

simplifying IPC



Invest in your Infection Control Program:

- NO COST TO YOUR FACILITY
- CONSULTATIVE, NOT REGULATORY IN-PERSON VIST WITH NMDOH EPIDEMIOLOGISTS
- RESOURCES, TOOLS, AND REFERRALS TAILORED TO YOUR FACILITY'S NEEDS
- FOUNDATIONAL RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR ONGOING IMPROVEMENT SUPPORT

Infection Control Assessment & Response (ICAR) Program

Background:

Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) is a CDC-sponsored program focused on supporting improvement of infection prevention and control capacity nationally. The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) Infectious Disease Epidemiology Bureau (IDEB) uses the ICAR program framework to assist New Mexico healthcare facilities identify risks for and reduce healthcare associated infections (HAIs). The infection control assessment tools used were developed by the CDC to provide a collaborative starting point to assess IPC practices and guide quality improvement activities.

Key purposes:

- Partner with healthcare facilities of all types to conduct non-regulatory assessments of their infection prevention programs and practices
- Establish lasting partnerships with healthcare facilities to improve infection control capacity across New Mexico.
- Guide future quality improvement initiatives.
- Bolster outbreak response and reporting preparedness.

ICAR strategies:

- Partner with facility infection preventionists to assess infection prevention domains and identify focus areas.
- Collaborate with infection prevention-focused organizations (e.g. APIC) and professional associations to offer the best available infection prevention resources.

Frequently Asked Questions

What will happen during the visit?

You can expect a one-day visit to your facility by a small team of 3-4 people, comprised of staff from the New Mexico Department of Health. Staff may include infection preventionists, epidemiologists, and environmental health specialists. During the visit, our team will conduct an interview with administration and infection prevention staff, collect direct observations, and provide educational resources in addition to qualitative feedback.

Which members of our healthcare team should participate in the visit?

Suggested participants may include, but are not limited to, representatives from Administration, Nursing, Infection Prevention, Pharmacy, and Environmental Services. Upon completion of your self-assessment, you will better understand the necessary participants based on the roles and responsibilities of staff within your facility.

What is the assessment tool and how will it be used?

The assessment tools were developed by CDC to assist healthcare facilities and health departments in assessing infection prevention practices and guide performance improvement activities within facilities. It is recommended that at facilities review the appropriate ICAR assessment tool and perform a self-assessment. Assessment tools were developed for acute care hospitals, long term care facilities, hemodialysis centers, and other outpatient settings. The tool will be sent to each facility prior to an ICAR assessment and will be reviewed during the visit to highlight recommended best practices and share opportunities for improvement. These tools are available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/hai/prevent/infection-control-assessment-tools.html>.

Will we receive a report of your findings?

Yes. The facility will receive a summary report of the visit within approximately four weeks. In approximately six months, the ICAR team will follow up with the facility to discuss any changes that have been implemented following the assessment. Additional resources and support will be provided as necessary.

Who can I contact for additional information?

Facilities interested in assessing their infection prevention programs and partnering with the ICAR team should contact: Ruth Healy, MPH, Infection Prevention Epidemiologist at Ruth.Healy@doh.nm.gov, 505-629-6891.