

Perceived Impact of Mandatory Reporting of Healthcare-Associated Infections on Infection Prevention and Control Departments in Acute Care Hospitals

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BACKGROUND

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires hospitals to report healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) through the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program.
- Facilitated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), mandatory reporting aims to improve quality by benchmarking and improving transparency.
- In addition, the majority of US states have policies in place for mandatory reporting of HAIs in acute care hospitals.
- The aim of this study was to examine Infection Preventionists' perceptions of the impact of mandatory reporting on infection prevention and control (IPC) departments.

METHODS

- In Winter of 2018, we electronically surveyed IPs working in acute care.
- The survey was distributed by the Association of Professionals in Infection Prevention and Epidemiology (APIC) to its members via an initial email and weekly e-blasts over a 6-week period.

RESULTS

- There were 256 IPs who completed the survey; 187 IPs provided responses in the mandatory reporting section.
- Half (53%) reported that mandatory reporting resulted in more influence of the IPC department on hospital decision making and 38% reported increased visibility.
- The most important benefit of mandatory reporting was increased awareness of IPC for hospital administrators (42%), followed by transparency of outcomes for patients and providers (28%).
- However, a third of IPs reported less time for staff education and routine IPC activities.
- IPs also reported an increased workload and lack of action based on the results of the reports as drawbacks of reporting mandates.

CONCLUSIONS

- According to IPs, mandatory reporting has resulted in increased visibility and awareness of IPC in acute care hospitals, however, some drawbacks were also identified.
- Given federal and state requirements for HAI reporting, policy makers need to be attuned to additional demands placed on acute care hospitals to comply with mandatory reporting processes.
- Future research should aim to examine whether IPC departments have sufficient resources to comply with these regulatory policies and ways in which to improve the reporting process.

