WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

National Healthcare and Safety Network's (NHSN) Antibiotic Use and Resistance (AUR) Module:

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About Implementation for Hospitals

Washington State Department of HEALTH

DOH 420-453 March 2023

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About the New Requirement

Why Sign Up for the NHSN AUR Module?

- New requirement to begin in calendar year 2024 for critical access hospitals and all other hospitals that participate in the Medicare Promoting Interoperability Program (formerly known as Meaningful Use)
  - Rule can be found in the August 2022 Federal Register here: Promoting Interoperability Programs
- For calendar year 2024, facilities must attest to either:[1,2]
  - Being in active engagement with NHSN to submit AUR data
  - Claim an applicable exclusion*
    - Lack of certain electronic systems or lack of patients in an NHSN-eligible location – see footnote on Page 6 for full details

Does This New Requirement Apply to Both AU & AR Data?[1,2]

- Yes, both AU and AR data are required to be submitted

What Does "Active Engagement" Mean?[1]

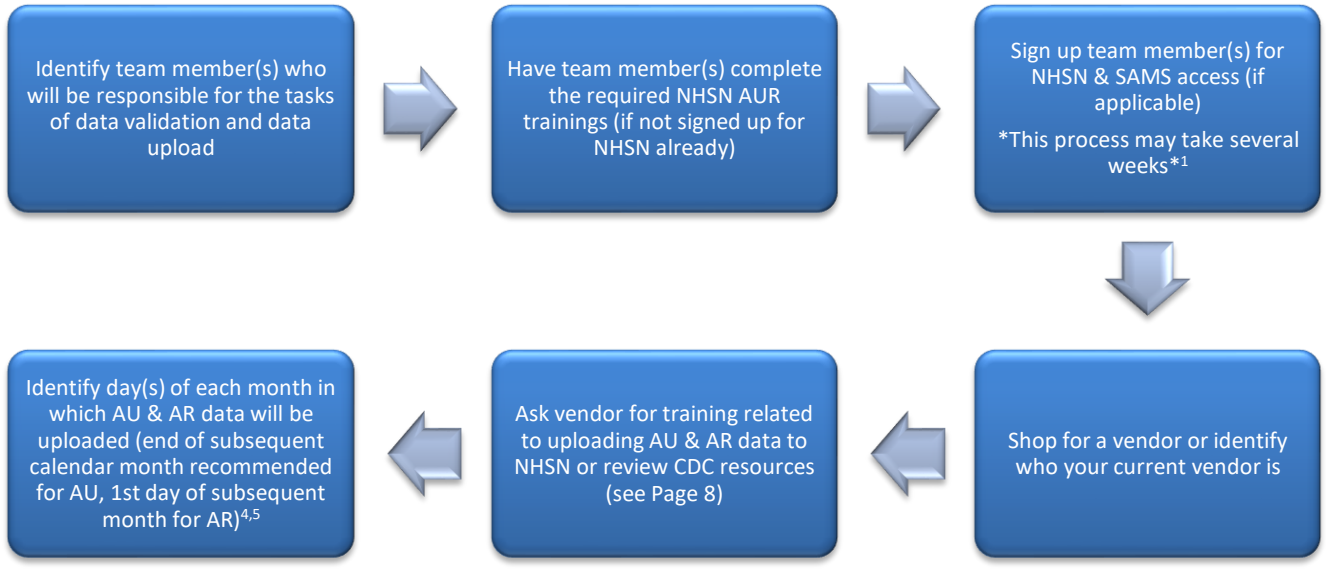
- CDC's NHSN AUR Promoting Interoperability Guidance outlines the steps that must be taken for a facility to meet this definition. There are 2 ways in which a facility can be considered actively engaged:
  - Option 1: Completing pre-production and validation
    - This includes registration of intent to submit data as well as testing & validation of specific data files known as CDA files
    - Complete steps 1 and 2 in the CDC resource linked above to meet the CMS criteria for attesting to Option 1
    - Beginning in Calendar Year (CY) 2024, facilities can only spend 1 calendar year in Option 1
  - Option 2: Production submission
    - This includes submitting AU & AR data into the NHSN production environment
    - Complete steps 1 – 3 in the CDC resource linked above to meet the CMS criteria for attesting to Option 2
    - For CY 2023:
      - 90 continuous days of data submission of both AU and AR data meet active engagement requirements
    - For CY 2024:
      - 180 continuous days of data submission of both AU and AR data meet active engagement requirements

Getting Started

How Does the NHSN AUR Module Benefit My Facility?[3]

- Some examples of how other institutions use it include:
  - Benchmarking institutional antibiotic consumption to similar hospitals and national trends
  - Evaluating stewardship initiatives
  - Justifying antibiotic stewardship program positions
  - Demonstrating the value of the program to local stakeholders
  - Contributing to public health by providing antimicrobial resistance tracking on a more global scale

How Do I Prepare for NHSN AUR Reporting?



