

**§418.110(j) Standard: Infection control.**

**The hospice must maintain an infection control program that protects patients, staff and others by preventing and controlling infections and communicable disease as stipulated in §418.60.**

**Interpretive Guidelines §418.110(j)**

The hospice inpatient facility must have an active surveillance program that includes specific measures for prevention, early detection, control, education, and investigation of infections and communicable diseases in the hospice. There must be a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the program(s) and take corrective action when necessary. The program must include implementation of nationally recognized systems of infection control guidelines to avoid sources and transmission of infections and communicable diseases (e.g., the CDC's Healthcare Infection Control Guidelines, the CDC Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of Mycobacterium Tuberculosis in Health Care Settings, OSHA regulations, and APIC guidelines on infection control, etc.).

The active infection control program should have policies that address the following:

- Definition of nosocomial infections and communicable diseases;
- Measures for identifying, investigating, and reporting nosocomial infections and communicable diseases;
- Measures for assessing and identifying patients and health care workers, including hospice personnel, contract staff (e.g., agency nurses, housekeeping staff) and volunteers, at risk for infections and communicable diseases;
- Measures for the prevention of infections;

- Measures for prevention of communicable disease outbreaks, such as airborne diseases (TB, SARS, etc.), food borne diseases (Hepatitis A, Salmonella, etc.), blood borne diseases (HIV, Hepatitis B, etc.), and others (VRE, MRSA, pseudomonas, etc.);
- Provision of a safe environment consistent with nationally recognized infection control precautions, such as the current CDC recommendations for the identified infection and/or communicable disease;
- Isolation procedures and requirements for infected or immunosuppressed patients;
- Use and techniques for standard precautions;
- Education of patients, family members and caregivers about infections and communicable diseases;
- Techniques for hand washing, respiratory protections, asepsis as well as other means for limiting the spread of contagion;
- Orientation of all new hospice personnel to infections, communicable diseases, and to the infection control program;
- Measures for the screening and evaluation of health care workers, including all hospice staff, contract workers (e.g., agency nurses, housekeeping staff, etc.), and volunteers, for communicable diseases, and for the evaluation of staff and volunteers exposed to patients with non-treated communicable diseases; and
- Employee health policies regarding infectious diseases and when infected or ill employees, including contract workers and volunteers, must not render patient care and/or must not report to work.