



Reducing the Complexity of Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Infectious Diseases Reporting to State, Local and Territory Public Health Departments

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Methods

- The design of the Toolkit focused on compiling the required disease reporting information from states and territories.
- A hyperlink table to Public Health Departments' websites (Linked Table) and six frequently asked questions (FAQs) were developed.

Reportable Infectious Diseases by State and Territory Hyperlinks					
State or Territory	Reportable Infectious Disease Web-Site	Healthcare providers and facilities reportable disease	Laboratory reportable disease	Comments	Additional Reporting
Alabama	http://www.adph.org/epi/Default.asp?id=1345	http://www.adph.org/epi/assets/DIR_Flyer.pdf	http://www.adph.org/epi/Default.asp?id=5192		Outbreaks and Cases of potential public health importance
Alaska	http://www.epi.alaska.gov/pubs/conditions/default.stm	http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/pubs/conditions/ConditionsReportable_HCP.pdf	http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/pubs/conditions/ConditionsReportable_LABS.pdf		Outbreak or unusual number or clustering of diseases or other conditions of public health importance
Arizona	http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/oids/reporting/	http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/oids/pdf/rptlist.pdf	http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/oids/pdf/labrptlist.pdf		Emerging or exotic disease
Arkansas	http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsServices/infectiousDisease/hivStdHepatitisC/Pages/ReportableDiseases.aspx	http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsServices/epidemiology/Documents/ReportableDisease.pdf	http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsServices/epidemiology/Documents/ReportableDisease.pdf		Report any unusual diseases or outbreaks that may require public health assistance
California	http://www.cdph.ca.gov/healthinfo/Pages/ReportableDiseases.aspx	http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/Documents/Reportable_Diseases_Conditions.pdf	http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/sss/Documents/Title17Sec2505-01-14.pdf		Occurrence of any unusual disease, outbreaks (including diseases not listed in §2500).
Colorado	https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/report-a-disease	https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/DC_ComDis_Reportable-Conditions-Health-Care-Providers.pdf	https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/DC_ComDis-Reportable-Conditions-Laboratories.pdf		Outbreaks – known or suspected of all types including foodborne, waterborne or other illness

Methods

- The FAQs were based on questions received from VHA staff.

Frequently Asked Questions: Infectious Diseases Reporting by VHA Facilities

1. Why do VHA facilities need to report infectious diseases to state, local, and/or territorial public health departments?

Reporting cases of infectious diseases designated as reportable is required by VHA Directive 2013-008, *Infectious Disease Reporting*.¹

It is known that infectious diseases kill more people worldwide than any other cause.² Infectious diseases are caused by microorganisms including bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi. These infections are spread directly from person to person, animal to human, or indirectly from the environment.³ Reporting infectious diseases protects the public's health by preventing and controlling of disease, injury, and/or disability through surveillance, public health investigations, and/or interventions.

2. What conditions need to be reported to public health departments by VHA facilities?

All infectious diseases established as reportable by your jurisdiction through statutes and regulations must be reported. State and territory health departments publish and maintain web

Methods

- The Toolkit used the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologist (CSTE) State Reportable Conditions Assessment webpage as a model, but a simplified version was devised.
- Multiple versions of the Toolkit were developed and in collaboration with VHA Office of Public Health (OPH) personnel a final version was produced.
- Parameters considered:
 - Time saving
 - Ease of use

Results

- The electronic Toolkit is located in a SharePoint website readily accessible to all VHA staff.
- The Linked Table provides direct access to state or territory's reporting documents, saving search time and effort.
- The FAQs were created to inform VHA staff regarding new regulations and to eliminate confusion.
- The Toolkit is currently accessible to all VHA staff and is updated every six months by OPH personnel.

Results

- A challenge identified during Toolkit development was that some jurisdiction's reporting websites were hard to find and/or were not up-to-date and some do not appear to have any information available.
- Furthermore, jurisdictions generally have different reportable diseases and timeframes. Some of them do not have a detailed and/or accessible reporting process.

Conclusion

- The Toolkit provides a practical, useful and easy-to-use disease report instrument. It was developed to facilitate the process in which VHA staff report diseases, with the goal of improving compliance.



Thank you for your attention.

Questions?

For further assistance contact VHA OPH mailbox: publichealth@va.gov