

# New targets for HAI surveillance

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# August 2010: Outbreak in a neonatal ICU in Mainz

November 2011: Outbreak in a neonatal ICU in Bremen



# August 2011 A new infection prevention act

**Bundesrat** 

Drucksache 361/11

17.06.11

G

#### Gesetzesbeschluss

des Deutschen Bundestages

Gesetz zur Änderung des Infektionsschutzgesetzes und weiterer Gesetze

Deutsche Bundestag hat in seiner 114. Sitzung Der am 9. Juni 2011 aufgrund der Beschlussempfehlung und des Berichts des Ausschusses für Gesundheit - Drucksache 17/6141 - den von den Fraktionen der CDU/CSU und FDP eingebrachten



# Pilot study 1994/95

Development of modified surveillance definitions





# BSI (laboratory confirmed)

Patient has a recognized pathogen other than CNS cultured from blood or cerebrospinal fluid and organism is not related to an infection at another site

#### AND TWO of the following symptoms:

- Fever (> 38 °C) or temperature instability or hypothermia (< 36.5 °C)</li>
- tachycardia (> 200/min) or new/increasing number of bradycardias (< 80/min)</li>
- recapillarisation time > 2 s
- new or increasing number of apnoeas (> 20 s)

- metabolic <u>acidosis</u> (BE < -10 mval/l)</li>
- new <u>hyperglycemia</u> (>140mg/dl)
- other sign of BSI
   (skin color (only if recapillarisation time not used), labory signs (CRP, Interleukin), increasing need for oxygen (intubation), instable overall situation, apathy)

## Pneumonia Definition

#### ONE radiologic finding

- New or growing infiltrate
- Consolidation
- Pleural effusion

#### AND respiratory complaints

#### AND four of the following

- new/increasing number of <u>bradycardias</u> (< 80/min) or new/increasing <u>tachycardia</u> (> 200/min)
- new/increasing <u>tachypnoea</u>
   (>60/min) or new/increasing number of <u>apneas</u> (> 20 s)
- purulent sputum
- <u>pathogen</u> detected in sputum

- new/increasing <u>dyspnoea</u>
- Temperature instability / fever / hypothermia
- increasing respiratory secretions
- CRP > 2,0 mg/dl
- I/T ratio > 0,2

## **NEC Definition**

#### ONE of the following radiologic signs

- pneumoperitoneum
- pneumatosis intestinalis
- Unchanging "rigid" loops of small bowel

#### AND TWO of the following (without other recognized cause)

- vomiting
- prefeeding residuals
- abdominal distension

- abdominal redness
- persistent microscopic or macroscopic blood in stools



#### New definitions for neonatal ICU patients?

#### Ventilator associated pneumonia

#### CVC associated BSI

		Berlin criteria yes	Berlin criteria no	TOTAL	Berlin criteria yes	Berlin criteria no	TOTAL
CDC criteria	yes	2	0	2	7	0	7
CDC criteria	no	1	86	87	1	35	36
TOTAL		3	86	89	8	35	43

K = 0.79 (CI<sub>95</sub> 0.40-1.19) agreement according to Landis and Koch: "good" K = 0.92 (CI95 0.76 -1.08) agreement according to Landis and Koch: "excellent"



### Conclusion

- Our neonatologists did not accept CDC criteria for neonates
- Our criteria appeared to be more objective for neonates.
- It is possible to apply specified criteria for pneumonia and BSI without loosing the possibility for comparison with NNIS data.

Journal of Hospital Infection (2004) 57, 126-131

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

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Development of a surveillance system for nosocomial infections: the component for neonatal intensive care units in Germany

P. Gastmeier<sup>a,\*</sup>, C. Geffers<sup>b</sup>, F. Schwab<sup>b</sup>, J. Fitzner<sup>b</sup>, M. Obladen<sup>c</sup>, H. Rüden<sup>b</sup>



### NHSN data for neonatal ICUs

**Table 7.** Pooled means and key percentiles of the distribution of central line—associated BSI rates and central line utilization ratios for level III NICUs, DA module, 2006 through 2008

