



### Getting Started

1. One person at the facility must be responsible as the NHSN administrator. That person must complete the NHSN Administrator training module. This person is responsible for enrolling the other users from their facility, and assigning authorizations to those people.
2. If you have decided to change roles or leave employment with a facility, notify NHSN as to the person, who will be assuming the role of facility administrator at the facility until someone has been hired to replace your position.
3. If the NHSN administrator leaves the facility or this position, before they leave, they need to set up one of their facility users as the NHSN administrator.
4. Each facility should have at least two people set up to use the NHSN (this means each person must have completed the training requirements and have their own digital certificate)
5. Create and safely store your "Challenge Phrase" (NHSN Password). It must be at least 8 characters, contain at least one non-alphabetic character, contain only English letters, numbers or the following characters: - + : ' .
6. Please make sure that the email address you reported to NHSN is correct. If your email address should change, you need to update that information with the NHSN.
7. Your email address which you entered on the personal information page of the NHSN Digital ID Enrollment page must be correct in order to receive your Digital ID/Certificate.
8. Make a backup copy of your digital certificate and save it to a flash drive.
9. Digital certificates are only active for 1 year. When you receive an email from NHSN notifying your certificate is expiring, **do not wait until your certificate expires before you apply for a new digital certificate.**
10. To log onto the NHSN via the Secure Data Network (SDN), go to:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/index.html>

### Use of NHSN

11. A Facility Survey must be completed **annually**. You may have to add one for the current year.
12. In the NHSN database under the Facility tab chose the locations tab to name the locations or units for which you will be reporting data. Choose a name that is represents the location or unit, i.e. NICU, SICU or 3WICU. The location labels must be set up within the NHSN system before the Monthly Reporting Plan can be completed.
13. You must have a Monthly Reporting Plan set up for in the NHSN Database each month before data is reported. The reporting plan outlines what you as a provider will be reporting for that particular month. On your plan, you will identify the device associated items, surgical procedures you are tracking, and any multi-drug resistant organisms for which you will be reporting.

## NHSN USER HINTS & TIPS

14. If there are no changes to the subsequent months reporting plans, you can simplify setting up the remainder of plans for the year by selecting the **"Copy From Previous Month"**, and those fields will automatically be populated with the data from the other plans.
15. **When labeling a unit location use an identifier that is descriptive of the unit. i.e. ICU, 3N, 7W.** Do not use facility ID number or your name. Refer to the **NHSN Rule of 80%**. If 80% of the patients in that unit are surgical ICU patients, label the unit as a surgical ICU.
16. When entering data, you must enter the patient information before the event data can be entered. Once a patient has been entered into the NHSN, their patient information or patient identifiers will not have to be entered again should they have future events to report.
17. When entering data, the fields marked with an asterisk (\*) require data to be entered before the page can be saved.
18. In order to save the data or changes you have entered on each page in the NHSN, you must click the **"SAVE"** button at the bottom of the page.
19. Per NHSN requirements, the monthly data must be entered within 30 days after the month ends.
20. When conferring rights in the plan section for "Infections and Other Events" keep the start date as July 2008 and the next date field should be left blank. If you use a date other than July 2008, any data previously reported, will be unavailable for viewing. The exception would be if your intensive care unit or facility was not open in 2008 then you would use the date of established operations.

### Device-associated Denominators

21. Print out a copy of the CDC/NHSN Surveillance Definitions of Healthcare-Associated Infections and have them available when you are doing your data entry. This document is vital to assist you determine if the infection meets the National Healthcare Safety Network definition.
22. Summary data refers to patient days and device days by type of unit.
23. When reporting the summary data for CLABSI and VAP, the "Patient number of Days" is the total monthly census for the **ICU unit or units** for which you are reporting. **Example:** If you are reporting on a 6 bed ICU and there are 31 days in that month, the maximum number of patient days or central line days that you could report would be 186.
24. The count for the number of central lines on a unit should be counted one time during a 24 hour period. The count should be taken at the same time every 24 hours.
25. When counting the number of central lines to report, you only count one central line per patient. If a patient has more than one central line, you only count this as one.

