

§484.70(b) Standard: Control.

The HHA must maintain a coordinated agency-wide program for the surveillance, identification, prevention, control, and investigation of infectious and communicable diseases that is an integral part of the HHA's quality assessment and performance improvement (QAPI) program. The infection control program must include:

Interpretive Guidelines §484.70(b)

The HHA should have a program for the surveillance, identification, prevention, control and investigation of infectious and communicable diseases specific to care and services provided in the home setting. The CDC defines surveillance as “the ongoing, systematic collection, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of health data closely integrated with the timely dissemination of this data to those who need it.”

As part of its infection control program the HHA should: (1) observe and evaluate services from all disciplines to identify sources or causative factors of infection, track patterns and trends of infections; and (2) establish a corrective plan for infection control (if appropriate) and monitor the effectiveness of the corrective plan. Cross Reference to §484.65(a), QAPI Program Scope.

§484.70(b)(1) A method for identifying infectious and communicable disease problems; and**Interpretive Guidelines §484.70(b)(1)**

The HHA must develop a procedure for the identification of infections or risk of infections among patients. It is the prerogative of the HHA to determine the methodology to be used for such identification. Example methodologies include, but are not limited to:

- Clinical record review;
- Staff reporting procedures;

- Review of laboratory results;
- Data analysis of physician *or allowed practitioner* and emergency room visits for symptoms of infection; and
- Identification of root cause of infection through evaluation of HHA personnel technique and self-care technique by patients or caregivers.

Analysis of surveillance data should be used to improve care practices and control infections and transmission of communicable diseases.

While not required by the regulation, CMS suggests HHAs have a way to receive alerts from the CDC Health Alert Network or local public health network as a means of staying up to date with alerts and information related to public health incidents (as seen with the 2019 Novel Coronavirus public health emergency).

§484.70(b)(2) A plan for the appropriate actions that are expected to result in improvement and disease prevention.

Interpretive Guidelines §484.70(b)(2)

The HHA must develop *an* action plan to address or prevent infections or transmission of communicable diseases. Such plan should be based on surveillance findings, any identified root cause of infection or disease transmission, tracking data and analysis of data findings.

Actions to facilitate improvements and disease prevention may include the following:

- Policy, procedure or practice changes to improve care;
- Education for patients, caregivers, and HHA personnel to prevent infections and transmission of communicable diseases; and
- The development of process or outcome measures which could be used to monitor and address identified issues (e.g., infection prevention and control observations for technique).

The HHA must evaluate and revise the plan as needed.