		Cer	ntral line-associ	ated BSI rate	*				
							Percentile		
Birth-weight category	No. of locations <sup>†</sup>	No. of CLABSI	Central line-days	Pooled mean	10%	25%	50% (median)	75%	90%
≤750 g	142 (124)	481	122,272	3.9	0.0	0.0	3.2	5.3	8.0
751-1000 g	153 (133)	373	111,293	3.4	0.0	0.0	2.5	4.8	7.5
1001-1500 g	154 (136)	276	112,926	2.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	3.5	6.0
1501-2500 g	152 (117)	216	90,384	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.7	3.5	4.8
>2500 g	145 (106)	157	82,677	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	6.1
		С	Central line utili	zation ratio <sup>‡</sup>					
							Percentile		
Birth-weight category	No. of locations <sup>†</sup>	Central line-days	Patient- days	Pooled mean	10%	25%	50% (median)	75%	90%
≤750 g	142 (139)	122,272	345,082	0.35	0.19	0.28	0.35	0.46	0.56
751-1000 g	153 (145)	111,293	348,976	0.32	0.16	0.25	0.30	0.41	0.55
1001-1500 g	154 (151)	112,926	472,563	0.24	0.10	0.15	0.22	0.33	0.50
1501-2500 g	152 (148)	90,384	547,895	0.16	0.04	0.07	0.12	0.21	0.37
>2500 g	145 (140)	82,677	420,114	0.20	0.04	0.07	0.13	0.21	0.35



Edwards et al. AJIC 2009; 37:783-05

## NNIS/NHSN versus NEO-KISS

	NNIS/NHSN	NEO-KISS
Definitions	CDC definitions (children < 1 year)	Modified CDC definitions (for neonates only)
Endpoints	CVC-BSI VAP	CVC-BSI, PVC-BSI Tube-associated pneumonia, CPAP-associated pneumonia NEC
Collection of device days	Unit-based (summarized for the unit)	Patient based (for each individual patient)
Birth weight groups	< 750g; 751-1000g 1001-1500g 1501-2500g; >2500g	< 500g 500-999g 1000-1499g
Data entry/ analysis	webbased	webbased

# Included neonates per department 2006-10

	Mean	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Number of patients	32	17	27	44





Journal of Hospital Infection (2008) 68, 214-221



Available online at www.sciencedirect.com







Incidence of healthcare-associated infections in high-risk neonates: results from the German surveillance system for very-low-birthweight infants

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#### Nationales Referenzzentrum für Surveillance von nosokomialen Infektionen



NRZ SURVEILLANCE SUPPORT DOWNLOAD LINKS KONTAKT

AKTUELL

VERANSTALTUNGEN

VORSTELLUNG

AUFGABE

**EXPERTENRAT** 

PUBLIKATIONEN

NEWSLETTER

STELLENANGEBOTE

IMPRESSUM

ÜBUNGSKASUISTIKEN

KISS-ZERTIFIKAT

PRÄVALENZERHEBUNG

PROHIBIT WP3-Studie

webKess



12. Einführungskurs in die Methodik der Infektionssurveillance im Modul NEO-KISS (NEO-KISS-Einführungskurs) für Neuteilnehmer/Refresher

am 25.09.2012 (Di) in Berlin.

Nähere Informationen finden Sie hier.

Krankenhaus-Infektions-Surveillance-System (KISS) - 16. Erfahrungsaustausch 2012 in Berlin

17.09.2012 (Mo) bis 18.09.2012 (Di) - Langversion



Charité -Universitätsmedizin Berlin Campus Benjamin Franklin Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts. Institut für Hygiene und Umweltmedizin



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**Participation** 

CDC Definitions

AMBU-KISS

CDAD-KISS

**DEVICE-KISS** 

HAND-KISS

ITS-KISS

MRSA-KISS

NEO-KISS

ONKO-KISS

**OP-KISS** 

Import

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#### Project description

It has been known for over twenty years that the continuous, systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data relevant to nosocomial infections and that feedback for doctors and nurses can reduce the frequency of these infections. This kind of internal quality assurance is known as surveillance. Data from one hospital are more valid and more effective when they are compared with those from other hospitals. The frequency of infection at one station or department can only be determined in context with data from other stations and departments. In order to avoid false conclusions, comparisons are only possible when identical methods of data collection with fixed diagnostic definitions are used. Because different stations and departments gauge risks differently and differ in patient composition, these differences are compensated for by a standardisation and stratification process in data calculation and analysis.

