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ILLINOIS SURGICAL SITE INFECTION (SSI) REPORTING Q&A

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Importing Denominator Data

Q: Where can I (or someone from my facility's IT department) learn more about uploading denominator data to NHSN?

A: If you attended an in-person training session, uploading denominator data is covered on pages 21-27 of your handouts; if you attended a webinar, it is covered on slides 44-54. Additional questions should be directed to the NHSN helpdesk at nhsn@cdc.gov.

Q: Do all the optional fields need to have a place holder? If so, what is the expected place holder?

A: Each optional field in the import file does need to have a placeholder, but it does not need to be of a specific character length – if you just leave a blank column in the file, it will import correctly. Please refer to the document "Importing Patient Safety Procedure Data" for more information about importing denominator data (see list of websites at the end of this document for a link to this file). There is an online help feature within the NHSN system that provides more information about importing data, which has been updated recently. When you are in the import mode, it asks you to locate the file you wish to import. It then reads it and checks it out for errors. If there are errors it lists them and then you can determine what is not correct and edit and resubmit the file.

Q: We are getting the SSI denominator data ready and the person helping us with that process would like to send a "test" data submission of the denominator data. Is this possible to do?

A: NHSN has indicated that sample files should not be imported. However, the NHSN application has many rules in place to prevent a user from importing a file in an incorrect format or missing required information. When importing, a user has the opportunity to fix or delete any "Bad Data" records identified by the system before continuing with the import.

Conferring Rights

Q: If I already conferred rights to the IDPH group for CLABSI reporting, do I have to re-confer rights for SSIs?

A: Yes! Instructions are available on slides 6-14 of the document "SSI Reporting IDPH", which was emailed to NHSN facility administrators on March 25, 2010.

Q: Why don't I see a line and check box for "Annual Hospital Survey" on the confer rights screen, like on slide 8 of "SSI Reporting IDPH"?

A: Because we used an old screen shot when we put that document together; in the current version of NHSN, that option should not appear in that section of the confer rights screen. There is a separate box that allows facilities to confer rights to specific surveys for specific years. Our apologies!

Adding Users

Q: How do I add another NHSN user at my facility?

A: Enter NHSN and under USERS select ADD. Assign them a user ID and fill in the necessary information. You'll also need to designate what type of rights they will have. To verify that they have been entered, you can exit to the main screen and under USER select FIND and you should see a list of all the users at your facility. Once a user is added, NHSN will send the user an email with the agreement to follow the rules of behavior and instructions for obtaining and downloading a digital certificate.

NHSN User Start-up Guide: http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhgp/nhsn_members.html

Timing

Q: When am I required to start reporting?

A: The reporting period begins on April 1, 2010.

Q: How long do I have to get the data entered into NHSN?

A: According to the Reporting Requirements for Participation in NHSN, data for each month (both denominator and numerator data) need to be entered within 30 days of the end of the month. So, all numerator and denominator data (surgical procedures and infections) for April 2010 need to be entered by May 30, 2010.

“Report adverse events/exposures and appropriate summary or denominator data as required for the module(s) indicated on the reporting plan to CDC within 30 days of the end of the month.”

<http://cdc.gov/nhsn/enroll.html#2er>

Minimum Surveillance Requirements

Q: Is there any guidance available regarding minimum surveillance requirements?

A: Yes, a document outlining the minimum surveillance requirements will be sent out next week. Also, the minimum surveillance requirements are covered on slides 15-23 of the document “SSI Reporting IDPH”, which was emailed to NHSN facility administrators on March 25, 2010.

Reporting Threshold

Q: My facility only performs a few of the reportable procedures each year. Do I still have to report in NHSN?

A: Hospitals performing any coronary artery bypass graft and/or total knee replacement surgeries are mandated to report surgical site infections to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) through NHSN. Hospitals performing 20 or fewer of one of these procedures per year will not have SSI rates reported on the Illinois Hospital Report Card website for that procedure, but IDPH will continue to monitor SSI rates for these hospitals.

Other

Q: For CBGB, if the patient’s saphenous vein is harvested for grafting, is that YES for transplant?

A: Yes, this meets the definition for an autologous or autograft transplant (Mary Andrus’ presentation, slide 37). However, the question on the “Denominator for Procedure” form about transplants specifically asks about whether or not there was a non-autologous transplant; the answer would be no, since the patient’s own vein was used.

Q: If an endoscope is used to harvest the saphenous vein, is that YES for endoscope?

A: Yes – see Mary Andrus’ presentation, slide 32, “Denominator for Procedure - Endoscope”; the bubble says “Exception: For CBGB operations, if the donor vessel was harvested using a laparoscope, select yes.”

Helpful Websites and Contact Information

NHSN Homepage:

<http://cdc.gov/nhsn/index.html>

NHSN – Surgical Site Infection Event Protocol and Instructions:

<http://cdc.gov/nhsn/PDFs/pscManual/9pscSSIcurrent.pdf>

NHSN – Importing Patient Safety Procedure Data:

http://cdc.gov/nhsn/PDFs/ImportingProcedureData_current.pdf

NHSN – Procedure Associated Module Training Webinar:

http://cdc.gov/nhsn/wc_pa_ma.html

Email address for NHSN-related questions:

nhsn@cdc.gov

Email address for digital certificate/secure data network related questions:

cdcsdn@cdc.gov

Please note that the secure data network email address will not be able to answer questions about using NHSN; make sure your questions go to the appropriate email address.

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Email Tracy if the facility administrator at your facility is changing or if you are a new facility administrator.