

Healthcare Safety Newsletter

Winter 2023

Healthcare Safety Unit
Texas Department of State Health Services

dshs.texas.gov/healthcare-safety-unit

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New Texas Healthcare Safety Network coming soon!

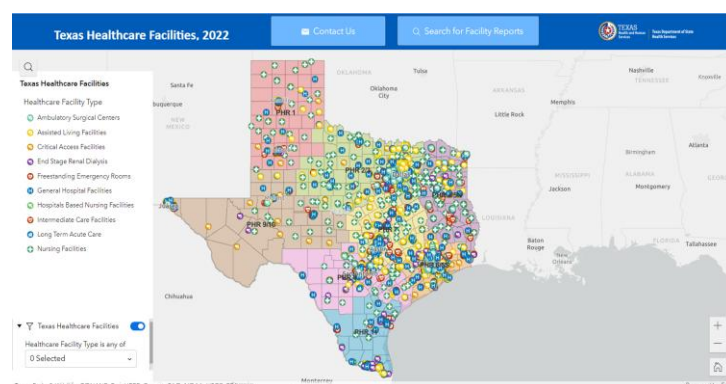
The DSHS Healthcare Safety Unit is excited to announce a new version of the Texas Healthcare Safety Network (TxHSN) coming in early 2023! General Hospitals and Ambulatory Surgical Centers will soon enter preventable adverse events (PAEs) in the new system. Visit www.paetexas.org for more information about PAE reporting requirements.

More features have been added to the new version of TxHSN to benefit all healthcare facilities. The new features include learning needs assessments and tracking infection prevention and control assessments. Users will also have access to training modules and resources that cover topics on infection prevention and patient safety.

Additional information and training instructions will be coming soon.

Geographic Information System

The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Healthcare Safety Unit (HSU) collaborated with the agency's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Team to produce an interactive healthcare facilities map based on 2022 data. The application allows filtering view by healthcare setting, provides individual facility information, and is visually organized by public health region. Users can access the 2022 Texas Healthcare Facilities Map using either web or mobile operating system (OS) using the link on the [HAI Resources](#) page.



2022 Texas Healthcare Facilities Map

New Infection Control Resources

Project Firstline (PFL) continues to provide innovative and accessible infection control education for all frontline healthcare workers. These resources share how to protect patients, co-workers, and themselves from infection disease threats in healthcare. The latest PFL resources cover the topic of recognizing infection risks in healthcare and include interactive graphics and activities to test infection control knowledge.

Do you know how to properly read a disinfectant label?

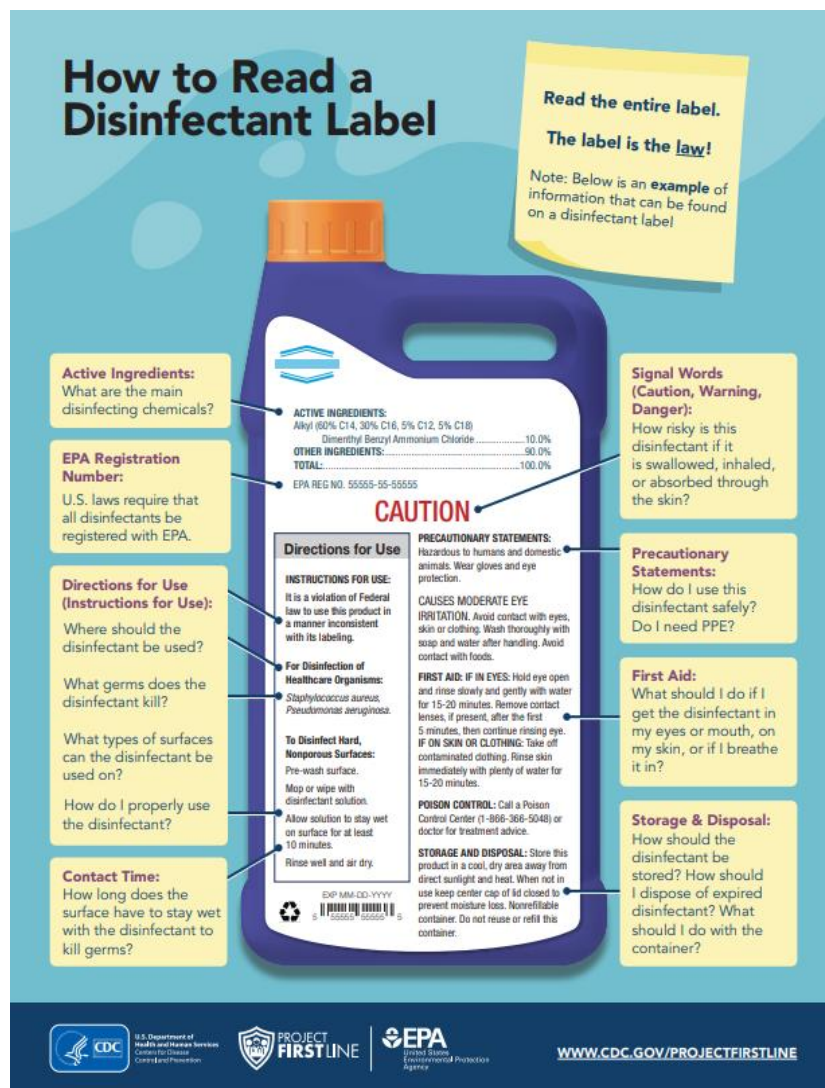
Access new, attention-grabbing, infographics like the “How to Read a Disinfectant Label”, and the latest training videos, on the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) PFL’s site!



