



STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Donald E. Williamson, MD  
State Health Officer

April 16, 2010

Dear Hospital CEO:

I want to thank you and all of Alabama's hospital leaders for working with the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and Senator Bobby Denton to pass the Mike Denton Infection Reporting Act. I believe this is an important step in our efforts to prevent hospital-acquired infections and provide transparency.

Hospital representatives, along with the other members of our Healthcare Data Advisory Council, have made much progress over the last several months. The State Committee of Public Health at its last meeting approved the Council's proposed rules. The proposed rules are now out for public comment, and when approved, will require hospitals to report Healthcare-associated Infections (HAIs) starting in January 2011. Even though the rules require reporting beginning in January 2011, it is our hope that hospitals will begin voluntarily reporting as early as this summer or fall so we have time to refine the process as needed. We will not, however, be publicly reporting data submitted prior to January.

The rules specify that hospitals report using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), a Web-based program. Hospitals are to report infections in the following categories:

- Central line-associated bloodstream infections in critical care units (medical, surgical and pediatric).
- Surgical site infections related to colon surgery and abdominal hysterectomies.
- Catheter-associated urinary tract infections in general medical and surgical wards.

We are working with the Alabama Hospital Association and volunteers from the Healthcare Data Advisory Council to provide training to hospitals on the reporting process. We hope to launch the NHSN Training Plan through a series of regional meetings during the first week of May. In order to launch these training sessions successfully, we need your help in obtaining the appropriate contact(s) for your facility. We need contact information for the individual from your facility who will serve as the NHSN Facility Administrator. The NHSN Facility Administrator is the person authorized to register your facility in NHSN, provide rights to the Alabama Department of Public Health to access the data for reporting, and authorize someone in your facility to enter data into NHSN. The Facility Administrator will also submit the required monthly plan into NHSN. If you have someone other than the Facility

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Administrator who will be the primary NHSN User (the individual who enters, reviews, and validates the facility's HAI data), we would like to have that person's contact information as well. Please complete the enclosed sheet and fax to Kelly M. Stevens, Director of Epidemiology, Alabama Department of Public Health, 334-206-5967, or scan and e-mail document to [Kelly.Stevens@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Kelly.Stevens@adph.state.al.us). As the regional training sessions will be held the first week in May, we need this information as soon as possible, but at least by April 26.

Again, we thank you for your commitment to quality patient care and look forward to working with you and your staff. If you have any questions about the Mike Denton Infection Reporting Act or this letter, please contact Mrs. Stevens at 334-206-7934 or [Kelly.Stevens@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Kelly.Stevens@adph.state.al.us).

Sincerely,



Donald E. Williamson, M.D.  
State Health Officer

DEW/kms  
Enclosure  
cc: Facility Infection Control Professional