



The 9th National Conference of the Australian Infection Control Association Inc. (AICA) was held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra on 18-19 May. The Conference was well represented by all states and territories with 332 registrants from many diverse areas of the Health Care Industry. These included infection control practitioners, microbiologists, infectious disease physicians, general practitioners, dentists, dental assistants, and trade representatives. The trades were well represented by 44 excellent exhibitions. Lunches, morning and afternoon teas were served amongst the booths allowing maximum interaction of registrants with the representatives. AICA is very grateful to the trades for their commitment, representation and sponsorship. Without their continued support of infection control, the annual conferences would not have been as successful as has been demonstrated.

Apart from venue organisational hiccups and time constraint problems, the Steering Committee of the Infection Control Association ACT Inc. (ICA ACT) were happy with the Conference generally. As with all conferences, an important aspect for delegates and trade alike, is the networking. The National Conference Centre lends itself remarkably well to this function, with many positive comments and feedback having been received in this regard.

The Conference was opened by Professor Jennifer James, Head of School of Nursing Science, University of Canberra. Professor James highlighted the fact that on researching holdings, she found nine on virology, 384 on microbiology and only eight on infection control. Infection control practitioners need to be addressing such issues as we move towards the 21st century.

Professor Yvonne Cossart, Bosch Professor, Department of Infectious Diseases, University of Sydney was the Keynote Speaker and her paper was titled

"Clean Hands Still Transmit Disease". Professor Cossart gave as an example from times past – and it is still relevant today – on how easily we can be fooled into thinking and believing something is clean, ie water and/or hands just because it/they look clean. We were reminded how dangerous this assumption can be.

Another Keynote Speaker was Professor Lyn Gilbert, Director of Clinical Microbiology, Institute of Clinical Pathology and Medical Research, Westmead Hospital Sydney and Clinical Professor, Department of Infectious Diseases, University of Sydney. Her paper was on "Group B Streptococcus". Dianne Dreimanis of Woden Valley Hospital presented Group B Streptococcus data collected from the ACT Hospitals during the past three years.

A third Keynote Speaker was Professor Peter McDonald, Head of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases at the Flinders Medical Centre, Adelaide who spoke on "Ethics and Infection Control" and highlighted the rapidly changing situation regarding collection and dissemination of data in the nineties.

The NSW Nosocomial Infection Outcome Indicator Project Team, of Cathryn Murphy, Drs Julian Gold, Mary-Louise McLaws and Peter Taylor led a panel on National Surveillance Towards the Year 2000. Other speakers on the panel were nominated representatives of Infection Control Associations from each state and territory. The issues addressed by the panel included:

- Reliability & validity in nosocomial surveillance
- Outback surveillance
- Surveillance from a private hospital perspective
- Trust, confidentiality and ownership of data
- Difficulties and benefits experienced in WA surveillance
- Interhospital comparison & risk stratification – how is it possible?
- Position paper on clinical indicators 5A and 5B of the ACHS Healthcare Standards Evaluation Programme
- How ACHS definitions work and don't work for Tasmania
- Establishing computer systems for surveillance
- The future of surveillance

The outcome of this panel discussion was expected to identify the diverse methods of collection, assessment and

correlation methods used by all states and territories. This certainly happened, but what was surprising was just how different all areas are. However, this is the first step towards the vision of developing standardised indicators and collection methods which will lead to a national surveillance programme that is both credible and meaningful.

Meg Winks, RN, State Co-ordinator, TB Services NSW Health Department outlined her role in education, case prevention, case finding, contact tracing, surveillance and evaluation services, drug projections and the monitoring of delays in diagnosis, notification and treatment. TB has taken a new perspective in the 1990s, requiring continued involvement and development of strategies for its containment and control.

