



Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) Program Trends

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HAI/AR Program
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MEET THE TEAM

- **Dr. Elizabeth Ohlsen, MD, MSc**
HAI/AR Staff Physician
- **Grace Lee, MD, MPH, CIC**
HAI/AR SME Consultant
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Healthcare Associated Infection(HAI)/Antibiotic Resistance (AR)
Program Manager
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HAI/AR Infection Preventionist
ICARist
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Microbiologist II
HAI/AR Lab Coordinator



Program Framework

- Collection of tools used to comprehensively assess your Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Program
- Structured modules used to gather information, systematically review IPC practices and provide guidance for improvement activities
- Audits and observations to inform and supplement assessments
- Formal written report with recommendations, resources and actionable interventions
- *Non-regulatory, non-punitive, voluntary, no cost*



Partnership

- *Infection Prevention leader* in collaboration with other leadership, i.e. *Nursing, Environmental Services, Quality/Safety, Risk/Regulatory, etc.*
- Key leaders are involved and engaged in partnering throughout the process
- The IP leader, key leaders and staff partner, collaborate and share in the accountability of ongoing improvement projects and activities identified, i.e. education/training, auditing, etc.
- HAI/AR Program IP is available to partner, support, inform and guide

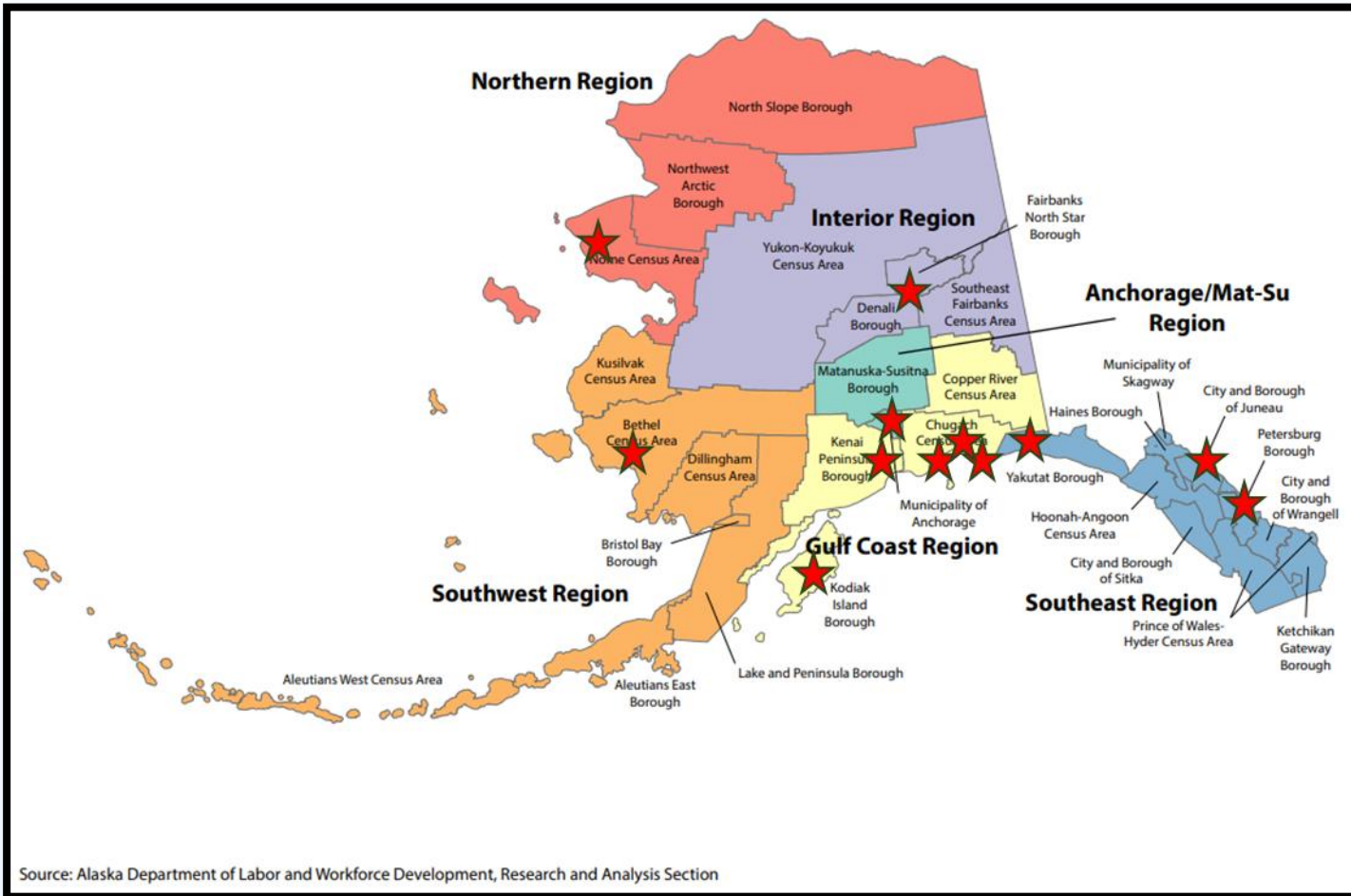


Purpose

- Informs what is needed to establish and manage an effective, sustainable IPC Program
- Helps to identify and prioritize ongoing quality improvement
- Supplements the already great work of the IP leader and teams
- Supports the integration of guidance and the consistent use of evidence-based IPC practices – the WHY behind the WHAT!



Where in the state is the ICARist?



Completed:

