

Frequently Asked Questions about ...

Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) tools

Q: Why is the Virginia Department of Health asking to visit your healthcare facility?

A: The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is following guidance provided by the [CDC Containment Strategy for Targeted Multidrug-resistant Organisms](#).

Q: Could your facility benefit from an assessment of infection control practices?

A: VDH is offering to work with healthcare facilities to conduct an Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) visit to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in healthcare facilities' infection prevention and control program.

Q: What are the goals and objectives of the ICAR visit?

A: The goal of the ICAR visit is to enhance infection control capacity in healthcare facilities.

Objectives:

- Establish and strengthen collaborative relationships between VDH central office and local health departments and healthcare facilities and providers
- Work with healthcare facilities to assess their infection prevention programs
- Provide guidance to address areas identified for improvement

Q: Who are the ICAR team members?

A: The ICAR team is a small team of 3-5 members, comprised of staff from VDH central office and local health departments.

Q: How long is the ICAR visit?

A: The onsite visit typically lasts less than a day.

Q: What is the focus of the ICAR team?

A: The ICAR team works to facilitate discussions with leadership in the healthcare facility to assess infection prevention practices and provide infection prevention tools and resources. Additionally, the ICAR team will identify, discuss and mitigate infection prevention gaps by interviewing, observing and educating frontline staff.

Q: Will the ICAR visit be considered a state inspection?

A: No, the ICAR visit is voluntary and will be organized in advance, in conjunction with the healthcare facility. The ICAR visit is not punitive and results will not be shared with any regulatory agency such as the Office of Licensure and Certification (OLC). The visit is a collaboration between VDH central office and local health departments and the healthcare facility to improve infection prevention practices.

Q: What is the process for the ICAR visit?

A: Before the site visit, the healthcare facility will:

- Identify a primary point of contact (e.g., infection preventionist, appropriate nursing leadership)
- Complete an infection control self-assessment (tool will be provided by VDH)

During or before the site visit, VDH will:

- Discuss the tool with you

During the site visit, VDH will:

- Perform direct observations of facility practices

After the visit, VDH will:

- Provide written recommendations, summarizing strengths and recommendations for infection control improvement
- Provide evidence-based resources
- Schedule a follow-up discussion after the visit to review implemented changes

Q: Will we receive a report of the VDH findings?

A: Yes, the facility will receive a report of the ICAR visit within two weeks following the assessment. The report will summarize strong facility practices and highlight opportunities for improvement. The summary report will include hyperlinked resources and guidance to supplement your facility's infection prevention program.

Q: Who can I contact for additional information?

A: For more information, please contact the VDH Healthcare-Associated Infections/Antimicrobial Resistance Program by phone at 804-864-8141 or email at hai@vdh.virginia.gov. The ICAR tools are available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/tools/index.html>.