

## Joint Statement of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) and the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA)

# Training infection prevention leaders for the present and future: United in patient safety

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“It is the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) that those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.”—Charles Darwin

APIC and SHEA continued to join forces in 2018 to advance the missions of infection prevention and hospital epidemiology. Over the last 3 years, the organizations have worked together to advance our collective missions. This year we have seen the fruits of our collaborative efforts and initiatives.

In 2018, we are particularly proud of several accomplishments.

The 2 organizations continue to host an annual shared SHEA-APIC Presidents’ Webinar, which serves to include membership in the shared resources and ideas of our collaborative effort. In March, the Webinar, and the partnership, was featured in the online publication Relias Media in an article titled “APIC-SHEA Forming a Formidable Partnership” (available from: <https://www.reliasmedia.com/articles/142255-apic-shea-forming-formidable-partnership>). The strong SHEA-APIC partnership was featured as a model for other organizations and quoted then Presidents Sara Cosgrove, MD, MS, FIDSA, FSHEA, and Linda Greene, RN, MPS, CIC, FAPIC, as they outlined the critical importance of both organizations working together for common goals.

APIC and SHEA teamed up with the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists to update the position paper: “Antimicrobial stewardship and infection prevention—leveraging the synergy: A position paper update,” authored by Manning et al. This paper, published in April in both *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* (available from: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/infection-control-and-hospital-epidemiology/article/antimicrobial-stewardship-and-infection-prevention-leveraging-the-synergy-a-position-paper-update/B7BBF7049FFFF4C9F4EF2785692825A2>) and *American Journal of Infection Control* (available from: [https://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553\(18\)30001-4/fulltext?code=ymic-site](https://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553(18)30001-4/fulltext?code=ymic-site)) was an update from the 2008 paper jointly published by SHEA and APIC.

In May, APIC’s Chief Executive Officer Katrina Crist and SHEA’s Executive Director Eve Humphreys authored an article published in *Becker’s Clinical Leadership in Infection Control*

titled “Is your hospital ready for the next outbreak, epidemic, or even another bad flu season?” (available from: <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/quality/is-your-hospital-ready-for-the-next-outbreak-epidemic-or-even-another-bad-flu-season.html>). The article communicates the value of infection preventionists and healthcare epidemiologists in designing and implementing strategies that eliminate preventable infections, while also maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Also authored by Crist and Humphreys was a Modern Healthcare commentary: “C-suites should see antibiotic stewardship and infection control as one issue,” published in June of 2018 (available from: <http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20180615/NEWS/180619925>). This article encouraged health system leaders to take the lead in maximizing the effectiveness of these programs by aligning stewardship and infection prevention and funding them adequately.

Building on the momentum of the joint position statement regarding the alignment of infection prevention and antimicrobial stewardship, SHEA and APIC hosted a joint education session at SHEA’s Spring Meeting in Portland, Oregon, in April, and then again at APIC’s Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in June, titled: “Leveraging the synergy of antimicrobial stewardship and infection prevention and control programs.” The session featured speakers Ed Stenhjem MD, Marion Kainer MD, and Janet Haas PhD, RN, CIC, FSHEA, FAPIC. In addition to joint educational sessions, governance links between key committees of the 2 organizations were established, with SHEA and APIC representation on respective public policy and practice guidance committees.

Finally, we are very excited to announce December 2018 is the launch of the Joint APIC-SHEA Leadership Development Program, hosted in Arlington, Virginia. This innovative program brings together infection preventionists and healthcare epidemiologists to participate in joint leadership training to enhance their work advocating for effective infection prevention and antibiotic stewardship practices across their facilities. Much like the partnership between APIC and SHEA, this program will synergize leadership efforts between preventionists and epidemiologists, so that infection prevention challenges and opportunities can be met with even greater energy and increasingly innovative approaches.

We continue to monitor our partnership goals and assess our progress and opportunities. We are targeting several goals to achieve over the next year, many of which serve as continuations

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of this past year's activities previously summarized. Some goals of note include the following:

- Convene at least 2 meetings of the joint SHEA and APIC task force.
  - We continue to meet annually once in person and once by conference call. These meetings serve to keep the changing society leaders informed about the partnership and on track to meet goals.
- Launch joint education opportunities to train infection prevention teams.
  - An annual Leadership Development Program was approved by both boards in 2015, and the inaugural program will be hosted in Arlington, Virginia, in December 2018. The focus is on strengthening infection preventionist and hospital epidemiologist teams to enhance their negotiations with health care organization executive leadership and advocate for resources.
- Develop annual joint session held at the SHEA Spring Conference and APIC Annual Conference.
  - The first session was held at APIC 2017 and focused on National Healthcare Safety Network rebaselining. The second joint session was held at SHEA and APIC respectively in 2018 and focused on antimicrobial stewardship.
- Meet with patient advocacy and consumer groups to develop positive, trusting relationships and to work in partnership around mutual infection prevention goals.

- Both SHEA and APIC continue to develop independent strategies in this area and will continue to discuss ways to effectively partner in this area.

The collaborative efforts of SHEA and APIC have helped to shine a light on the important work of preventing infections among patients. This work is crucial to the missions of our organizations: keeping patients safe and promoting responsible, effective, and efficient care that preserves clinical resources, especially antibiotics, for future generations. In our ever-changing healthcare environment, this collaboration helps to assure that sound principles for epidemiology and infection prevention are applied to policy and practice.

This year, we are particularly excited about launching the annual Joint APIC-SHEA Leadership Development Program. By working together to train and prepare infection prevention leaders of today and tomorrow, APIC and SHEA are making certain that patients have the best opportunity to avoid healthcare-associated infections and have safe and positive health outcomes. Health care will surely continue to change, and APIC and SHEA together can promote appropriate policies and practices and do our best to make certain that adequate resources are allocated to infection prevention, because together we reach further across the continuum of care to prevent infections in diverse populations in all settings. Our organizations together are leading the response to assure safer care for all.