



News Release

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Commissioner

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DHSS Proposes New Rules at N.J.A.C. 8:56, Health Care Facility Infection Reporting

The Office of Health Care Quality Assessment in the Office of the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Senior Services (Department) is proposing new rules at N.J.A.C. 8:56, governing hospital reporting and prevention of healthcare-associated infections (HAI). The proposed new rules only apply to general hospitals. The notice of proposal appears in the April 21, 2008 issue of the *New Jersey Register*.

The proposed new rules would implement the Health Care Facility-Associated Infection Reporting and Prevention Act (Act), P.L. 2007, c. 196, codified at N.J.S.A. 26:2H-12.39 through 12.45. The Act directs the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, in consultation with the Quality Improvement Advisory Committee (QIAC), to promulgate rules necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act. The proposed new rules would fulfill this statutory requirement.

The Act at N.J.S.A. 26:2H-12.41 identifies the following two categories of HAI related information for reporting: (1) the process quality indicators as identified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and (2) the information relating to the major site categories that define HAI as identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). N.J.A.C. 8:56 would designate the CDC National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), as the reporting system that each hospital must use to report the information related to the major site categories that define HAI as identified by CDC. N.J.A.C. 8:56 would require hospitals reporting quality performance measurement data, developed by CMS and related to HAI, to complete such reporting using existing procedures. N.J.A.C. 8:56 would set forth enrollment and training requirements for NHSN, data collection and reporting requirements, the Department's procedure for determining the HAI data required to be reported, availability of the data to the public, and provisions for data accuracy, confidentiality, and enforcement.

The public has until June 20, 2008 to comment on the notice of proposal. Persons wishing to comment on the proposal must submit their comments in writing to Ruth Charbonneau, Director, Office of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Health and Senior Services, PO Box 360, Trenton, NJ 08625-0360. Written comments on the proposal must be postmarked on or before June 20, 2008, which is the close of the 60-day public comment period.

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