

# HAI/AR monthly digest

Utah Department of Health and Human Services  
Healthcare Associated Infections/Antimicrobial Resistance Program

Issue 31 | February 2024

Did you read this month's  
digest?

[Yes](#) [No](#)

## HAI/AR resources

### HAI/AR website

Visit our [homepage](#), which links to other program sites.

### Infection prevention guides

You are encouraged to use the [Infection prevention and preparedness manual](#) and the [Multidrug-resistant organisms guide](#) in your facilities.

### DHHS COVID-19 healthcare guidance

All guidance documents are now located on the [HAI/AR webpage](#) and updated as needed.

### CDC's COVID-19 guidance for healthcare facilities

Last updated May 8, 2023.  
Updated [considerations for COVID-19 vaccines](#) are also available.

## — Organization updates —

### HAI/AR updates

#### Respiratory virus update

Many vulnerable Utahns are being hospitalized due to severe illness as the respiratory virus season continues. Vaccination can protect against severe illness and death. See the attached letter and flyers from Dr. Leisha Nolen, Utah state epidemiologist, for important updates about the ongoing respiratory virus season and how to provide vaccination in long-term care settings.

#### Utah public health grand rounds

Join us for the Utah public health grand rounds on **February 14 from 12 to 1**. This online talk will help you to stay up-to-date on health patterns across the state and learn about concerning trends. The Utah Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is partnering with the ECHO program to bring you a series that aims to help clinicians gain a broader view of health in Utah. We will provide data and insights to help clinicians make well-informed decisions for their patients and communities.

Our inaugural session will give you a snapshot of current respiratory illnesses in Utah, as well as provide an overview of the data DHHS uses to understand the diseases and health issues in our state. These sessions will be presented by Dr. Leisha Nolen, Utah state epidemiologist, and are eligible for CME. Click [here](#) to register for the February talk. Sign up on our [listserv](#) to stay connected for future public health grand rounds.

#### First local *Candida auris* case

We identified the first case of *C. auris* in Utah not linked to Nevada in December. It is more important than ever to conduct admission screening for new residents to prevent further spread of *C. auris* in Utah.

## **Infection control assessment and response (ICAR)**

Assisted living facilities can use this [link](#) to request an ICAR appointment. Send questions to [HAI@utah.gov](mailto:HAI@utah.gov).

## **Immunization Program**

Contact [Jeni Demeny](#) for assistance tracking resident immunizations.

## **Interfacility transfer form**

This [updated form](#) should be used for patient transfers to and from other healthcare facilities.

Communicating infection control precautions to the next healthcare provider helps prevent transmission of multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs).

## **Mental health resources**

Visit the [mental health resources site](#) for details of available resources.

## **Project Firstline resources**

Our [self-paced modules](#) are great for new and experienced staff training. Our [Escape Room manual](#) is a fun way to review infection control principles.

Our [training cards](#) are great for team meetings and huddles.

Other Project Firstline resources are available on the [CDC's website](#).

## **Candida auris resources**

The C. auris outbreak in Nevada continues. We have also recently seen the first case of C. auris transmission in Utah.

We recommend you screen resident transfers who come from any long-term acute-care hospital (LTACH) or ventilator-equipped skilled nursing facility (vSNF). Continue to screen any resident transfers from Nevada.

## **Antimicrobial stewardship webinar series**

Join us as the antimicrobial stewardship webinar resumes for the new year! Sessions are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 12 p.m. MST. Free continuing medical education (CME) credits are available.

Details for the next session:

Date: February 21, 2024

Speaker: Cullen Adre, PharmD, Tennessee Department of Health

Topic: Antimicrobial stewardship in LTCFs from a public health perspective

Register for the webinar [here](#). The Zoom password is 123456.

## **Feedback on HAI/AR resources**

We'd like to know if our IPC manual and MDRO guide were useful for you in 2023. Take 5 minutes to complete this short (7 questions) [survey](#). Responses are anonymous and every question is optional. We appreciate your feedback!