Anchorage (3), Juneau (3), Seward, Bethel, Homer, Kenai/Soldotna (2), Valdez, Petersburg, Cordova (2), Palmer/Wasilla (3), Kodiak, Juneau/Sitka

Revisits: Juneau, Homer, Cordova

Planned: Anchorage (3), Petersburg (2026)

TOTAL TO DATE: 23

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/article/maps-gis-data>



Module 1 – Training, Audits, Feedback ★ [PDF – 5 pages]

 Hand Hygiene  [PDF – 7 pages]

 Transmission-Based Precautions (TBP)  [PDF – 30 page]

 Environmental Services (EVS)  [PDF – 18 pages]

 High-level Disinfection and Sterilization  [PDF – 13 pag]

Module 6 – Injection Safety  [PDF – 11 pages]

Module 7 – Point of Care (POC) Blood Testing  [PDF – 8 pages]

Module 8 – Wound Care  [PDF – 9 pages]

Module 9 – Healthcare Laundry  [PDF – 9 pages]

 Antibiotic Stewardship  [PDF – 5 pages]

Module 11 – Water Exposure  [PDF – 18 pages]

Infection Prevention and Control Gaps



- Environment of Care (EOC)
- Transmission Based/Enhanced Barrier Precautions (TBP/EBP)/PPE
- Hand Hygiene
- Environmental Services/Cleaning and Disinfecting
- High-Level Disinfection/Sterilization

Art by Dan Berger | www.naturalnews.com



Environment of Care Risks



- Presence of outside shipping cardboard
- Equipment storage on/too near floor
- Lack of separation of clean and dirty (storage of supplies)
- Uncleanable surfaces/furniture
 - Paper/tape signs
- Open containers/food in clinical areas
- Construction



Precautions/PPE Risks

- Delays in putting patients in precautions
- Enhanced Barrier Precautions adoption varies
 - Lack of understanding
- Glove/Mask Use Dos/Don'ts
- PPE types, sizes/ABHS not readily available
 - N95 Respirators
- Hold over pandemic PPE practices
 - Reuse of PPE – gowns, respirators
 - Supplies stocked that staff do not use, unknown use
 - Command hooks *everywhere*



Hand Hygiene Risks

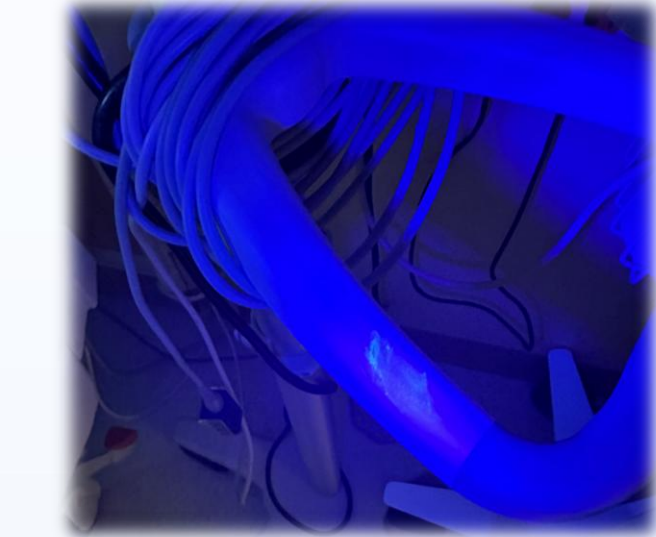


- Lack of auditing, feedback
- Overall nonadherence
- Gloves replacing hand hygiene
- ABHS not readily available
- Product expired, empty, broken
- Sink splash zone
- Lotion not understood