Scan the QR code from your smart device to reach the Project Firstline

Learn and Earn!

Earn continuing education (CE) with PFL by watching on demand training videos when it is most convenient for you. Access PFL videos from a smart phone or smart device. The trainings are available through [CDC TRAIN](https://www.cdc.gov/training/) and available CE includes Continuing Medical Education (CME), Continuing Nursing Education (CNE) and Continuing Professional Education (CPE).



Project Firstline’s graphic on reading a disinfectant Free Training Classes!

Earn a spot in the 2023 training classes by watching PFL training videos! DSHS will be sponsoring a training class on the essentials of Infection Prevention for those new to Infection Control. DSHS will also sponsor a Certification in Infection Control (CIC) exam study course with exam scholarship geared towards those with years of Infection Control experience.

Use the [training tracker](#) to log the reviewed videos and email the training tracker and your training class preference to HAITexas@dshs.texas.gov. For eligibility, you only need to watch one video. However, spots are limited, so it is recommended to watch as many videos as possible. Course enrollment preference will be given to those who watch the most PFL videos. Courses will occur in Spring and Fall of 2023. You will be notified in the coming months if you are selected to participate in a training.



[Watch Project Firstline](#) videos to earn a spot in our training classes.

**Want to get your CIC?
We can help!**

Texas Healthcare Safety Plan 2022

The Texas Healthcare Safety Plan outlines the Healthcare Safety Unit's (HSU) priorities and implementation strategies to promote safe, quality healthcare, and support infection prevention and control activities in the state. The implementation strategies provide a multifaceted approach to increased awareness, education, and response to healthcare safety events, such as healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), antimicrobial resistant (AR) organisms, and preventable adverse events (PAEs).

To read the full plan, please visit: [2022 Texas Healthcare Safety Plans \(state.tx.us\)](https://state.tx.us/2022-Texas-Healthcare-Safety-Plans)

Texas Antibiotic Resistance Lab Network Response Plan and Epi-Lab Work Plan 2022

The Texas Antibiotic Resistance Lab Network Response Plan is used to solidify Texas' strategies for identification and containment of multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs) and to increase the state's capacity to respond to AR threats. This plan includes two components: a coordinated work plan and an outreach plan. This plan includes Texas response tiers for resistance mechanisms which include thresholds for conducting onsite infection control assessments and colonization studies, as well as the events or results that would trigger ongoing follow-up visits.

To read the full plan, please visit: [Texas Antibiotic Resistance Lab Network Response Plan | July 2022 \(state.tx.us\)](https://state.tx.us/Texas-Antibiotic-Resistance-Lab-Network-Response-Plan-July-2022)

2021 Texas Antibiotic Healthcare Associated Infection Outbreak Plan

The Texas DSHS Healthcare Safety Investigations Group identifies, responds to, and tracks healthcare-associated infection (HAI) outbreaks. Descriptive analyses were conducted on the 2021 HAI outbreak responses and the results were compared with the responses from 2017. A total of 1,331 HAI outbreaks were reported in 2021, with 92% of these outbreaks occurring in long-term care facilities and caused by COVID-19.

