corha.org
Presenters

Dawn Terashita, MD, MPH (CORHA Governance Committee member and Policy Workgroup Co-lead)
Associate Director, Acute Communicable Disease Control Program
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Moon Kim, MD, MPH (CORHA Policy Workgroup Co-lead)
Hospital Outbreak and Biothreat Response Unit
Acute Communicable Disease Control Program
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
• **Mission:** To improve practices and policies at the local, state and national levels for detection, investigation, control and prevention of HAI/AR outbreaks across the healthcare continuum, including emerging infections and other risks with potential for healthcare transmission.

• **Council Members:** ASTHO, CSTE, NACCHO, CDC, SHEA, APIC, APHL, CMS, FDA

• **Products:**
  - Threshold for reporting and investigation
  - Tools for investigation
  - Framework for HAI outbreak notification
Enhance Capabilities of Public Health and Healthcare to Improve Outbreak Detection, Response, and Prevention

A diagram includes a strategy map and activities:

- Detection and Response
  - Develop a Comprehensive Repository of Tools and Guidance
- Lessons Learned and Prevention Needs
  - Define and Operationalize CORHA’s Role in Emerging Threats
- Funding
  - Implement Succession Planning

E
Strengthen Relationships and Communication Among Stakeholders

F
Develop and Implement a Formal Evaluation Plan
• Outbreaks of infections are a regular occurrence within healthcare facilities

• Previously, no comprehensive guidance existed for notification of outbreaks
  • Varied based on situation
CORHA Framework for HAI outbreak notification

Introduction

This document provides guidance for notification in the context of a suspected healthcare-associated infection (HAI) outbreak. It is based on public health best practices and grounded in the biophysical principles of autonomy and beneficence. A suspected outbreak can be signaled by a cluster of cases (infection or colonization), detection of an unusual pathogen or resistance mechanism, or even a serious infection control breach. For the purpose of this document, all such instances will be referred to as "outbreak."

Investigation partners (e.g., the healthcare setting and public health authorities) should consider the communication needs of all affected target populations, as outlined below. Timely, transparent, and instructional communication may be critical for controlling infection risks, preventing further transmission and reducing harm by allowing appropriate treatment. Public health authorities should be consulted to help develop content of communications to various target populations throughout the process. Communication specialists should be involved where possible. As assessment of the risk evolves and new information becomes available during an investigation, updated information can be communicated to target populations.

This guidance is intended to provide standardized actions that can be taken for suspected HAI outbreak notifications. The circumstances surrounding these investigations may vary, and the course of action may be tailored in consultation with public health authorities. Supplementary resources referenced in this document may be used to enhance communication information. Note that additional guidance, not presented here, is available from CORHA and other organizations to assist with the epidemiological aspects of healthcare outbreak investigations, including reporting.

STEP 1: Immediate Notification

Immediate notification refers to the set of initial and critical communications that occur when an outbreak is first suspected. Healthcare settings or providers should immediately report the suspected outbreak or infection control breach to designated internal team members (e.g., infection preventionists, hospital epidemiologists, and patient safety officers) and public health authorities, following state and local regulations and guidelines. Representatives of healthcare settings should take the lead on immediate notification to the groups outlined in the table below. Public health staff may need to take the lead when healthcare setting representatives do not or are unable to lead. Ideally, the notification process should be initiated as soon as possible—within 24 hours after recognition of an outbreak. In most cases, notification plans should ensure patients who have been infected are notified and counseled promptly (by their healthcare providers whenever possible). Notification to other prioritized groups should follow as soon as possible, and these steps may occur simultaneously instead of sequentially.

The same principles will apply as new cases are identified.

Steps for Immediate Notification:

A suspected outbreak should be immediately reported to designated internal team members at the healthcare setting and to public health authorities. The following steps should be initiated as soon as possible—within 24 hours after an outbreak is suspected. The role of public health authorities will be to assist in the assessment of the outbreak and the content of notifications.

<p>| Case patients who have been infected (or their designated healthcare proxy and, if patients are deceased, their closest family member) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to Notify (one or more of the following, as appropriate)</th>
<th>When to Notify (public health agency to be involved on an ongoing basis to ensure accuracy)</th>
<th>Justification (one or more of the following)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbally, in person or by phone calls if the patient has already been discharged, with the opportunity to ask questions. Written FAQs and descriptive statement should also be given or sent.</td>
<td>First tier.</td>
<td>To prevent and control transmission and assist with outbreak investigation activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If unable to reach patients + in person or by phone, a written communication should be sent.</td>
<td></td>
<td>To fully inform patients about the event and implications for their health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To allow patients to seek appropriate treatment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 8.3 for an example involving *Legionella pneumophila*

Box 8.4 for New-Delhi metallo-beta-lactamase-producing carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacteriaceae*

Discusses use of written notification postings
NOTIFICATION SUMMARY AND EXAMPLE SCENARIOS

https://www.corha.org/resources-and-products/?filter_cat=patient-notification