What Vendors Are Available?

- A list may be found at this link: SIDP AUR Vendors

What Role(s) Can Assist with NHSN AUR Processes?[1,3]

- AU Option:
  - Pharmacist or physician champions are generally in charge of uploading data, reviewing/validating submitted data, running reports, and analyzing data

        - Infection preventionists and information technology specialists are team members who can also assist with AUR processes
- AR Option:
    - Consider the above options or either a microbiologist or clinical laboratory specialist, as they may have more ready access to resistance data then other professionals
- Consider your own facility's resources in determining which role would be the best fit for these tasks

What is the SAMS (Secure Access Management Services) Partner Portal?

- The SAMS Partner Portal is the system that will allow you to access the NHSN application
- You will need a SAMS login to use the NHSN AUR module

How Do I Get a Login for SAMS & the NHSN AUR Module?

- Your facility's NHSN administrator can add you as a user. This role is likely filled by your infection preventionist, as they are already required to report certain measures to NHSN
    - Directions for the facility administrator can be found here:
        - How to Add a New NHSN User (cdc.gov)
    - You will be asked to attest to the completion of NHSN training as a part of the sign-up process. This can be found here:
        - 2022 NHSN Training - Videos and Slides
            - Scroll down to "Antimicrobial Use & Resistance"
    - See Figure 1 at the end of this document and "Strategies for Success" for more detailed information

It's Been a While & I Haven't Received Any Emails from SAMS. What Should I Do?

- Check your spam folder
- Read through any past emails to ensure no steps were missed
- Review the User Guide for CDC's SAMS Partner Portal
- Reach out to samshelp@cdc.gov for assistance, if needed

Some Tips for Success:

- Signing up for a SAMs and/or NHSN login takes time.
    - Completing each step is quick, but the length of time between emails can vary
        - Identity verification step may also take time
    - Consider planning several weeks to complete the entire process
    - Grid cards can only be sent to your legal home address
- If your facility uses a vendor, check to see if they offer any training or guidance that may assist you
    - See also the "Links to More Resources" section of this document

- For best results, consider creating a multidisciplinary team to implement reporting
    - Identify specific team members who will be responsible for monthly data uploads, data reporting, and all other initial setup tasks
    - Identify a project sponsor or project champion who can support the team
- For hospitals in which turnover is a concern:
    - Consider signing up multiple people for SAMS and NHSN logins

*Hospitals that are excluded from the measure include those who (1) Do not have patients in any patient care location for which data are collected for NHSN during the reporting period (2) Do not have electronic medication administration records (eMAR) or barcoded medication administration (BCMA) records or an electronic admission discharge system (ADT) system during the EHR reporting period or (3) Do not have an electronic laboratory information system (LIS) or electronic ADT system during the EHR reporting period. See the linked Federal Register for more details

Implementing the Module

How Do I Validate AUR Data?

- The files below are available on the NHSN Antimicrobial Use and Resistance (AUR) Options under the "Data Validation" section:
  - AU Option:
    - AU Option Implementation Data Validation (Available as PDF or Word document)
      - Resource-limited facilities can start at Section C of this document
      - AU Option Annual Data Validation (Available as PDF or Word document)
      - AU Option Data Quality Line List (Available as PDF only)
  - AR Option:
    - AR Option Validation (Available as PDF or Word document)

How Do I Upload AUR Data into the AUR Module?[4]

- Facility personnel responsible for reporting AU or AR data must coordinate with their pharmacy and/or laboratory information software providers to configure their system to generate standard formatted file(s) that follow the Health Level 7 (HL7) Clinical Document Architecture Standard (CDA) to be imported into NHSN
  - These files are also known as "CDA" files and must be submitted for all locations indicated in the Monthly Reporting Plan within NHSN

Resources and References

CDC's NHSN AUR Promoting Interoperability Guidance

- CDC's NHSN AUR Promoting Interoperability Guidance

User Guides

- User Guide for CDC's SAMS Partner Portal
  - For detailed guidance on obtaining access to the portal that allows you to use the NHSN application
- NHSN AUR Module Guide

AUR Quick Reference Guides

- Antimicrobial Use and Resistance Module Reports
  - Scroll down to the section titled "Analysis Quick Reference Guides"
  - Contains multiple quick reference guides for various features of the AUR module

Frequently Asked Questions About AUR

- Antimicrobial Use (AU) Option
- Antimicrobial Use (AR) Option

CMS Promoting Interoperability Program (Formerly Meaningful Use)

- About the Promoting Interoperability Program
- Frequently Asked Questions About the Promoting Interoperability Program