Dr Peter Collignon, Infectious Diseases Physician and Microbiologist, Woden Valley Hospital described a hospital-based prospective study on all patients with positive blood cultures associated with intravascular catheter sepsis. The incidence of significant sepsis was quoted as 8.1 episodes per 1000 admissions. The most common organisms isolated with *Staphylococcus aureus* (75 episodes) and *E coli* (70 episodes). Fifty patients died. 128 episodes were hospital acquired. The primary site of sepsis was intravenous catheters in 68 episodes, as well as renal tract (57 episodes), GIT tract (48 episodes), respiratory tract (25 episodes) and biliary tract (23 episodes). Nosocomial bacteraemia accounted for 40% of episodes. Half of these nosocomial infections were iatrogenic (IV catheters 68, renal 113, ERCP 1).

Elizabeth MacKinlay, Senior Lecturer Nursing Science, University of Canberra, presented a picture of common infections encountered in the elderly. She stated that frequently it is harder to recognise early signs of infection in the aged due to their other physiological disorders. Indeed signs of infection may be ignored, attributing them to "just part of growing older".

The conference finished on a high note with a selection of proffered papers on surveillance, paediatrics and reusing single use items.

A selection of these papers will be published in future issues.

The ICA ACT Steering Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Conference.

Elaine Graham

Subeditor – ACT – Telephone: 06 244 2512





ACHS and VICNA Seminar, March 1995: Infection Control: New Standards, Improved Quality

A half day seminar at Royal Melbourne Hospital on 20 March 1995 by Australian Council of Healthcare Standards was one of several held around Australia over recent months. The seminar highlighted changes in emphasis and requirements of infection control for accreditation of hospitals in the future. Infection control, like quality assurance, is now recognised as a significant element, an essential safety component, in hospital processes today. Both the ACHS Service Manager and ACHS Surveyor emphasised the expectation of a high profile and priority for infection control, infiltrating all fields and divisions of the hospital. To assess this, staff, both at ground level (nurses, cleaners, etcetera) and management level (including senior management), will be interviewed and records examined (committee minutes and communication documents, for example). Priority would also be reflected in the resources allocated to the infection control programme. Expectations emphasised throughout the seminar are outlined as follows.

It must be demonstrated that the programme is effective, that there is evidence of proper surveillance, prevention and control of infection through planned activities with a proactive force. These activities must include all patient care and support services. Each health care worker must realise their defined role in preventing infection and this must be reflected in their job description.

The infection control committee is expected to be active in ensuring establishment of correct protocols through regular reviews and evaluation of work practices. The infection control co-ordinator is expected to be consulted for any related matters and be responsible for the supervision and implementation of infection control policies throughout the entire facility. S/he must conduct quality activities including surveillance of infections, hygiene practices and environmental maintenance. Reports to management and their subsequent responses will be examined.

The infection control realm includes infection prevention and control in general, sterilising and environmental services. The sterilising services must be managed by a properly qualified person. Correct sterilising processes, storage and distribution of sterile goods will be examined, as well as staff training and proper documentation of procedures. The cleaning/housekeeping service must be organised and assurance of a safe and healthy environment for patients demonstrated. Documentation must identify procedures and expected outcomes of cleaning procedures. A close working relationship between cleaning/housekeeping and infection control services is essential.

Other areas to be examined include procedures, monitoring and documentation related to the purchase, storage and use of chemicals, supply department, engineering, food services, pest control, purchase and maintenance of equipment and materials, linen, waste disposal, universal precautions, hand washing, sharps and blood

contamination injuries and support and education programmes. It was emphasised that it is the hospital's responsibility to ensure that the facility supplying linen is maintaining high standards.

Overall, the new guidelines are seen to broaden the role of the infection control practitioner through an increased profile in all areas of the hospital, being involved in a wider cross section of policy development and procedure development and having a greater role in monitoring infection control practices and infection rates. The practitioner plays a central role in evaluating practices to prevent and control infection and guiding changes to improve outcomes. This means more responsibility to be the expert and consultant, increased educational requirements and advanced evaluation/quality assurance skills.