The other most common organisms involved in 2021 HAI outbreaks were *Acinetobacter*, *Candida* and Enterobacterales species. In 2021, there was a twelvefold increase of HAI outbreaks compared to 2017, primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were 261 cases of *Candida auris* reported in 2021; 226 of the cases were part of a regional outbreak investigation.

To read the full plan, please visit: [2021 Texas HAI Outbreak Report \(state.tx.us\)](https://state.tx.us/2021-Texas-HAI-Outbreak-Report)

Alerts, Advisories, and Recalls

[Sentinel Event Alert 66: Eliminating disparities for pregnant patients | The Joint Commission](#)

[Reuse Tracheostomy Tubes or Switch to Appropriate Alternatives During Shortage: FDA Safety Communication | FDA](#)

[Certain Reworked Philips Respironics Trilogy 100/200 Ventilators Recalled Due to Potential for Silicone Foam Adhesion Failure and Residual PE-PUR Foam Debris: FDA Safety Communication | FDA](#)

[Hospira, Inc. Issues A Voluntary Nationwide Recall For Lot of Vancomycin Hydrochloride Injection, USP 1.5g/vial, Due To The Presence of Visible Glass Particulates | FDA](#)

[R3 Report Issue 35: New and Revised Requirements for Antibiotic Stewardship | The Joint Commission](#)



Treatment for COVID-19

[DSHS recommends](#) Paxlovid as the first-line treatment to reduce the risk of hospitalization and death due to COVID-19 for high-risk Texans with symptomatic COVID-19. Treatments for COVID-19 are most effective when taken within a few days of symptom onset. Individual at higher risk including older adults (ages 50 years or more, with risk increasing with age), people who are unvaccinated and people with certain medical conditions (such as chronic lung disease, heart disease, or a weakened immune system) should talk to their healthcare provider or use the [HHS COVID-19 Test-to-Treat Locator](#) to find out about treatment options if diagnosed with COVID-19. For more information see:

- dshs.texas.gov/covid-19-coronavirus-disease-2019/covid-19-therapeutics-information
- cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/treatments-for-severe-illness.html

Epidemiology Publications

Enjoy reading new publications from our Healthcare Safety Unit HAI Epidemiologists:

[Remote infection control assessments in long-term care facilities during COVID-19 pandemic in Texas, 2020 - ScienceDirect](#)

American Journal of Infection Control, Volume 50, Issue 10, October 22, Pages 1110-1117

Authors: Rachael Singer (Former CSTE Fellow), Gretchen Rodriguez, Bobbiejean Garcia, Annie Nutt and Enyinnaya Merengwa

[Dialysis Water Supply Faucet as Reservoir for Carbapenemase-Producing *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* - Volume 28, Number 10—October 2022 - Emerging Infectious Diseases journal - CDC](#)

Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal, Volume 28, Number 10, October 2022

Author: Gillian Blackwell

Candida Testing

Survey of Candida Testing by Clinical and Reference Laboratories in Texas

To help improve education and outreach services for submitters of specimens to the Texas DSHS Laboratory, DSHS is gathering information about the *Candida* testing methodologies being used by clinical labs to test specimens from long-term care hospitals (LTCHs) and specialized nursing facilities (SNFs) in Texas. The survey contains 10-12 questions and takes approximately 5 minutes to complete.

Please visit this link to complete the survey:
forms.office.com/r/M8FxT3Un67

Who should take this survey?

The person most knowledgeable about the microbiological tests conducted at your facility should complete the survey. Please forward the survey link to a colleague who may help answer the questions on behalf of your facility. We request only one survey per facility be submitted.

Questions?

For technical questions about the survey, please contact Niamh Gray at niamh.gray@dshs.texas.gov.

For questions about shipping or submitting yeast/*Candida* specimen(s) to the laboratory, please check out the *Candida auris* specimen shipping instructions at [Laboratory Testing Services Manual - Specimen Collection and Submission Form Guidance | Texas DSHS](#), or call Jan Owens at 512-776-7342.

DSHS Healthcare Safety Unit Open Positions

Manager III – Data and Training Group – Position closes 05/08/2023 – [Apply Here](#)

Epidemiologist I – Validations Group – Position closes 07/04/2023 – [Apply Here](#)

Program Specialist IV – MDRO and AR/AS Team – Position closes 06/28/2023 – [Apply Here](#)

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