## **Comagine Health updates**

### **Vaccination station web series**

Tune in to the Comagine Health vaccination station web series on the second Tuesday of the month, 11–11:30 a.m. MT. These interactive sessions are designed to address questions, barriers, or issues about adult vaccinations and offer opportunities for problem-solving and discussion. Register [here](#).

### **Collaborative “all teach, all learn” community**

The Comagine Health Utah Infection Prevention Solutions team is restarting the interactive Project ECHO® learning collaborative in 2024. Sessions are held each first and third Wednesday of the month beginning January 17, 2024. Register [here](#):

During these expert-led, peer-to-peer learning opportunities you can improve your infection prevention program through:

- Continued topical learning
- Sharing best practices
- Troubleshooting real-life scenarios
- Helping each other bridge knowledge gaps

The CDC recommends screening any resident who received care from a Nevada facility within 6 months. We also recommend screening residents who are transferred from vSNF or LTACH facilities in Utah County. Contact the HAI/AR team at [HAI@utah.gov](mailto:HAI@utah.gov) to schedule a resident screening for C. auris.

Recommended precautions to prevent C. auris spread:

- Use [contact precautions](#) if your facility is a [hospital](#) or [long-term acute care hospital](#).
- Use [enhanced barrier precautions](#) if your facility is a [long-term care facility](#), [skilled nursing facility](#), or [rehabilitation facility](#).
- These precautions apply to residents colonized or infected with an MDRO and all high-risk residents.

We have also created C. auris [knowledge checks](#) for frontline staff and clinicians, which can provide ongoing education.

## Questions?

For questions, visit our HAI webpage or email us at [HAI@utah.gov](mailto:HAI@utah.gov).



Collaborative members who actively participate in the ECHO series are eligible for free resources, based on the number of sessions attended (and subject to availability):

- 1 session: APIC memberships, APIC book: Infection Prevention Guide to Long-Term Care (\$350 value)
- 3 sessions: Large MedifyAir purifier and replacement filters (\$700 value)
- 5 sessions: Mobile Training Center (\$1500 value)

Participants from the previous ECHO collaborative: register again using this link to receive the meeting and resource links for 2024 sessions.

## Last chance to participate in customized coaching and consultation

Comagine Health offers **free** 1:1 infection prevention and control coaching to help your team provide the safest care for your residents. Their expertly-designed solutions are evidence-based to meet your facility's specific needs.

Additional **free** resources are available to those who complete the coaching and consultation service:

- One year of local and national APIC memberships
- Technology solutions, such as webcams, tablets, speakers, and mobile hotspots
- PPE solutions: fit testing kits, N-95 masks, gloves, face shields, gowns
- Air purifiers and a year's supply of filter refills from Medify Air

These resources are only available for a limited time to all long-term care settings in Utah. Email the Comagine team at [InfectionPreventionAdvisor@comagine.org](mailto:InfectionPreventionAdvisor@comagine.org) or check out their [website](#) to take advantage of this free support.

## CDC updates

On **Wednesday, January 31, 2024**, CDC and CMS present stories from the field: immunization strategies for long-term care. This webinar is open to all interested in collaboration with their staff, residents, and families to improve COVID-19 vaccination rates at their facilities. For more information, see the attached flyers. You can register for the event [here](#).

## New Project Firstline modules



We are excited to announce 2 new (free) self-paced modules focused on infection control. The homecare and hospice series is a 2-part series—available now—focused on preventing germ spread in the home environment. The building management series is a 4-part series focused on preventing germ spread through common building concerns. The first module is available now!

- **Homecare and hospice series**
  - [Prevent germ spread through bag technique](#)
  - [Recognizing infection risks in care settings](#)
- **Building management series**
  - [Supply storage](#)
  - Ventilation
  - Construction *\*coming soon\**
  - Water management *\*coming soon\**

Additional Project Firstline resources can be found on the [Project Firstline Utah webpage](#) or on the [CDC Project Firstline website](#).

