

New AHRQ Data Show Healthcare-Associated Infections Greatly Increase the Length and Cost of Hospital Stays

Adults who developed health care-associated infections (HAIs) due to medical or surgical care while in the hospital in 2007 had to stay an average of 19 days longer than adults who didn't develop an infection, (24 days versus 5 days), according to new data from AHRQ. For patients with an HAI, the rate of death in the hospital, on average, was six times as high as the rate for patients without an HAI (9 percent versus 1.5 percent). Also, on average, the cost of a hospital stay of an adult patient who developed an HAI was about \$43,000 more expensive than the stay of a patient without an HAI (\$52,096 versus \$9,377). Other statistics include:

- In 2007, about 45 percent of patients with HAIs were 65 or older, 33 percent were 45 to 64 and 22 percent were ages 18 to 44. However, the 45- to 64-year-old group had the highest rate of HAIs.
- The top three diagnoses in hospitalized adult patients who developed HAIs were septicemia (12 percent), adult respiratory failure (6 percent) and complications from surgical procedures or medical treatment (4 percent).
- The rate of infections among medical and surgical discharges peaked in 2004 and 2005 at 2.3 per 1,000 stays, then declined to 2.03, a rate similar to year 2000.

These data are from AHRQ's new statistical brief, *Adult Hospital Stays with Infection Due to Medical Care, 2007* ([PDF File](#); [PDF Help](#)). The report uses statistics from the 2007 Nationwide Inpatient Sample, a database of hospital inpatient stays that is nationally representative of inpatient stays in all short-term, non-Federal hospitals. The data are drawn from hospitals that comprise 90 percent of all discharges in the United States and include all patients, regardless of insurance type, as well as the uninsured.