Further into the future, accreditation overall will change significantly to focus more on continuum of care from patients' first arrival at hospital to community management. Through this process, the monitoring, evaluation and outcome of care is priority. The standards of processes and structures, as currently assessed, remains important, but the organisation and interaction of these, as opposed to the performance of individual departments, will be reviewed.

For information about the journal and VICNA/AICA membership, please contact Bronwen Mander, c/o Western Hospital, Gordon Street, Footscray, VIC 3011. Telephone (03) 319 6666. Fax (03) 318 5349.



DATES

VICNA 7th State Conference,
2nd and 3rd November 1995,
Radisson President Hotel,
Queens Street, Melbourne, Vic 3004
Contact Ms Janine Clark,
c/o Box Hill Hospital, Nelson Road,
Box Hill Vic 3128
Telephone 895 3333 Fax 895 3268

CALL FOR PAPERS:

We invite members and non-members to submit abstracts.

We would also welcome speakers from other states. Closing date: 28 July 1995

VICNA Annual General Meeting,
31 July 1995, 5.00pm
Acacia Room, Austin and Repatriation
Hospital (Repatriation facility), Banksia
Street, Heidelberg West, Vic 3081.
Agenda items and nominations must be
submitted in writing by 3rd July 1995,
to Ms Janine Clark, President,
VICNA, c/o Box Hill Hospital, Nelson
Road, Box Hill, Vic 3128
Telephone: 895 3333 Fax: 895 3268



Medical and Dental Office Practice Infection Control Certification

The investigation of HIV transmission during minor surgical procedures in an office practice in New South Wales led to the conclusion that there must have been some breakdown in infection control procedures. The same conclusion had been reached in the USA during an investigation of HIV transmission relating to a dental practice conducted by an HIV-positive practitioner.

In response to these incidents, the South Australian Branches of the Australian Medical Association (AMA) and the Australian Dental Association (ADA) initiated the development of a process of certification of medical and dental practices for infection control procedures.

As President of the Infection Control Association of South Australia (ICASA) I was invited to join a working party with the AMA and ADA to develop these procedures. After some 12 months of deliberation appropriate procedures were developed and AMADA Quality Management was formed as a joint venture between the AMA and ADA to coordinate the certification process and to provide a form of self regulation.

The aim of the certification process is to ensure continuous quality improvement. Medical and dental practitioners are provided with support to analyse their procedures against a checklist, to educate themselves and their staff, and to maintain evidence of professional responsibility and public accountability.

AMADA Quality Management was launched at a seminar in February 1995 and was attended by over 500 dental and medical practitioners, who were invited to undergo the certification process.

This process consists of a visit from an infection control practitioner and either a doctor or dentist who assess the practice according to a checklist covering the following:

- Cleanliness and the working environment
- Hand washing facilities
- Sharps and waste disposal
- Protective equipment
- Safe handling of laboratory items and pathology specimens
- Medication administration
- Equipment/instrument cleaning, disinfection, sterilisation and storage
- Staff education and training in infection control
- Policy development
- Quality management
- Vaccination of staff

A report is then presented to a certification committee consisting of two doctors and two dentists appointed by the AMA and ADA respectively. Finally certificates of compliance are issued for display in surgeries.

Meredith Ochota
President
Infection Control Association
of South Australia Inc

Infection Control Seminar for SA Branch of ADA

In February, the Australian Dental Association (SA Branch) and the Australian Medical Association (SA Branch) launched a program for the certification of Medical and Dental Practices, which identified the need for practice staff to receive education in Infection Control.

The Australian Dental Association (SA Branch) Director of Training for the Dental Assistant Training Course began planning a post basic course in Infection Control for country and metropolitan trainees. The response to the basic course was so great, over 50 people were turned away. A second

course has been promised in the future.

Marilyn Leaver, Infection Control Consultant – Wakefield Hospital Jude Bail, Infection Control – South Australian Dental Service Meredith Ochota, Manager – AMADA Quality Management presented papers and participated actively in panel discussions that were scheduled throughout the weekend.

Professor Peter McDonald discussed "Background Microbiology – Transmission of Disease Virulence" or micro-organisms.

