

RCW 43.70.056 Health care-associated infections—Data collection and reporting—Advisory committee—Rules. (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Health care-associated infection" means a localized or systemic condition that results from adverse reaction to the presence of an infectious agent or its toxins and that was not present or incubating at the time of admission to the hospital.

(b) "Hospital" means a health care facility licensed under chapter 70.41 RCW.

(2)(a) A hospital shall collect data related to health care-associated infections as required under this subsection (2) on the following:

(i) Central line-associated bloodstream infection in all hospital inpatient areas where patients normally reside at least twenty-four hours;

(ii) Surgical site infection for colon and abdominal hysterectomy procedures.

(b) The department shall, by rule, delete, add, or modify categories of reporting when the department determines that doing so is necessary to align state reporting with the reporting categories of the centers for medicare and medicaid services. The department shall begin rule making forty-five calendar days, or as soon as practicable, after the centers for medicare and medicaid services adopts changes to reporting requirements.

(c) A hospital must routinely collect and submit the data required to be collected under (a) and (b) of this subsection to the national healthcare safety network of the United States centers for disease control and prevention in accordance with national healthcare safety network definitions, methods, requirements, and procedures.

If the centers for medicare and medicaid services changes reporting from the national healthcare safety network to another database or through another process, the department shall review the new reporting database or process and consider whether it aligns with the purposes of this section.

(d) Data collection and submission required under this subsection (2) must be overseen by a qualified individual with the appropriate level of skill and knowledge to oversee data collection and submission.

(e)(i) A hospital must release to the department, or grant the department access to, its hospital-specific information contained in the reports submitted under this subsection (2), as requested by the department consistent with *RCW 70.02.050.

(ii) The hospital reports obtained by the department under this subsection (2), and any of the information contained in them, are not subject to discovery by subpoena or admissible as evidence in a civil proceeding, and are not subject to public disclosure as provided in RCW 42.56.360.

(3) The department shall:

(a) Provide oversight of the health care-associated infection reporting program established in this section;

(b) By November 1, 2013, and biennially thereafter, submit a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature that contains: (i) Categories of reporting currently required of hospitals under subsection (2)(a) of this section; (ii) categories of reporting the department plans to add, delete, or modify by rule; and (iii) a

description of the evaluation process used under (d) of this subsection;

(c) By December 1, 2009, and by each December 1st thereafter, prepare and publish a report on the department's website that compares the health care-associated infection rates at individual hospitals in the state using the data reported in the previous calendar year pursuant to subsection (2) of this section. The department may update the reports quarterly. In developing a methodology for the report and determining its contents, the department shall consider the recommendations of the advisory committee established in subsection (5) of this section. The report is subject to the following:

(i) The report must disclose data in a format that does not release health information about any individual patient; and

(ii) The report must not include data if the department determines that a data set is too small or possesses other characteristics that make it otherwise unrepresentative of a hospital's particular ability to achieve a specific outcome;

(d) Evaluate, on a regular basis, the quality and accuracy of health care-associated infection reporting required under subsection (2) of this section and the data collection, analysis, and reporting methodologies; and

(e) Provide assistance to hospitals with the reporting requirements of this chapter including definitions of required reporting elements.

(4) The department may respond to requests for data and other information from the data required to be reported under subsection (2) of this section, at the requestor's expense, for special studies and analysis consistent with requirements for confidentiality of patient records.

(5)(a) The department shall establish an advisory committee which may include members representing infection control professionals and epidemiologists, licensed health care providers, nursing staff, organizations that represent health care providers and facilities, health maintenance organizations, health care payers and consumers, and the department. The advisory committee shall make recommendations to assist the department in carrying out its responsibilities under this section, including making recommendations on allowing a hospital to review and verify data to be released in the report and on excluding from the report selected data from certified critical access hospitals.

(b) In developing its recommendations, the advisory committee shall consider methodologies and practices related to health care-associated infections of the United States centers for disease control and prevention, the centers for medicare and medicaid services, the joint commission, the national quality forum, the institute for healthcare improvement, and other relevant organizations.

(6) The department shall adopt rules as necessary to carry out its responsibilities under this section. [2013 c 319 § 2; 2013 c 319 § 1; 2010 c 113 § 1; 2009 c 244 § 2; 2007 c 261 § 2.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 70.02.050 was amended by 2013 c 200 § 3, eliminating many of the provisions relating to disclosure of health care information without patient's authorization, effective July 1, 2014. See RCW 70.02.200 through 70.02.260.

Effective date—2013 c 319 § 2: "Section 2 of this act takes effect July 1, 2017." [2013 c 319 § 4.]

Effective date—2010 c 113: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 18, 2010]." [2010 c 113 § 2.]

Findings—2007 c 261: "The legislature finds that each year health care-associated infections affect two million Americans. These infections result in the unnecessary death of ninety thousand patients and costs the health care system 4.5 billion dollars. Hospitals should be implementing evidence-based measures to reduce hospital-acquired infections. The legislature further finds the public should have access to data on outcome measures regarding hospital-acquired infections. Data reporting should be consistent with national hospital reporting standards." [2007 c 261 § 1.]