



NHSN Purposes, Eligibility Criteria, Assurance of Confidentiality, and Consent Agreement

The National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), collects national data on healthcare-associated adverse events and their risk factors. Healthcare facilities may participate in NHSN for one of two reasons: (1) voluntarily, i.e., on their own initiative and for their own purposes or (2) as a result of a state or federal mandatory reporting requirement. Depending on the applicable state or federal mandatory reporting requirements, data provided by healthcare facilities to NHSN may be made accessible to state and/or federal agencies, or any other entity as prescribed by such requirements. In the absence of a state mandatory reporting requirement, NHSN patient safety component and healthcare personnel safety component data provided by healthcare facilities to NHSN will be made accessible or provided to a state agency at the request of that agency for surveillance and prevention purposes. These data disclosures to a state agency will be made to the extent permissible by federal law.

Purposes of NHSN

The purposes of the NHSN are to:

- Collect data from a sample of healthcare facilities in the United States to permit valid estimation of the magnitude of adverse events among patients and healthcare personnel.
- Collect data from a sample of healthcare facilities in the United States to permit valid estimation of the adherence to practices known to be associated with prevention of these adverse events.
- Analyze and report collected data to permit recognition of trends.
- Provide facilities with risk-adjusted metrics that can be used for inter-facility comparisons and local quality improvement activities.
- Assist facilities in developing surveillance and analysis methods that permit timely recognition of patient and healthcare worker safety problems and prompt intervention with appropriate measures.
- Conduct collaborative research studies with NHSN member facilities (e.g., describe the epidemiology of emerging healthcare-associated infection [HAI] and pathogens, assess the importance of potential risk factors, further characterize HAI pathogens and their mechanisms of resistance, and evaluate alternative surveillance and prevention strategies).
- Comply with legal requirements – including but not limited to state or federal laws, regulations, or other requirements – for mandatory reporting of healthcare facility-specific adverse event, prevention practice adherence, and other public health data.
- Enable healthcare facilities to report HAI and prevention practice adherence data via NHSN to the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in fulfillment of CMS's quality measurement reporting requirements for those data.
- Provide state departments of health with information that identifies the healthcare facilities in their state that participate in NHSN.



- Provide to state agencies, at their request, facility-specific, NHSN patient safety component and healthcare personnel safety component adverse event and prevention practice adherence data for surveillance, prevention, or mandatory public reporting.

Eligibility Criteria

Facilities participating in NHSN must meet the following criteria:

- Be a bona fide healthcare facility in the United States, e.g., be listed in or associated with a facility that is listed in one of the following national databases: American Hospital Association (AHA); Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS); or Veteran's Affairs (VA).
- Have email addresses for NHSN users and high-speed Internet connections on the computers they will use to access NHSN.
- Comply with secure access control requirements of the system.
- Be willing to follow the selected NHSN component protocols exactly and report complete and accurate data in a timely manner during months when reporting data for use by CDC.
- Be willing to share such data with CDC for the purposes stated above.
- Be able to provide written consent for participation in NHSN by a member of the facility's chief executive leadership (e.g., Chief Executive Officer).

Data Collection and Reporting Requirements for Participation

Once accepted into NHSN, each facility must:

- Use the NHSN Internet-based data entry interface and/or data import tools for reporting data to CDC.
- Successfully complete an annual survey for each component selected.
- Successfully complete one or more modules of the component selected. Successful completion requires the following:
 - For the selected component, submit a reporting plan each month to inform CDC which, if any, of the modules will be used for that month. Data for at least one module must be submitted for a minimum of 6 months of the calendar year to maintain active status with the exception of the Biovigilance component's Hemovigilance module. Users must submit data for the entire year to maintain active status.
 - Adhere to the selected module's protocol(s) exactly as described in the NHSN Manuals during the months when one or more NHSN modules are used. This includes using surveillance methodology appropriate for the module and as described in the protocol.
 - Report adverse events/exposures and appropriate summary or denominator data as required for the module(s) indicated on the reporting plan to CDC within 30 days of the end of the month.
 - For those months when the Healthcare Worker Exposure module is followed and no exposures are reported, confirm that none occurred.
 - Pass quality control acceptance checks that assess the data for completeness and accuracy.



- NHSN facilities must agree to report to state health authorities those adverse event outbreaks that are identified in their facility by the surveillance system and about which they are contacted by CDC.
- Failure to comply with these requirements will result in withdrawal from NHSN. Such facilities will be offered the opportunity to download their data before being withdrawn. Six months after withdrawal, a facility may apply for re-enrollment into NHSN.

Assurance of Confidentiality: The voluntarily provided information obtained in this surveillance system that would permit identification of any individual or institution is collected with a guarantee that it will be held in strict confidence, will be used only for the purposes stated, and will not otherwise be disclosed or released without the consent of the individual, or the institution in accordance with Sections 304, 306 and 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 242b, 242k, and 242m(d)).

Consent Agreement

Official Authorized to Bind this Facility To The Terms of This Agreement (e.g., COO/CEO/CFO) As an official authorized to bind the facility specified below, I warrant that I have read and that I understand the terms of this agreement, **including the updated purposes of NHSN**, and hereby consent to allow the facility to participate in the NHSN. I understand that the new NHSN purposes and data disclosures will begin with data entered no earlier than January 1, 2011.