In 1996, the NRZ developed a method to enable hospital wards and departments to complete surveillance with a single method that would take the most important influences and risk factors into account and



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CDAD-KISS

DEVICE-KISS

HAND-KISS

ITS-KISS

MRSA-KISS

NEO-KISS

IMPORT

ONKO-KISS

**OP-KISS** 

Import

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NEO-KISS (Nosocomial infection surveillance system for preterm infants on neonatology departments and ICUs)

Infection is one of the most important reasons for neonatal morbidity and mortality worldwide. Progress in neonatal intensive care has made it possible to decrease mortality among preterm infants with very low birth weights, but these preterm infants are at especially high risk for developing nosocomial infections. Surveillance has proven itself to be an effective method for reducing the frequency of nosocomial infections. An important part of the surveillance system is the comparison of infection rates. Nationwide reference data are necessary for comparing infection rates and for evaluating the efficiency of preventative measures. The goal of the project is to make nationwide reference data about the frequency of nosocomial infections among preterm infants more available. A pilot project was started in May 1999. Data collection on a patient-by-patient basis has been underway since January 2000. All children with a birthweight (BW) of less than 1500 g are included until their hospital discharge, death or weight of over 1800 g. Specially developed definitions are



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#### Protocol





#### **Data Collection Forms**

- Patient Surveillance Master Data Form
- Patient Progress Chart
- Data Collection Form Pneumonia
- Data Collection Form NEC
- Data Collection Form BSI

#### Reference Data

NEO-KISS Reference Data, 2009



# KISS Hospital Infection Surveillance System NEO-KISS Component Calculation period: January 2005 to December 2009

#### Reference data for neonatology departments

Birthweight class 500 to 999

Total departments 198
Total patients 9,226
Total patient days 454,978
Average length of surveillance (days): 49.31

Table 1: Device usage rate1

Device	Total device days	Pooled average	25% quantile	Median	75% quantile
Vascular catheter	241,909	53.17	45.22	52.20	60.86
- CVC	138,303	30.40	19.08	29.84	39.47
- PVC	103,606	22.77	15.28	21.62	29.23
Mech. Ventilation	264,101	58.05	42.57	54.79	62.92
- Intubation	97,856	21.51	13.17	20.65	27.38
- CPAP	166,245	36.54	20.17	31.03	39.66
Antibiotics	157,945	34.17	25.70	33.30	42.34

Table 2: Incidence density<sup>2</sup>

Type of infection	Total infections	Pooled average	25% quantile	Median	75% quantile
Severe HAI <sup>3</sup>	3,151	6.93	2.76	5.99	9.01
- Pneumonia	416	0.91	0.00	0.41	1.31
- BSI	2,735	6.01	1.82	4.69	7.83
NEC	510	1.12	0.00	0.68	1.44





# KISS Hospital Infection Surveillance System NEO-KISS Component Calculation period: January 2005 to December 2009

#### Reference data for neonatology departments

Table 3: Device-associated infection rates4

Devassoc. infection	Total devassoc. infections	Pooled average	25% quantile	Median	75% quantile
Vascular catheter- assoc. BSI	2,258	9.33	1.71	6.77	11.51
- CVC-assoc. BSI	1.367	9.88	0.00	6.96	12.52
- PVC-assoc. BSI	891	8.60	0.00	3.87	10.95
Mech. Ventilation- assoc. pneumonia	376	1.42	0.00	0.37	2.10
<ul> <li>Intubation-assoc. pneumonia</li> </ul>	236	2.41	0.00	0.00	3.26
- CPAP-assoc. pneumonia	140	0.84	0.00	0.00	0.67



# Other activities in Europe

- Belgium: Dr. D. Haumont, Brussels
- Italy: Prof. Antonella Agoni, University Catania
- Poland: Prof. Piotr B. Heczko, Krakow
- Spain: Prof. Adolf Valls i Soler, Bilbao

(Using the NEO-KISS method or similar methods)



