

RCW 70.41.430 Prevention and control of the transmission of pathogens of epidemiological concern—Policy adoption—Reporting—Definitions.

(1) Each hospital licensed under this chapter shall, by January 1, 2023, adopt a policy regarding prevention and control of the transmission of pathogens of epidemiological concern. The policy shall, at a minimum, contain the following elements:

(a) A facility risk assessment to identify pathogens of epidemiological concern that considers elements such as the probability of occurrence as determined via surveillance, potential impact, and measures the hospital has implemented to mitigate the risk to patients, health care workers, and visitors; and

(b) Appropriate evidence-based procedures and intervention strategies to identify and help prevent patients from transmitting pathogens of epidemiological concern to other patients and health care workers.

(2) A hospital that has identified through appropriate testing a patient who has a pathogen of epidemiological concern that is required to be reported to the national healthcare safety network of the United States centers for disease control and prevention shall report the event as required by the United States centers for medicare and medicaid services.

(3) For the purposes of this section "pathogens of epidemiological concern" means infectious agents that have one or more of the following characteristics:

(a) A propensity for transmission within health care facilities based on published reports from the centers for disease control and prevention and the occurrence of temporal or geographic clusters of two or more patients;

(b) Antimicrobial resistance implications;

(c) Association with serious clinical disease or increased morbidity and mortality; or

(d) A newly discovered or reemerging pathogen. [2022 c 207 § 2; 2009 c 244 § 1.]

Finding—2022 c 207: "The legislature finds that a singular focus on methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus does not reflect the reality that there are many more pathogens of epidemiological concern. Modernization of state law is needed. Hospitals must prepare and respond effectively to pathogens of epidemiological concern within their facilities through a broad facility risk assessment that identifies pathogens of epidemiological concern that pose risks to patients, health care workers, and visitors. Department of health oversight and surveys will ensure risk assessments are appropriate and current. Lab identified pathogens must be reported to the national healthcare safety network of the United States centers for disease control and prevention pursuant to requirements from the centers for medicare and medicaid services." [2022 c 207 § 1.]