### Resource spotlight: ICAR module 8

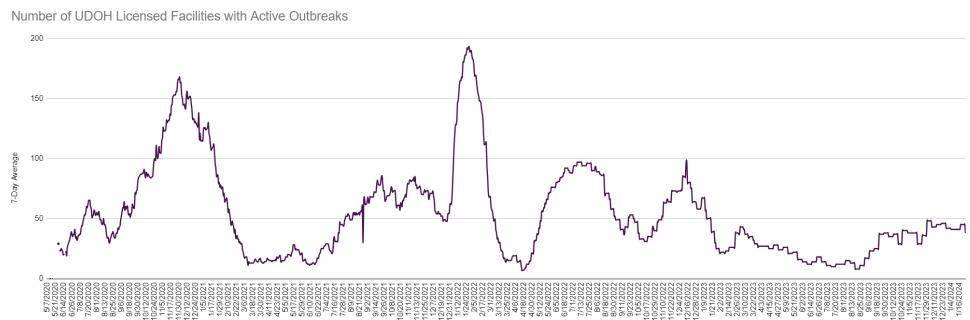
The next module of the ICAR tool assesses wound care practices. This module uses both interview and observation portions to assess:

- who, where, and how wound care is performed,
- correct equipment and supply use, and
- precaution used.

Stay tuned as we cover the remaining ICAR modules in coming months. Click [here](#) to request an ICAR in your facility.

# Utah LTCF COVID-19 situational update

As of December 31, 2023

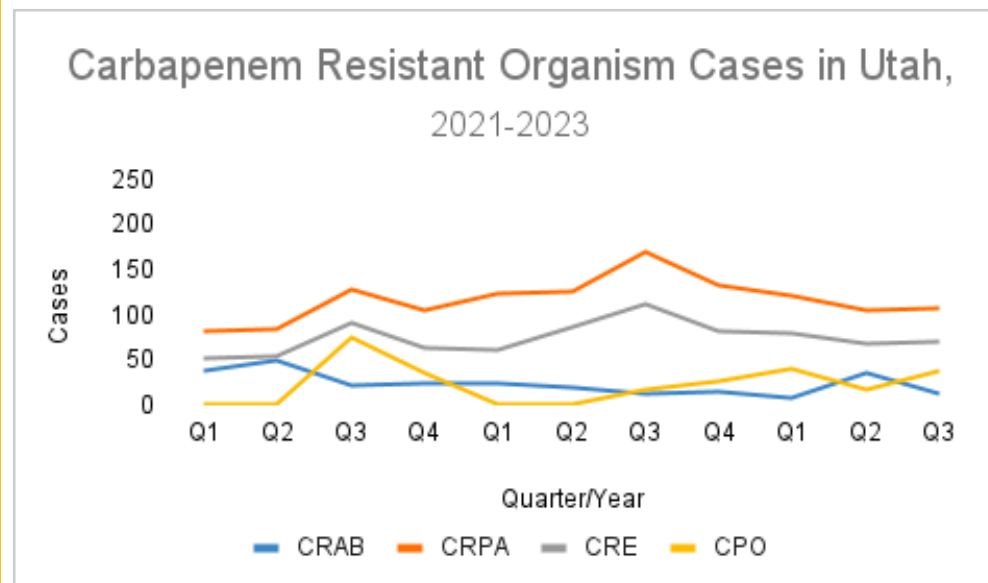


## Antimicrobial resistance in Utah

As of September 30, 2023

### Carbapenem-resistant organisms (CRO)

The CROs shown in the graph below include: carbapenem-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii* (CRAB), carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA), carbapenem-resistant Enterobacterales (CRE),\* and carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPO).\*\*



\*The Enterobacterales order contains multiple bacteria species which you are not required to report to Utah DHHS, but are of interest to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Utah DHHS. Therefore, the CRE count may not be a comprehensive count of all CRE cases in Utah.

\*\*The CPO counts are also included in the CRAB, CRE, and CRPA counts because CPOs are also carbapenem-resistant organisms.

This graph was created with data provided by the Utah Public Health Laboratory.

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[Yes](#) [No](#)

To stop receiving the HAI/AR monthly digest, reply to this email or email [janellekammerman@utah.gov](mailto:janellekammerman@utah.gov) directly. Thank you.



Utah Department of  
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