

JOINT STATEMENT

Collaborative Efforts, Collective Impact

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“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

– Helen Keller

The relationship between the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) and the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA) focuses on our shared goals of (1) advancing the field of infection prevention by ensuring that our members have the knowledge and tools to implement approaches to detect and prevent healthcare-associated infections, (2) highlighting to a larger audience the important role our members play in infection prevention and the value they bring to healthcare institutions, and (3) advocating for patient care that is free from preventable harm caused by healthcare-associated infections. Our joint successes allow our organizations to leverage our strengths to present a united front advocating for issues that have profound impact on infection preventionists and healthcare epidemiologists, with a specific focus on improving patient outcomes and educating healthcare consumers.

In 2017, we are particularly proud of several accomplishments, specifically:

- Presenting on a joint panel at the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria in January 2017 stressing the importance of infection prevention in reducing the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, preventing healthcare-associated infections, and providing safe medical care, and the need to maintain and expand the infection prevention and healthcare epidemiology workforce.
- Advocating by leveraging the cost-effectiveness and cost savings of infection prevention and control at the healthcare level and with regulatory agencies.
- Combining efforts on joint regulatory advocacy efforts to save federal and state funding for antibiotic resistance and infection prevention.
- Creating education to build on the value of infection prevention and control programs.
- Presenting a joint session on rebaselining of data submitted to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Healthcare Safety Network at APIC 2017.

APIC and SHEA have pledged ongoing support of these joint efforts. A meeting of APIC and SHEA leadership in

May 2017 allowed us to monitor progress toward our goals and discuss new challenges and opportunities to meet the needs of the ever-expanding landscape of infection prevention.

Through our joint efforts, we are well on our way to achieving the partnership goals.

- Goal: 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.
- Goal: Write a joint editorial on the strategic importance of increasing resource allocation to infection prevention programs
 - The APIC chief executive officer and SHEA executive director continue to look at ways to publish an article in a healthcare management journal communicating the value of infection prevention and hospital epidemiology to highlight the role to healthcare executives.
- Goal: Continue to strengthen the relationship via frequent 2-way communication
 - The APIC chief executive officer and SHEA executive director communicate regularly and explore opportunities to work together in real time. Additionally, each organization presents one time per year at the board meeting of the other organization to provide an overview of strategic programs.
- Goal: Launch joint education opportunities to train infection prevention teams
 - A Leadership Development Training Program was approved by both boards in 2015, and the inaugural program is scheduled for late 2017. The focus is on strengthening infection preventionist and hospital epidemiologist teams to enhance their negotiations with

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healthcare organization executive leadership and advocate for resources. This leadership training is essential for developing the next generation of leaders.

- Goal: Host an annual shared SHEA-APIC Presidents' Webinar to include membership in the shared resources and ideas of this collaborative effort
 - The meeting in December 2016 was a success and had strong participation from members of both societies.
- Goal: Review and revise the antimicrobial stewardship article, "Antimicrobial Stewardship: A Collaborative Partnership Between Infection Preventionists and Health Care Epidemiologists"
 - The revision for this article started in 2017 and should be complete and ready to publish in mid-2018.
- Goal: Meet with patient advocacy and consumer groups to develop positive, trusting relationships and to work in partnership around mutual infection prevention goals

- The leadership agreed that these groups are integral to heightening awareness of the need for robust infection prevention programs and the provision of timely and transparent data. A meeting of key stakeholders is anticipated to convene in mid- to late 2018.

This partnership has worked well because we challenge each other. We represent shared visions for patient care and each contributes an important piece of the dialogue to the conversation. Our partnership is additive, providing a cohesive voice to prevent healthcare-associated infections and stop antimicrobial resistance to make healthcare safer. We look forward to continuing to meet our stated goals. More than that, we want to look beyond the present status to create goals that stretch the status quo and firmly establish the roles, responsibilities, and leadership of infection preventionists and healthcare epidemiologists across healthcare settings.

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