

# NQF to Help Hospitals Better Prevent, Identify and Treat Hospital-Onset Bloodstream Infections to Improve Patient Safety

*New guide to be developed will give hospitals a 'playbook' to follow to mitigate hospital-onset bacteremia and fungemia*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, September 14, 2023 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Quality Forum (NQF) will develop an

implementation guide for acute care hospitals to support efforts to prevent hospital-onset bacteremia and fungemia (HOB), a bacterial or fungal infection of the bloodstream and a common type of healthcare-associated infection (HAI). The guide is intended to be used as a step-by-step "playbook" for clinicians and hospital staff in their efforts to reduce avoidable



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*Dana Gelb Safran, ScD,  
President & CEO, NQF*



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infections contributing to HOB, and offer best practices on isolation and treatment of the pathogen when HOB does occur.

Despite being largely preventable, HAIs are a longstanding concern among hospitals as they result in about 72,000 [annual deaths](#) and have an [estimated direct medical cost](#) of \$28.4 billion per year. An estimated 633,300 patients contract HAIs each year, a situation that has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The HAI infection rate increased significantly between 2019 and 2021, according to [data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC).

Over the past two decades, hospitals' infection prevention efforts have focused primarily on procedure- or device-related infections, using measures such as surgical site infections (SSIs) and central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSIs) to track infection rates. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is currently considering including an HOB outcome measure in its Hospital Inpatient Quality Report Program and other federal health programs that, by

contrast, broadens the scope of infections being tracked and reduces the burden on the front-line clinicians who must collect the information.

“Estimates show about a third of healthcare-associated infections are preventable, and reducing preventable infections is one of the most effective things hospitals can do to improve patient safety,” said Dana Gelb Safran, ScD, President & CEO, NQF. “Hospitals and frontline clinicians need actionable, practical guidance on strategies to identify, track, and prevent these infections and protect patients.”

NQF will begin the process of developing the HOB clinical guide by conducting an environmental scan of existing research, conducting key informant interviews, identifying gaps in the field, and hosting a virtual forum of healthcare experts and patients. NQF will use the insight gathered to identify, synthesize, and share best practices that will form the foundation of the implementation guide. Once drafted, the guide will be peer-reviewed by up to five reviewers before being finalized and made widely available to acute care hospitals. Work is expected to commence in late 2023, and the guide is anticipated in mid-2024. This project is made possible by funding from Becton Dickinson (BD).

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#### About National Quality Forum

The National Quality Forum (NQF) works with members of the healthcare community to drive measurable health improvements together. NQF is a not-for-profit, membership-based organization that gives all healthcare stakeholders a voice in advancing quality measures and improvement strategies that lead to better outcomes and greater value. Learn more at [www.qualityforum.org](http://www.qualityforum.org).

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