#### BSI data collection form - NEO-KISS

vebKessID	Patient ID:		Patient name:	
/ascular catheter association:	O CVC O PVC O	No catheter		
nfection start date:			Criteria for clinical sepsis (all of the following)	
Pathogen 1:			Treating physician begins appropriate	0
Pathogen 2:			antimicrobial therapy for sepsis for at least 5 days	
athogen 3:			No pathogens detected in blood cultures or not tested	0
Two of the following clinical signs	and symptoms:			
<ul> <li>Fever (&gt; 38 °C) or unstable ten or hypothermia (&lt; 36.5 °C)</li> </ul>	perature	O noO yes	No apparent infection at another site	0
<ul> <li>Tachycardia (&gt; 200/min) or nev bradycardia (&lt; 80/min)</li> </ul>	w/increased	O noO yes	Criteria for laboratory-confirmed BSI	
Recapillarisation time > 2 s		O noO yes	<ul> <li>Non-CNS pathogen isolated in blood culture or cerebrospinal fluid (pathogen not related to infection</li> </ul>	on O
new or increased apnea (> 20 s	5)	O noO yes	at another site)	
<ul> <li>unexplained metabolic acidosi (BE &lt; -10 mEq/l)</li> </ul>	5	O noO yes	Criteria for laboratory-confirmed BSI with CNS as sole	patho
new hyperglycemia (> 140 mg/	dl)	O noO yes	CNS isolated in blood culture or intravascular	0
<ul> <li>Other signs of BSI: (skin color requirement (intubation), unst</li> </ul>		ny)	catheter as sole pathogen	
			and one of the following criteria:	
			CRP > 2.0 mg/dl / high interleukin	0
			Neutrophil I/T ratio > 0.2	0
As well as fullfillment of criteria fo			Leukocytopenia < 5/nl	0
laboratory-confirmed BSI with or v	without CNS		Thrombocytopenia < 100/nl	0



#### Patient progress chart - NEO-KISS

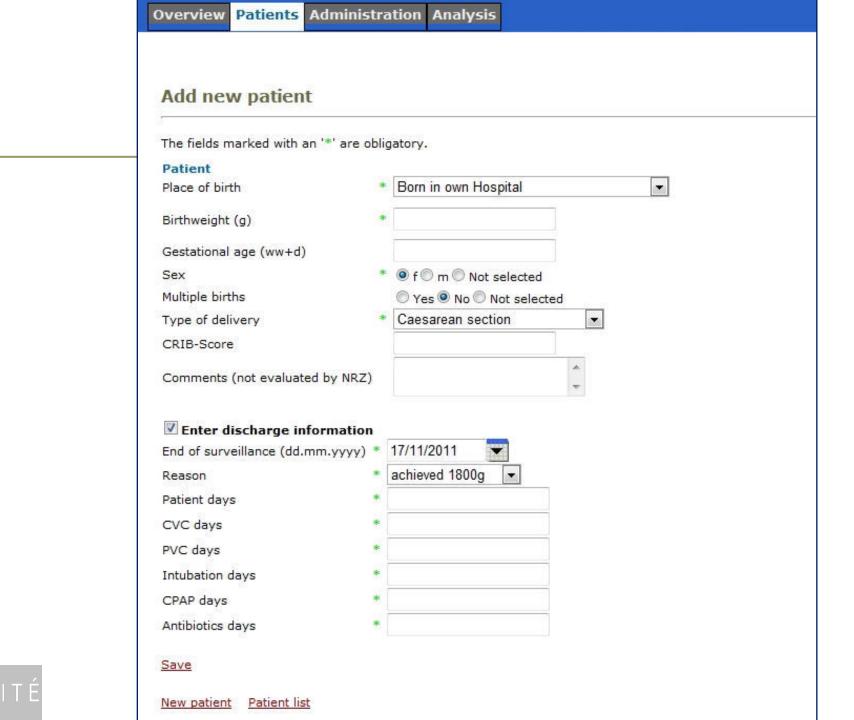
webKessID:	Patient ID:	Patient name
Month:	Chart No.:	
Day: 1 2 3 4 5 Patient was on unit:	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 Σ
cvc:		
cvc:		
Intubation:		
CPAP:		
Anti- biotics:		
	he month. When surveillance ends (weight ≥ 1800 ient surveillance master data form.	00g, transfer or discharge, or death), add together all monthly
Comments:		