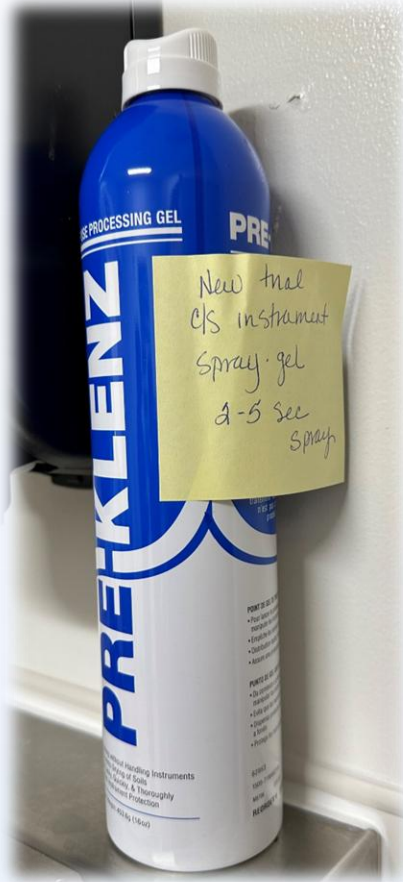
EVS/Cleaning, Disinfecting Risks

- Unlabeled, Expired products
- Products not readily available
- No clear indication/notification non-critical equipment is clean, ready for use
 - Assumption another staff member cleaning
- Manufacturer instructions for use not followed
- Lack of training, understanding of EVS best practices
 - Product uses, risks
 - Standardized, stocked EVS carts



HLD/Sterilization Risks

- Limited understanding of HLD options, ex. vaginal transducers
 - Disinfectant solutions have complex, time consuming IFUs
 - Cost of reprocessing equipment
- Excess instruments of unknown use
- Instructions for use – instruments, disinfectants, autoclaves, peel pouches
- Point of use process
- Lack of training, inconsistent practices
- COMPETENCIES




BEST PRACTICES



Color Your Way to 5 a Day

There are thousands of health-promoting phytochemicals found in plants. Researchers are just beginning to understand how they work to improve health, so it's important to eat a wide variety of colorful orange/yellow, red, green, white, and blue/purple vegetables and fruits every day.

By putting something of every color on your plate or in your lunch bag, you are more likely to eat the 5 to 9 recommended servings of vegetables and fruit every day. Just think: 1 cup of dark, leafy GREENS, 1/2 cup of RED tomatoes, 1/2 cup of YELLOW peppers, 6 oz. ORANGE juice and 1/2 cup of BLUEberries. And you have 5 A Day! It's quite simple when you Sample the Spectrum.



What Is High Blood Pressure?

High blood pressure occurs when the pressure of blood in the blood vessels stays high over a period of time. High blood pressure makes the heart work harder. It can harm your heart, your kidneys, and your eyes. High blood pressure can cause heart attack, kidney failure, and even death.

Check It Out!

High blood pressure usually has NO signs or symptoms. The only way to know you have high blood pressure is to get it checked - at least once a year or more often if you have high blood pressure.

Learn To Read Your Blood Pressure Numbers.

The top number, systolic, tells you the pressure of the blood when the heart is beating. The bottom number, diastolic, is the pressure when the heart is at rest. A reading of 140/90 or more is high blood pressure, or hypertension (the medical term for high blood pressure).

Know Your Numbers

Everyone needs to know their blood pressure numbers as there are often no signs or symptoms of high blood pressure. That is why high blood pressure is called the silent killer.

Normal Blood Pressure

The pressure of blood in the vessels when the heart beats

120/80 mmHg

Stage 1 Hypertension

Systolic blood pressure between 130 and 139 mmHg

Stage 2 Hypertension

Systolic blood pressure 140 mmHg or higher

What Are Diabetes Problems?

Too much glucose (sugar) in the blood for a long time can cause diabetes problems. This high blood glucose (also called blood sugar) can damage many parts of the body, such as the heart, blood vessels, eyes, and kidneys. Heart and blood vessel disease can lead to heart attacks and strokes. You can do a lot to prevent or slow down diabetes problems.

