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Antimicrobial Stewardship

CDC Reports on Antimicrobial Resistance Burden

Antimicrobial resistance remains a major threat to human health- by making infections difficult to treat which leads to more illnesses and longer hospital stays. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) evaluated new data for seven antimicrobial-resistant pathogens typically found in healthcare settings. A new [fact sheet](#) shows that the number of infections in the United States caused by the seven antimicrobial-resistant hospital-onset infection increased in 2020 and 2021 compared to 2019 levels. Understanding this information emphasizes how additional actions such as effective infection prevention and control, rapid response, and appropriate antibiotic and antifungal use is crucial in guiding efforts to address antimicrobial resistance.

Resource: [Antimicrobial Resistance Threats in the United States, 2021-2022 | CDC](#)

Antibiotic Awareness Week



In November 2024, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Antimicrobial Stewardship (AS) Team proudly supported the CDC's 2024 United States Antibiotic Awareness Week (USAAW) theme: "Fighting Antimicrobial Resistance Takes All of Us." This initiative emphasized the [One Health](#) approach, highlighting the interconnectedness of human, animal, plant, and environmental health.

To promote this Antibiotic Awareness initiative, the Healthcare Safety Unit (HSU) team wore purple for the “Go Purple for USAAW” campaign and shared CDC messaging across DSHS social media platforms. To learn more about this year’s CDC USAAW, please visit: [U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week \(USAAW\) | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-awareness/week-usaaw/). For questions or to learn more about the AS team: antibioticstewardship@dshs.texas.gov.

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology



The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) released a podcast on ways to modify infection control standards to accommodate the unique needs of critical access hospitals. Infection prevention experts discuss challenges faced, the importance of supporting Infection Preventionists (IPs), and the role of the APIC-IP competency model. Listen and learn from infection prevention experts on the latest research and how to put it into practice.

Resource: [#34 Seasoned Warriors: Navigating Infection Prevention Standards in Critical Access Hospitals – AJIC Podcast Website](#)

Department of State Health Services Audiovisual Library

The DSHS Audiovisual Library has free access to video streaming for people doing work related to:

- Health education
- Safety on the job
- Safety and health training
- Emergency services

To access streaming services, Texas residents aged 18 and above can register at [Streaming Video Registration Forms | Texas DSHS](#). For more information, visit: [Audiovisual Library | Texas DSHS](#).

Fighting Fatigue in the Workplace

Outlines the serious impact of fatigue in the workplace, including how fatigue interferes with emotional well-being and the ability to think and act effectively. This program discusses fatigue’s causes, hazards, and how to avoid workplace fatigue.

Location: Online at [Library catalog](#). Publisher: AP Safety Training 2019, (14 minutes).

Infection Control Resources

Project Firstline



Respiratory viruses primarily affect the respiratory system and can cause serious symptoms and even death. Common examples of respiratory viruses are [influenza](#) and [respiratory syncytial virus](#). Respiratory viruses are transmitted through air droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, and/or by touching a contaminated surface or object. Respiratory illnesses are more common in colder months and share similar risk factors, symptoms, and prevention strategies.

Important steps to protect yourself and others:

- Stay up to date with [immunizations](#)
- Practice good [hygiene](#)
- Take [steps for cleaner air](#)

The spread of respiratory viruses increases the risk of spread in healthcare settings. For recommendations, CDC [Project Firstline](#) developed an [infection control guidance](#) webpage for respiratory viruses.

The DSHS interactive [respiratory illness dashboard](#) provides weekly respiratory virus reports. The dashboard allows Texans to track trends in emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and deaths.

To provide actionable tips to prevent and reduce the spread of respiratory viruses, DSHS' Healthcare Safety Unit Training Team created a simple and brief [Infection Control Practices for Respiratory Viruses](#) training video, including helpful infection control practices and useful Project Firstline resources.

For more information:

[Respiratory Virus Guidance | Respiratory Illnesses | CDC](#)
[Preventing Respiratory Viruses | Respiratory Illnesses | CDC](#)

Safety

Falls Prevention

Falls in healthcare facilities are an ongoing safety concern, especially in patients, due to illness, unfamiliar surroundings, and interventions involving anesthesia. Effective fall prevention requires a [multifactorial approach](#) to assess risk factors and implement individualized interventions. This includes environmental hazard modifications (e.g., removing clutter and installing handrails), medication review, and exercise interventions to assist with mobility and reduce the risk of falls.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Patient Safety Network shares useful tips on its website ([Journey to Prevent Patient Falls](#)), including two fall-reducing strategies: AHRQ's [Fall Tailoring Intervention for Patient Safety](#) and CDC's [Stopping Elderly Accidents, Death and Injuries initiative](#).

Upcoming Events

Celebrate Patient Safety Awareness Week - March 9-15, 2025!

SHEA Conference: The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA) announces their conference on April 27-30, 2025, in Championsgate, FL. Registration is open.

CSTE Conference: The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) announces their conference on June 8-12, 2025, in Grand Rapids, MI. Registration is open.

APIC Conference: The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) announces their conference on June 16-18, 2025, in Phoenix, AZ. Registration is open.

Texas Healthcare Safety Conference: DSHS announces the annual Healthcare Safety Conference held virtually and in-person at the University of Texas Commons Conference Center in Austin, TX on July 22 and 23, 2025. Registration is open, along with a call for abstracts, speakers and exhibitors.

Quality in Long-Term Care Conference: Texas Health and Human Services, in collaboration with The University of Texas at Austin Steve Hicks School of Social Work announce their Quality in Long-Term Care Conference (QLTCC) on August 27 and 28, 2025. QLTCC opened a [call for presenters](#) and a [call for exhibitors](#). Registration opens June 2025.

Well-Being Check

Six Strategies for Improving your Emotional Health



A new year might mean new goals to improve physical health, but it is just as important to prioritize emotional health. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) defines emotional wellness as the ability to successfully manage life's stresses and adapt to change and difficult times. The NIH emotional wellness toolkit provides six strategies such as:

- Building strong social relationships
- Managing stress through mindfulness
- Implementing a positive outlook
- Building resilience
- Coping with loss
- Getting quality sleep

Review the [emotional wellness toolkit](#) for a more detailed look into each strategy listed above to improve your emotional well-being and to become your healthiest self in 2025.