Overview Patients Administration Analysis

#### Patient list (ZZZ / NEO1)

**⊗** Search

#		webKessId	Birth location	Birthweight	Gestational age	Sex	Multiple birth?	End of surveillance↓	Infection type
1 X	D ×	2	Transfer to own Hospital >= 24h postnatal	1163g	28+1	m	No	19/07/2009	
2 X	D×	1	Transfer to own Hospital >= 24h postnatal	720g	29+4	m	No	24/07/2009	
3 X	DX	3	Transfer to own Hospital < 24h postnatal	1250g	31+2	f	No	31/10/2009	
4 X	DX	4	Transfer to own Hospital >= 24h postnatal	1490g	32+1	m	No	01/12/2009	
5 X	DX	5	Transfer to own Hospital < 24h postnatal	1132g	29+4	f	No	18/12/2009	
6 X	D	6	Transfer to own Hospital < 24h postnatal	<b>720</b> g	25+1	f	n/s	04/01/2010	
7 ×	p ×	7	Born in own Hospital	1200g	27+4	m	No	30/01/2010	
8 <b>X</b>	DX	8	Born in own Hospital	1137g	29+4	f	No	09/03/2010	
<b>×</b>	p ×	9	Transfer to own Hospital < 24h postnatal	1310g	30+6	f	No	08/04/2010	
10 X	D×	12	Born in own Hospital	1490g	30+3	m	Yes: 2	22/06/2010	
11 X	p	10	Transfer to own Hospital < 24h postnatal	1146g	28+0	m	No	23/06/2010	
12 X	P	13	Born in own Hospital	1380g	30+3	m	Yes: 2	24/06/2010	
13 X	p ×	16	Born in own Hospital	1110g	32+0	m	No	16/07/2010	Sepsis
14 X	p ×	<b>1</b> 4	Born in own Hospital	1370g	29+4	m	No	27/07/2010	Sepsis
15 X	p×	15	Born in own Hospital	1110g	30+1	f	No	18/08/2010	
16 X	D	17	Born in own Hospital	1455g	33+1	f	No	11/09/2010	
17 X	p×	20	Born in own Hospital	966g	28+1	f	No	26/09/2010	
18 ×	p×	18	Born in own Hospital	1490g	29+6	m	No	11/10/2010	
19 🗙	P	19	Transfer to own Hospital < 24h postnatal	1445g	32+2	f	Yes: 2	09/11/2010	
20 X	P	22	Transfer to own Hospital >= 24h postnatal	926g	28+4	m	No	05/12/2010	
<< <	· >>	> 0 4 3	total: 21 entries						



New infection/edit infection			
Patient: webKessId: 3 Sex: w Place of birth: Born in own hospital Multiple births: No Birthweight: 1250 g Type of delivery: Caesarean section Gestational age: 31+2 CRIB: 1 Comments:			
Date of infection (dd.mm.yyyy)			
Type of infection   Sepsis Pneumonia NEC Not selected			
Pathogen 1 ESBL_KLE - Klebsiella pneumoniae (ESBL-producing)			
Clinical sepsis:			
Device association * ○ No Device ○ PVC ○ CVC ● Not selected			
All of the following criteria			
Treating physician begins appropriate antimicrobial therapy for sepsis for at least 5 days	Yes ○ No ○ Not selected		
No apparent infection at another site	Yes      No      Not selected		
AND two of the following (without other recognized cause):			
Fever ( > 38°C), temperature instability or hypothermia ( < 36.5°C)	● Yes ○ No ○ Not selected		
Tachycardia ( > 200/min) or new or increased bradycardia ( > 80/min)	○ Yes   No   Not selected		
Recapillarisation time > 2s	○ Yes   No   Not selected		
new or increased apnea ( > 20s)	Yes      No      Not selected		
unexplained metabolic acidosis (BE < -10 mEq/l)	○ Yes  ○ No  ○ Not selected		
new hyperglycemia ( > 140 mg/dl)	Yes No Not selected		
Other signs of BSI	○ Yes  ○ No ○ Not selected		
Comments (not evaluated by NRZ)	* <del>*</del>		