Will I Have Diabetes Problems?

Maybe. You may have one or more diabetes problems or none at all. It is hard to know if or when your diabetes will cause problems. Keeping your blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol under control can prevent diabetes problems.

What Should My Blood Glucose Numbers Be?

Keeping your blood glucose on target will prevent or delay diabetes problems. For most people, target blood glucose levels are:

Before meals	1 to 2 hours after the start of a meal
80 to 130	Less than 180

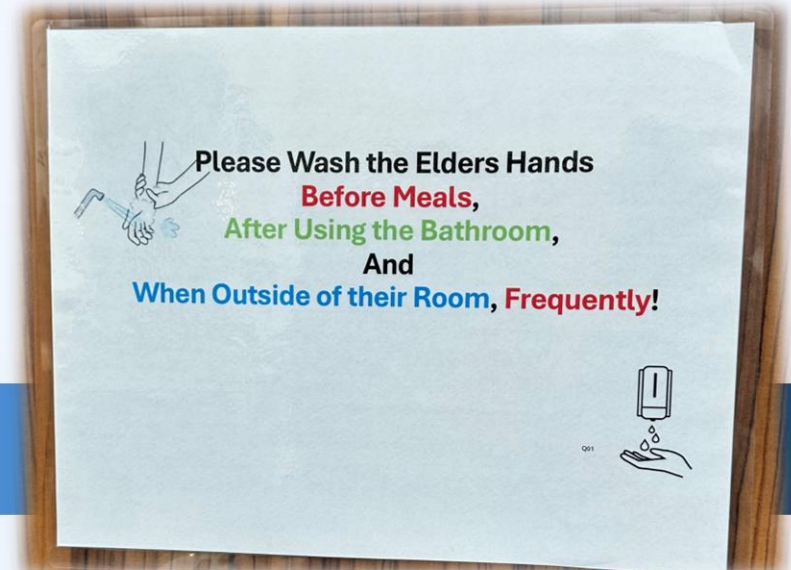


High-Contact Resident Care Activities (for EBP)

- Dressing
- Bathing/Showering
- Transferring
- Providing Hygiene (brushing hair/teeth, shaving)*
- Changing Linens
- Changing Briefs or Assisting with Toileting
- Device Care or Use (Indwelling Catheter, Trach/Vent, Central Line, Feeding Tube)
- Wound Care (care of any chronic wound)

*When bundled with other high-contact activities









Cleaning and Disinfection with Donna

Reading a Disinfectant Label



Scan the code or visit
<https://near-life.io/share/t/760/p/1699/s/3677/g/3677> to play the game.

Setting Up an Environmental Services Cart



Scan the code or visit
<https://near-life.io/share/t/760/p/1699/s/4479/g/4479> to play the game.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Occupied Patient and Resident Rooms

