

# Washington State Healthcare-Associated Infection (HAI) External Validation of Acute Care Hospital HAI Data: Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infection (CAUTI)

Acute care hospitals (ACH) in Washington state need to report certain healthcare-associated infections (HAI) to the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). Reporting this data makes healthcare safer, as it helps us see the big picture of infections across the state. These requirements are established by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Washington State Healthcare-Associated Infection Reporting Statute.

The WA DOH HAI epidemiology team works with hospitals to review and validate the data reported to NHSN. The team is available to help hospitals report their data if requested.



## Understanding CAUTIs

A urinary tract infection (UTI) is an infection involving any part of the urinary system, including urethra, bladder, ureters, and kidneys.

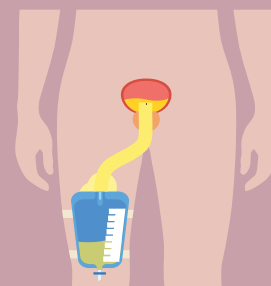
A catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI) occurs when germs (usually bacteria) enter the urinary tract through an indwelling urinary catheter (IUC) and cause an infection.

An IUC is a drainage tube that is inserted into the bladder through the urethra, left in place, and connected to a closed collection system outside of the body.

**CAUTI can lead serious complications, such as sepsis and endocarditis (infection of the heart lining and valves).**



**Prolonged use of indwelling urinary catheters is the #1 risk factor for CAUTIs.**

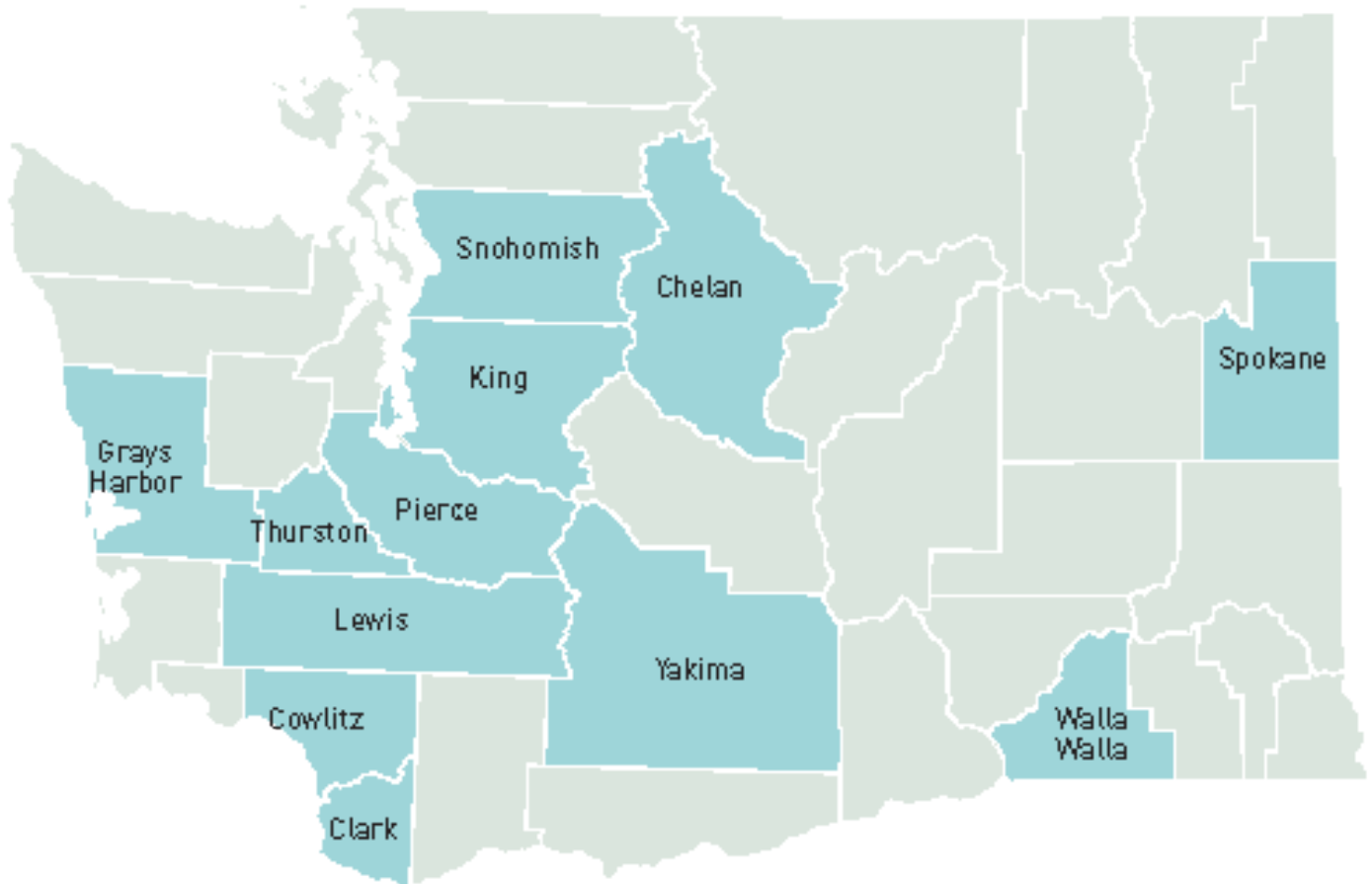


## Methodology

The DOH HAI Epidemiology team validated 2023 CAUTI data that were reported to NHSN. Thirty hospitals were randomly selected to participate, creating a representative sample of Washington hospitals. Out of the 30 selected hospitals, 29 in 12 Washington counties accepted and completed the validation exercise. The facility selection process was guided by the [2023 NHSN External Validation Toolkit](#). Up to 40 positive urine cultures were reviewed per hospital, using a standardized medical record abstraction tool. DOH determined whether the CAUTI events met NHSN surveillance reporting criteria and compared our determinations with what the hospitals reported to NHSN.

## Validations by County

Washington counties where external CAUTI validations were conducted:



## Results

In total, we reviewed 1,047 cases across the 29 hospitals. We found 97% of CAUTI events were correctly identified and reported to NHSN. We discovered 29 discrepancies, representing 0.03% of the cases reviewed. Twelve of those hospitals (41%) had no discrepancies whatsoever and most of the hospitals validated had discrepancies in less than 10% of their cases.



**12 Counties**



**29 Hospitals**



**1047 cases Reviewed**



**14 Remote Visits**



**15 Onsite Visits**



**Hospital bed size range 20-682**



**97% of CAUTI events were correctly identified and reported to NHSN.**

Please contact [NHSNepi@doh.wa.gov](mailto:NHSNepi@doh.wa.gov) with any questions.