

APIC Chicago

Association for Professionals in
Infection Control and Epidemiology

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Dear Colleagues,

2005 has started out to be a very busy year.....as I am sure it is for all of you. I just returned from the APIC Mandatory Public Reporting Consensus Conference in Atlanta. The conference was very well attended and was conducted in partnership with CDC, AHA, Consumers Union, National Quality Forum (NQF) and SHEA. The goal of the conference was to create a foundation for developing a system of measurement that is accurate, meaningful and consistent nationwide. The conference provided an opportunity to explore the essential elements that are needed to develop an effective public reporting system. These elements are basically discussed in the new HICPAC guidelines.

Concerns were identified regarding standardized national requirements rather than individual state laws that may vary. At the conference, there was an expression of interest from the National Quality Forum to help establish such a standard. Additionally, APIC, SHEA, HICPAC, and DHQP indicated a strong desire to see standardization and willingness to work with any appropriate agencies in that regard. APIC has provided an updated version of the APIC Talking Points on Reporting of Healthcare-Associated Infection Rates, which is included with this newsletter.

A big thanks to Cari Coomer for once again hosting our chapter's educational program at the Elmhurst Center for Healthcare in January. Barb Bancroft, RN, MSN presented a lively and informative program on emerging infectious diseases. Cari is diligently making program plans and contacting speakers. The next educational program will be May 12th at Westlake Hospital. Judene Bartley will provide a presentation on construction issues. Judy Kauerauf from IDPH will provide information on I-NEDSS and co-present with Dr. Paul from CDPH, who will discuss the Chicago based online reporting system (CHESS).

In August, Cari is planning a program at the Brookfield Zoo since it was such a big success last year. The Chicago Chapter Annual Education Program will be held at Aramark on October 14, 2005. Consideration is being given by the Board to the ICP's changing roles from infection control to infection prevention when planning our educational programs.

By now, everyone should have received information on the APIC 2005 Annual Education Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. It is an exciting opportunity to meet ICPs from around the world, to network, and learn about the latest advancements in the field of epidemiology and infection prevention.

National News: APIC and the Research Foundation have announced the merging of the two organizations. Although, affiliated with APIC, the Research Foundation until now had been incorporated as a separate organization. Dr. Jarvis will function as Chair of the APIC Scientific Research Council, who will oversee the Foundation's activities. Carol Schultz currently serves on the Research Foundation Committee.

You may recall that CMS was preparing to officially announce that alcohol-based hand rubs can be safely dispensed in egress corridors last year. The CMS response had stated that an official notice would be forthcoming in the Federal Register on December 23, 2004, but the process was delayed. The announcement from CMS is expected to appear in the Federal Register around March 23 or 25 with a likely official effective date 60 days thereafter.

Pertaining to the enforcement prohibition for annual fit-testing for TB, an OSHA interpretive bulletin was posted on the OSHA web site December 22, 2004. This bulletin was posted subsequent to President Bush's signing into law the Omnibus funding bill providing that no federal funds may be used to enforce the annual fit-testing provision for TB through fiscal year 2005 (until September 30, 2005). APIC is requesting a meeting with Jon Snare, the new OSHA administrator, regarding the General Industry Standard as it applies to TB should be revoked. APIC also asked Representative Wicker to send a letter to Labor Secretary Chao, requesting a revocation of the annual fit-testing mandate for TB. APIC Governmental Affairs will keep us informed of any news.

APIC provided comments on the CDC Draft TB Guidelines due by February 4, 2005. Recommendations are being updated to reflect the changing epidemiology of TB in this country and to ensure that this set of recommendations is science-based.

APIC will provide a web cast of the Mandatory Public Reporting Consensus Conference, which will be made free to all members and will become live via the APIC website on March 8, 2005. Currently, 32 states are addressing healthcare-associated infection reporting legislation for 2005 legislative session.

The CDC Advisory Committee HICPAC has released the guidance document, which provides recommendations to the states on developing systems for public reporting of healthcare-associated infections. The Illinois Report Card Advisory Group has been anticipating the HICPAC document and will take into consideration these recommendations.

Pat Merryweather, Senior Vice President of IHA, provided a presentation regarding the status of the Illinois Hospital Report Card Act at the consensus conference in Atlanta. Since the conference, Mary Alice Lavin, myself and representatives from the other IL APIC Chapters had a conference call with Pat to ensure that we are informed regarding any state activities related to the reporting of healthcare-associated infections. IHA will keep us informed of any developments in order that APIC can respond.

APIC Chicago Website: Hooray – website is live again. Thanks to Mary Alice Lavin for all her efforts and fortitude when dealing with the various issues. Please take the time to check out the web site at www.apicchicago.org. If you have any suggestions for the web site, please contact Mary Alice or any Chicago APIC Board member.

News from Members: Congratulations to Louise Kuhny from Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital on completing her MPH!!

Any graduates from the Cook County School of Nursing, please contact Dorothy Murphy at her e-mail address. Dorothy.Murphy@Cermakcc.org

If you would like to be recognized in this newsletter or have any news you would like to share, please let me know.

Willingness to Serve:

Our success as an organization relies upon the interest and involvement of the membership. Terra Suriano has accepted the chair position of the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee members are Janet Franck, Russell Karlins, Barbara Kratochvil and Kay O'Connor. If you, as a member of Chicago APIC, are interested in running for office, please contact Terra or one of the committee members. Terra's e-mail address is Terra.Suriano@AdvocateHealth.com

Programs being offered:

IDPH Annual Immunization and Communicable Disease Conference & Downstate Bioterrorism Summit – Bridging the Gaps: Connecting Communities and Public Health. Crowne Plaza Hotel – Springfield, IL, June 13 – 15, 2005. For more information, call IDPH at 217-522-5687 or e-mail ipha@ipha.com

Positions Available:

Evanston Northwestern Healthcare – Nurse Epidemiologist. Contact Kay O'Connor at koconnor@enh.org

Northwest Community Hospital – Infection Control Team position. Contact Human Resources at 847.618.5124.

Daniels SharpSMART - Client Care Manager position – contact creativesearch@carolina.rr.com

For additional information regarding these positions, check the Career Opportunities on the Chicago web site. www.apicchicago.org

Mark your Calendar:

May 12, 2005 – Educational program
October 14, 2005 – Chicago APIC all day conference
December 7, 2005 – Chicago APIC Business Meeting at Maggiano's

I look forward to seeing you at the May program!

Best Regards,
Anita Earl