Save infection



# Voluntary participation + confidental outcome

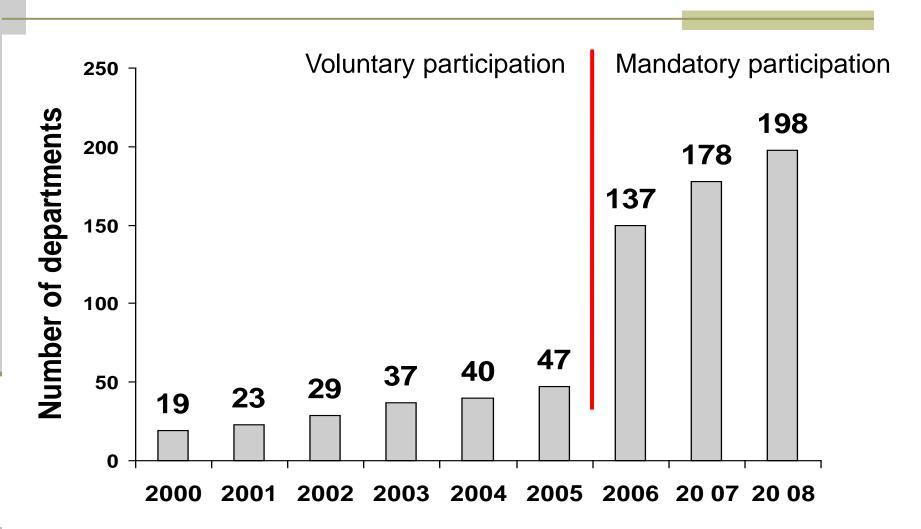
# One exception:



Mandatory participation + confidental outcome

# Development of participation

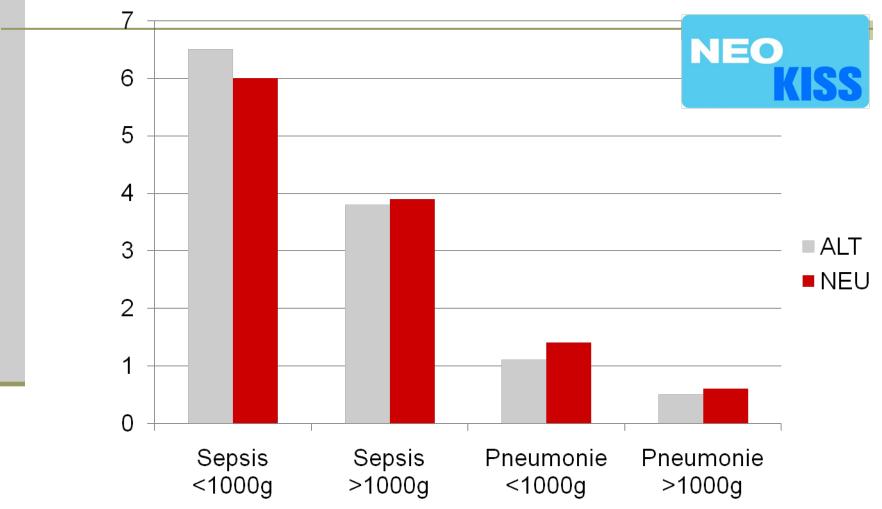






# Old vs. new participants

nosocomial infections per 1000 patient days







Journal of Hospital Infection (2007) 65, 319-325



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www.elsevierhealth.com/journals/jhin

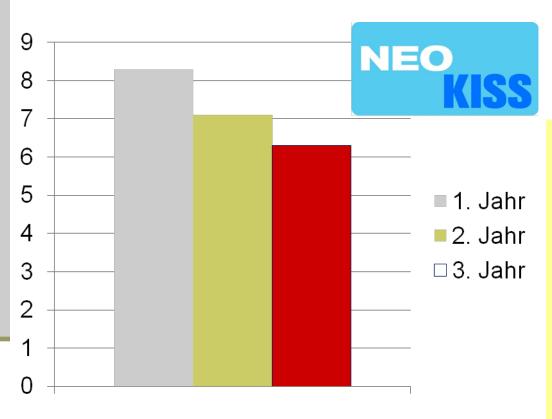
# Reducing neonatal nosocomial bloodstream infections through participation in a national surveillance system

