



Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Survey & Certification Group

Admin Info: 17-22-NHs, Hospitals, and CAHs

DATE: August 18, 2017

TO: State Survey Agency Directors

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: Surveyor Training Webinar: *Legionella* Risks and Surveyor Responsibility with S&C 17-30

Memorandum Summary

- Legionella and S&C 17-30 – In this Memo, surveyors in Nursing Homes (NH), Hospitals, and Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) are expected to ensure these facilities are protecting patients from Legionnaires Disease (LD) and other water borne pathogens.
- Webinar Details: Please join Karen Hoffmann on September 22, 2017 from 1:00-2:30PM (EST) to receive information and training on LD and assessment of facility water management programs.

Background

Legionnaires Disease (LD), a severe sometimes fatal pneumonia, can occur in persons who inhale aerosolized droplets of water contaminated with the bacterium *Legionella*. In a recent review of LD outbreaks in the United States occurring in 2000–2014, 19% of outbreaks were associated with long-term care facilities and 15% with hospitals. The rate of reported cases of legionellosis, which comprises both LD and Pontiac fever (a milder, self-limited, influenza-like illness) has increased 286% in the US during 2000–2014, with approximately 5,000 cases reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2014. Approximately 9% of reported legionellosis cases are fatal.

In June 2017, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released S&C 17-30: Requirement to Reduce Legionella Risk in Healthcare Facility Water Systems to Prevent Cases and Outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease (LD). Surveyors will be expected to review policies, procedures, and reports documenting water management implementation results to verify that facilities:

- Conduct a facility risk assessment to identify where *Legionella* and other opportunistic waterborne pathogens (e.g. *Pseudomonas*, *Acinetobacter*, *Burkholderia*,

Stenotrophomonas, nontuberculous mycobacteria, and fungi) could grow and spread in the facility water system.

- Implement a water management program that considers the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) industry standard and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) toolkit, and includes control measures such as physical controls, temperature management, disinfectant level control, visual inspections, and environmental testing for pathogens.
- Specify testing protocols and acceptable ranges for control measures, and document the results of testing and corrective actions taken when control limits are not maintained.

Webinar Details

Karen Hoffmann, Infection Preventionist and consultant to Survey and Certification Group at CMS, will present information related to LD and the other recognized waterborne opportunistic pathogens associated with outbreaks in healthcare facilities. She will review nationally accepted standards of practice from expert organizations, such as CDC and ASHRAE, to prevent infections due to opportunistic waterborne pathogens from facility premise plumbing. Information will be provided for surveyors to assess Hospitals, CAH, and NH on their policies and procedures for water management implementation. Policies and procedures must include a facility risk assessment, water management program, and testing protocols. The presentation will clarify what to assess for, and elements ensuring an effective water management plan.

State, Regional Office and Accrediting Organization surveyors are invited to join Karen Hoffmann on September 22, 2017 from 1-2:30 pm EST. You can register to attend on the Integrated Surveyor Training Website at <https://surveyortraining.cms.hhs.gov>. Once registered, the assigned Training Coordinator will send additional information on how to access the webinar.

This webinar will be archived and available to surveyors and the public on the training website. For questions, please contact the CMS Surveyor Training Site Help Desk, either by phone (1-855-791-8900) or by email at cmstraininghelp@hendall.com.

This information should be communicated with all survey and certification staff, their managers and the State/Regional Office training coordinators.

/s/

David R. Wright

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management