



Healthcare Associated Infection Prevention Newsletter

Surgical Site Infections (SSIs)

SSI Numerator Data

- Use the Surgical Site Infection (SSI) form for each SSI that is identified during the month.

Indicate the specific site of the SSI:

- Superficial Incisional Primary (SIP)
- Deep Incisional Primary (DIP)
- Superficial Incisional Secondary (SIS)
- Deep Incisional Secondary (DIS)
- Organ/Space

*** ALL house-wide SSIs must be entered into NHSN each month.

SSI Denominator Data

- Complete a Denominator for Procedure form for each procedure that is selected for surveillance.

SSI Denominator Data Sources:

- Operating room record review—patient medical record
- Operating Room logs
- ICD-9-CM procedure codes

Examples of SSI Data Sources

- Microbiology reports.
- Infection control rounds on nursing units.
- Pharmacy reports for antimicrobial use.
- Temperature chart.
- Operating room report of surgeries.
- Use post-discharge surveillance methods for SSI.

Examples of SSI Post-Discharge Sources

- Readmission to hospital.
- Emergency Department or Clinic records.
- Health care system/HMO may have pharmacy records for antimicrobial agents.
- Surgeon surveys – phone or mail.
- Patient surveys – less reliable.

For more information:
[NHSN SSI Guidance](#)



Healthcare Associated Infection Prevention Newsletter

NHSN Clarification on Drainage Tubes



Background:

Clarification regarding the NHSN operative procedure definition, specifically the phrase “primarily closes the incision before the patient leaves the operating room.”

If the surgical incision is not closed, the procedure does not meet the NHSN definition of an NHSN operative procedure.

Procedures where patients have a drainage tube that is left in at the incision site after surgery should NOT be entered in NHSN, as it does not meet the NHSN operative procedure definition.

Question:

Should a drainage tube that is left in another site, not the incision site, be entered in NHSN?

Answer from NHSN:

If there is an infection in an incision that was opened and closed, it would be an SSI.

Do not report a localized stab wound infection as an SSI.

An infection at a stab wound site would be counted as SST.

However, if there is culture positive from the drainage tube coming from the operative site and through a stab wound, that is reflective of an SSI.

Post Discharge Surveillance for SSIs

Question: Should SSIs that are discovered through post-discharge surveillance be entered into NHSN?

Answer: Yes, according to NHSN definitions, these infections (events) are reportable in NHSN. If a survey is sent to patients for post-discharge SSI surveillance, please ensure that the actual event date is obtained. In the context of SSI reporting in the NHSN protocol, the NHSN Facility Administrator has the responsibility to record an accurate event date.



Healthcare Associated Infection Prevention Newsletter



NHSN Wound Classification Definitions

Clean Wound [C] - A clean wound is an uninfected operative wound in which no inflammation is encountered and the respiratory, alimentary, genital or uninfected urinary tracts are not entered. In addition, clean wounds are primarily closed and, if necessary, drained with closed drainage. Operative incisional wounds that follow nonpenetrating (blunt) trauma should be included in this category if they meet the criteria.

Clean Contaminated Wounds [CC] - Clean-contaminated wounds are operative wounds in which the respiratory, alimentary, genital or urinary tracts are entered under controlled conditions and without unusual contamination. Specifically, operations involving the biliary tract, appendix, vagina and oropharynx are included in this category, provided no evidence of infection or major break in technique is encountered.

Contaminated Wounds [CO] - Contaminated wounds include open, fresh, accidental wounds. In addition, operations with major breaks in sterile technique (e.g., open cardiac massage) or gross spillage from the gastrointestinal tract, as well as incisions in which acute, nonpurulent inflammation is encountered are included in the category.

Dirty or Infected Wounds [D] - Dirty or infected wounds include old traumatic wounds with retained devitalized tissue and those that involve existing clinical infection or perforated viscera. This definition suggests that the organisms causing postoperative infection were present in the operative field before the operation.

Duration

- Record the hours and minutes between the skin incision and skin closure.
- Do not record anesthesia time.
- If the patient goes to the OR more than once during the same admission and another procedure is performed through the same incision within 24 hours of the original incision, report the combined duration of operation for both procedures.



Healthcare Associated Infection Prevention Newsletter

Outpatient SSIs

PA does not require outpatient HAIs to be entered in NHSN. Only inpatient HAIs must be entered into NHSN. Hospitals may choose to report more information than is required and can use NHSN as a mechanism for this reporting.

Please note that when a hospital chooses to enter outpatient infections for its own tracking purposes, this data will not be included in rate calculations.

PAOTH and ICD-9 Codes

When using the “PAOTH” custom procedure code, the ICD-9 field in NHSN must be treated as a mandatory field.

PA issued guidance that PAOTH was created to be used with SSI events. We realize that PAOTH has been used for non-SSI events. PADOH has decided to not ask hospitals to correct those entries at this time.

However, please be aware that PAOTH is a procedure code choice to use only when the ICD-9 code of the procedure related to the event being entered is not included in any NHSN procedure code. A record that was entered as PAOTH when another procedure code related to that procedure exists would be considered an error.

Web Site Links

[DOH Healthcare Associated Infection Prevention \(HAIP\)](#)

[Patient Safety Authority \(PSA\)](#)

[Pennsylvania Healthcare Cost Containment Council \(PHC4\)](#)

[Association for Professional in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.
\(APIC\)](#)

[Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America \(SHEA\)](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

[National Healthcare Safety Network \(NHSN\)](#)