F. Schwab a,\*, C. Geffers a, S. Bärwolff a, H. Rüden a, P. Gastmeier b

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Institute of Hygiene and Environmental Medicine, Charité — University Medicine in Berlin, Germany
<sup>b</sup> Institute of Medical Microbiology and Hospital Epidemiology, Hannover Medical School, Hannover,
Germany



# Infection rates according to the year of participation (old participants)



48 neonatal ICUs January 2000 to June 2005

1st vs. 3rd year of participation

Multivariable logistic regression analysis: OR=0.73; C195 0.60-0.89

→ 27% Reduction

Schwab F et al. J Hosp Infect 2007



# Use of benchmarking and public reporting for infection control in four high-income countries

Thomas Haustein, Petra Gastmeier, Alison Holmes, Jean-Christophe Lucet, Richard P Shannon, Didier Pittet, Stephan Harbarth

Benchmarking of surveillance data for health-care-associated infection (HCAI) has been used for more than three decades to inform prevention strategies and improve patients' safety. In recent years, public reporting of HCAI indicators has been mandated in several countries because of an increasing demand for transparency, although many methodological issues surrounding benchmarking remain unresolved and are highly debated. In this Review, we describe developments in benchmarking and public reporting of HCAI indicators in England, France, Germany, and the USA. Although benchmarking networks in these countries are derived from a common model and use similar methods, approaches to public reporting have been more diverse. The USA and England have predominantly focused on reporting of infection rates, whereas France has put emphasis on process and structure indicators. In Germany, HCAI indicators of individual institutions are treated confidentially and are not disseminated publicly. Although evidence for a direct effect of public reporting of indicators alone on incidence of HCAIs is weak at present, it has been associated with substantial organisational change. An opportunity now exists to learn from the different strategies that have been adopted.

Lancet Infect Dis 2011; 11: 471-81

Infection Control Programme, Geneva University Hospitals and Faculty of Medicine, Geneva, Switzerland (T Haustein MD, Prof D Pittet MD, Prof S Harbarth MD); WHO Collaborating Centre on Patient Safety, Geneva, Switzerland (Prof D Pittet); Institute of Hygiene and Environmental Medicine, Charité University Medicine,

Haustein et al. Lancet Infect Dis 2011; 11:471-81



# Use of benchmarking and public reporting for infection control in four high-income countries

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Benchmarking of surveillance data for health-care-associated infection (HCAI) has been used for more than three Lancet Infect Dis 2011; decades to inform prevention strategies and improve patients' safety. In recent years, public reporting of HCAI 11: 471-81

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HC

Evidence for a direct effect of public reporting of HCAI indicators on incidence of such infections is weak at present, but public reporting has been associated with relevant organisational change and a strengthening of infection control.

Introduction of new public reporting schemes has to be discussed in the context of the prevailing social and political context.

Monitoring of unintended outcomes of public reporting is needed.



OP KISS

NEO KISS

ONKO KISS ITS KISS

**SARI** 

Krankenhaus-

Krankenhaus Infektions-Surveillance-System

DEVICE KISS

www.nrz-hygiene.de

HAND KISS

MRSA KISS

AMBU KISS

CDAD KISS

# Aktive participants June 2011

Modul	Departments/ Units	Hospitals
ITS-KISS	610	546
OP-KISS	616	495
DEVICE-KISS	126	81
NEO-KISS	209	209
ONKO-KISS	36	33
MRSA-KISS		277
CDAD-KISS		96
HAND-KISS	7794	588
Total		986*



\* Total number of acute care hospitals in Germany 2008: 1780



German National Hand Hygiene Campaign



# Indicator: Alcoholic hand rub consumption (AHC)



AHC (in ml)