More Resources

- Antimicrobial Use and Resistance (AUR) Options

Contact Information

- SAMS Questions:
  - samshelp@cdc.gov
- NHSN Questions:
  - NHSN@cdc.gov
- CMS-related questions:
  - QualityNet help desk: Qnetsupport@cms.hhs.gov or 1-866-288-8912

References:

1. Webb, Amy. NHSN Antimicrobial Use and Resistance (AUR) Module Reporting for the CMS Promoting Interoperability (PI) Program [PowerPoint Presentation]. 2023 NHSN Annual Training. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [updated 2023 Mar 23; cited 2023 Mar 27]. Available from https://2023nhsntraining.vfairs.com/
2. Webb, Amy. NHSN Antimicrobial Use and Resistance (AUR) Module Reporting for the CMS Promoting Interoperability (PI) Program Q & A. 2023 NHSN Annual Training. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [updated 2023 Mar 23; cited 2023 Mar 27]. Available from https://2023nhsntraining.vfairs.com/
3. Werth, B., Dilworth, T., Escobar, Z., Gross, A., Suda, K., Morris, A., Kuper, K. (2022). Reporting behaviors and perceptions toward the National Healthcare Safety Network antimicrobial use (AU) and antimicrobial resistance (AR) modules. Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology, 1-7. doi:10.1017/ice.2022.131
4. NHSN. Antimicrobial Use and Resistance (AUR) Module. CDC. Atlanta, GA: CDC; 2022 Mar. Available from: https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/pscmanual/11pscaurcurrent.pdf
5. CDC. FAQs: Antimicrobial Resistance (AR) Option. NHSN. CDC; 2021 [cited 2022 Nov 30]. Available from: https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/faqs/faq-ar.html

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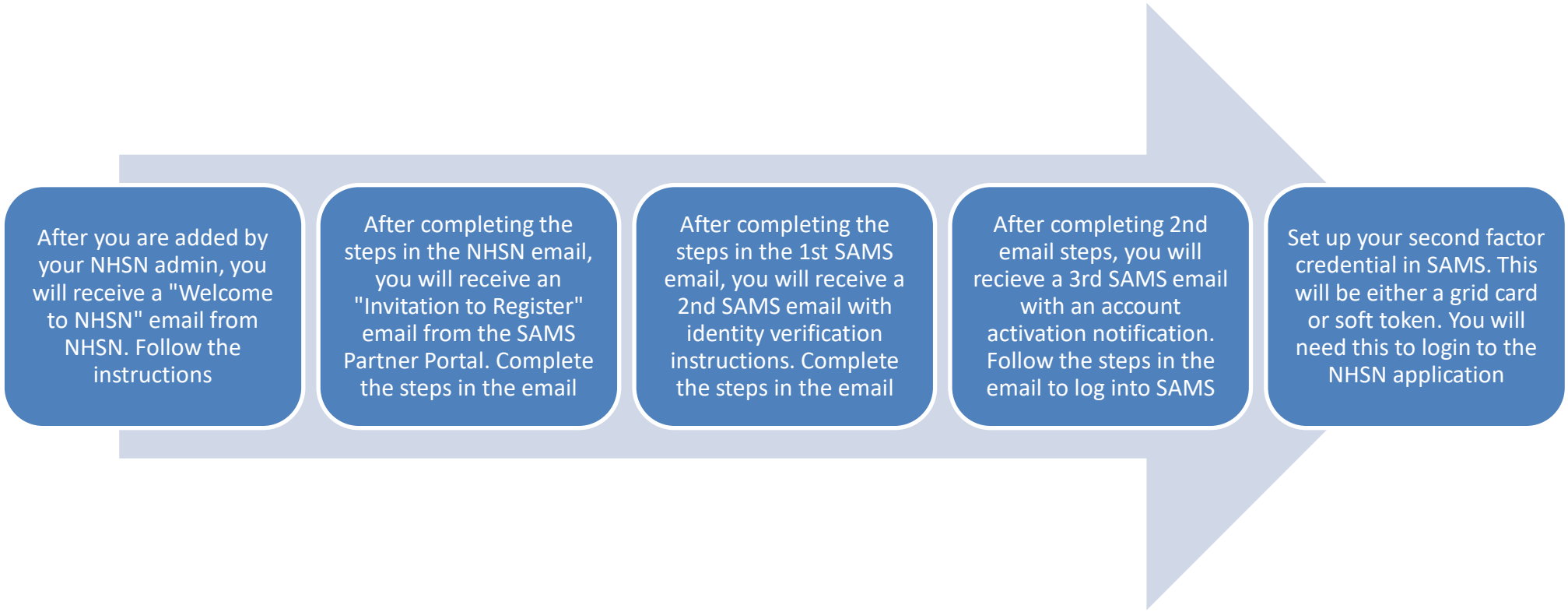

Figure 1: The NHSN Login Sign-Up Process