

Preventing hospital-acquired infections: a national survey of practices reported by U.S. hospitals in 2005 and 2009.

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The impact of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) 2008 [policy](#) denying additional payment to hospitals for preventable complications, including certain [health care-associated infections](#) (HAIs), remains a subject of [debate](#). This study assessed the effect of the CMS policy on use of infection control practices, using federal Veterans Affairs hospitals (which do not receive CMS payments) as a comparison group. Infection control practitioners at both federal and non-federal hospitals reported a greater organizational emphasis on HAI prevention and increased use of specific HAI preventive practices, over the time period before and after the CMS policy was implemented. This finding indicates that factors other than the CMS policy have driven efforts to reduce HAIs.