1000 patient days





Results of alcoholic hand rub consumption (AHC) 2010



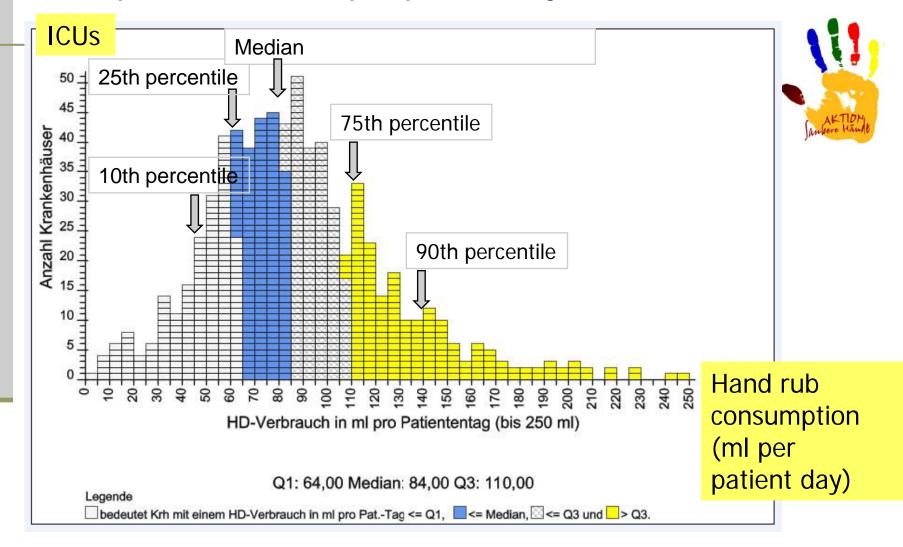
Data from 740 ICUs in 421 hospitals Mean 91 ml / patient day (about 30 hand rub procedures per patient day)



Data from 4638 non ICUs in 468 hospitals Mean 21 ml/ patient day (about 7 hand rub procedures per patient day)



# Distribution of ICUs according to alcoholic hand rub consumption (AHC) (ml per patient day) 2010





## Results- AHC in 740 ICUs in 2010



### AHC (ml) per patient day

Speciality	No of ICUs	P10	P25	Median	P75	P90
Medical	114	46	59	81	108	131
Surgical	95	55	74	100	119	144
Neonatal	70	36	59	84	124	191
••••						
Total	740	46	64	84	110	140

www.nrz-hygiene.de





## Results- AHC in 4638 non ICUs in 2010



### AHC (ml) per patient day

Speciality	No of hospitals	No of units	P10	P25	Median	P75	P90
Medical	372	1272	12	15	20	27	35
Surgical	352	935	11	15	20	25	32
Neonatal	121	249	18	27	37	55	75
••••							
Total	468	4638	10	14	19	27	38

www.nrz-hygiene.de





# Increase of AHC per patient day compared to baseline year 2007

(only 152 hospitals participating for the whole period from 2007 to 2010 were included)

	Ario (iiii) per patient day					
Type of units	Median 2007	Median 2010	Increase compared to 2007			
ICUs	66	89	41 %			
Non ICUs	15	21	28 %			
Total	18	25	36 %			

AHC (ml) per natient day







#### Nationales Referenzzentrum für Surveillance von nosokomialen Infektionen



SURVEILLANCE SUPPORT DOWNLOAD LINKS NRZ KONTAKT

KISS

Participation

CDC Definitions

AMBU-KISS

CDAD-KISS

DEVICE-KISS

HAND-KISS

ITS-KISS

MRSA-KISS

NEO-KISS

IMPORT

ONKO-KISS

**OP-KISS** 

Import





NEO-KISS (Nosocomial infection surveillance system for preterm infants on neonatology departments and ICUs)

Infection is one of the most important reasons for neonatal morbidity and mortality worldwide. Progress in neonatal intensive care has made it possible to decrease mortality among preterm infants with very low birth weights, but these preterm infants are at especially high risk for developing nosocomial infections. Surveillance has proven itself to be an effective method for reducing the frequency of nosocomial infections. An important part of the surveillance system is the comparison of infection rates. Nationwide reference data are necessary for comparing infection rates and for evaluating the efficiency of preventative measures. The goal of the project is to make nationwide reference data about the frequency of nosocomial infections among preterm infants more available. A pilot project was started in May 1999. Data collection on a patient-by-patient basis has been underway since January 2000. All children with a birthweight (BW) of less than 1500 g are included until their hospital discharge, death or weight of over 1800 g. Specially developed definitions are



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