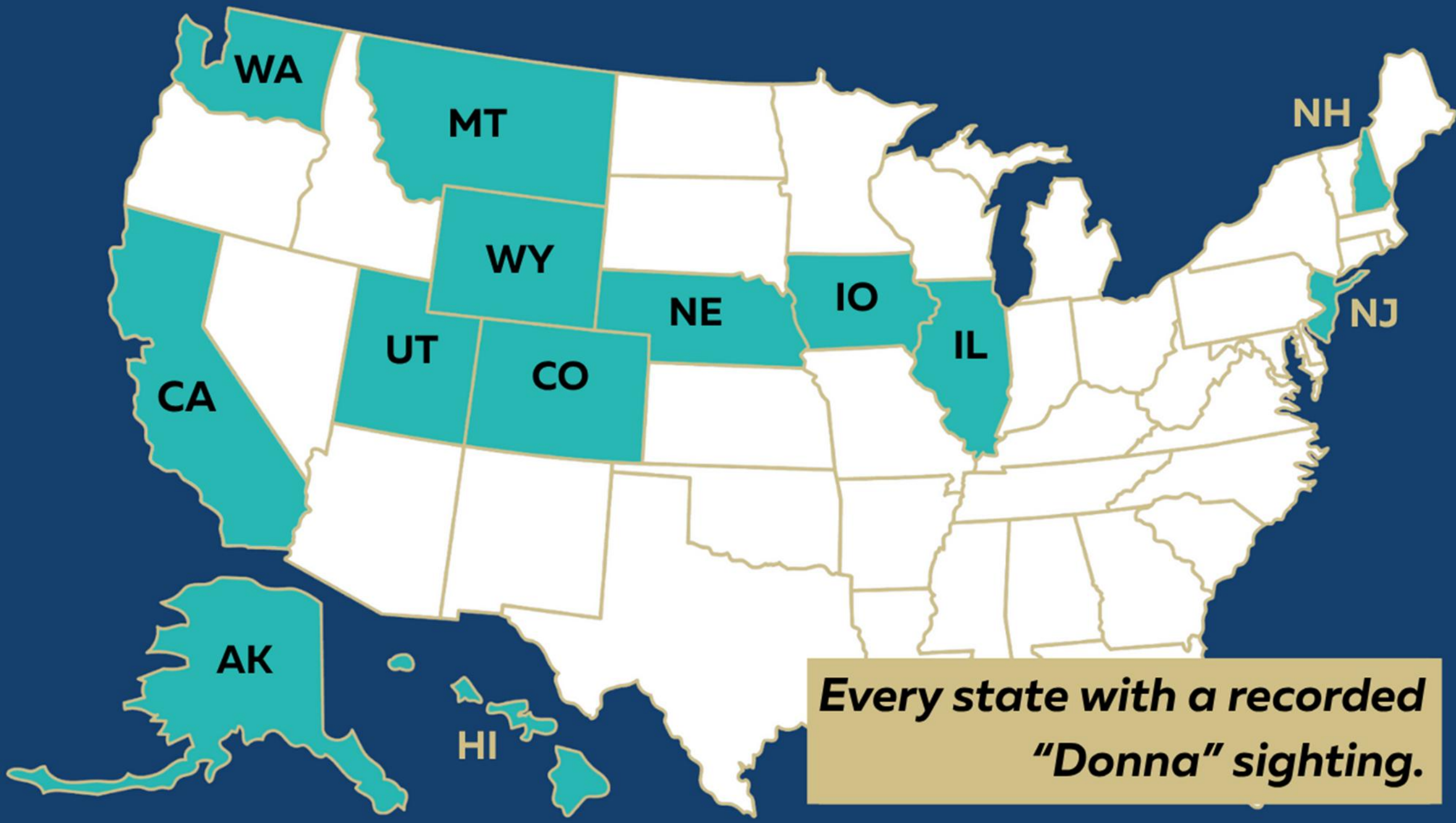


Scan the code or visit
<https://near-life.io/share/t/760/p/1699/s/4658/g/4658> to play the game.



Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/project-firstline/media/pdfs/howtoreadalabel-infographic-508.pdf>





Every state with a recorded "Donna" sighting.

MICROLEARN SERIES



INFECTION CONTROL TRAINING **FOR YOU**

Microlearning - 15 minutes or less

Project Firstline offers bite-sized, engaging sessions to strengthen your infection prevention knowledge.

- Do We Really Need to Talk About Hand Hygiene? Again? Yes!
- Ventilation in Healthcare Settings
- Cleaning and Disinfecting
- What's Wrong with this Picture: Emergency Room
- What's Wrong with this Picture: Workstation
- What's Wrong with this Picture: Outpatient Exam Room
- What's Wrong with this Picture: Low Level Disinfection
- What's Wrong with this Picture: High Level Disinfection and Sterilization
- What's Wrong with this Picture: Environment of Care

[Access Courses](#) 

Technical Assistance:
Contact Hannah LaRue for help with navigation or course completion.
hannah.larue@alaska.gov

Get started today!

-  Create a Moodle account to access courses.
-  Complete lessons, quizzes and evaluations to earn certificates.
-  Apply infection control best practices in your workplace!

- Monthly pre-recorded, involved AKIPN members
- Asynchronous = at any time
- ≤15 minutes
- Continuing Education/Certification of Completion



Responding to Common Outbreaks in Alaskan Healthcare Settings

April 2025

- [Alaska's Long-Term Care Facilities \(LTCF\) Outbreak Guide](#)
- Adapted from Montana State Public Health resource
- Healthcare Facility Outbreak Guide dropdown



COMING SOON

- **PFL Donna and YOU Facilitator Guide**

- Includes using the three short interactive training videos
- Quick refreshers, less than 30 minutes each, with discussion and talking points
- Helps with planning three interactive and engaging educational sessions
- Resources for supplemental training and education



QUESTIONS?

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