Of Special interest was a talk by Dr Liz Coates from the Adelaide Dental Hospital Extended Dental Care Clinic on "The Management of Patients with Infectious Diseases" (with emphasis on HIV).

Subject areas particular to Dentistry were addressed in short presentations:

Disposal of Dental Waste
Waste Management Regulations
Sterilising Research and Advisory Council of Australia (SA Branch) member, Violet Letford (The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Central Sterilising Services Department) spoke on Instrument Sterilisation. The ensuing Panel Presentation was lively addressing Surgery Layout and Design, Daily Work Practices, Surgery Cleaning and Decontamination Procedures. Questions from the floor were answered by the appropriate fields and disciplines.

Instrument Sterilisation, Packaging and Storage of Instruments, Autoclave Use and Maintenance, Calibration and Monitoring drew a lot of attention, as did the General Cleaning of the Clinic Area – the use of only detergent and water for general surface cleaning recurred for discussion regularly throughout the weekend.

Media interest focussed on the sterilisation of equipment, particularly dental drill handpieces, and the positive attitude of the large audience to effecting changes throughout the dental work area and private practices.

Evaluation of the weekend was positive and provided valuable information for Dentists and Dental Staff who are planning to seek Practise Accreditation.

Submitted by
Jude Bail
Infection Control,
South Australian Dental Service

Marilyn Leaver
Sub Editor
South Australia





The ICAWA meets on the first Friday of each month at the South Perth Community Hospital at 0900 hours. Alternate meetings take the form of an education session with various topics covered by a guest speaker. The most recent session was an interesting insight into Toxic Shock Syndrome presented by Dr Clay Gollidge.

New members are welcome with membership of the association open to any health care professional with an interest in infection control who is able to contribute to the aims and objectives of the Association. Commercial membership is open to a person representing a company or business, the products of which are associated with infection control, and who is able to contribute to the aims and objectives of the Association, and who is invited by the Association to become a member. Members are entitled to attend meetings of the Association and receive minutes of meetings, a quarterly WA Newsletter and National Journal. Membership forms are available from the Hon Secretary at the above address.

Infection Control Course for Registered Nurses

A two week infection control course for registered nurses has been conducted at Fremantle Hospital since 1984. The course co-ordinator is Madeleine McPherson, Infection Control Nurse Specialist and current President of ICAWA.

Apart from the core course lecturers, each year an overseas lecturer is invited to provide a broader perspective to the course. This year, Dr Tim Inglis, Senior lecturer in microbiology and Clinical Microbiologist at Singapore University, is the guest lecturer. Dr Inglis, previously from Leeds, UK, has an interest in and has published on ventilator associated pneumonia. He has written a book on microbiology for medical students which is soon to be released and is working on a CD Rom programme for infection

control. The course students include six from overseas – two from Bali, two from Palau, one from Abu Dhabi and one from Christmas Island. At the conclusion of the course, the students will undertake projects at Fremantle Hospital as well as attend further lectures and workshops before returning to their countries.

Postgraduate Diploma of Nursing (Clinical Nursing) – Infection Control stream

The Edith Cowan University School of Nursing Consultative Committee has convened an advisory panel to advise on the development, implementation and ongoing progress of a Postgraduate Diploma of Nursing (Clinical Nursing)

course planned to commence in February 1996. Included in the six streams of this diploma course will be infection control which will actually not commence until 1997. This is an exciting advancement for nurses wishing to study infection control at a post graduate level and a recognition of the importance of this field of nursing. The course will initially only be available to internal students, however external study may be considered in the future. Enquiries should be directed to Sue Nikolett, Edith Cowan University, Pearson St., Churchlands 6018. Telephone: 09 273 8593. Fax: 09 273 8699.



Dates for 1995

October 13-14

Infection Control Practitioners
Association of Queensland
STATE CONFERENCE
"Policies and Standards are we in control?"
Details The Secretary ICPAQ
PO Box 1124
Coorparoo DC, Qld 4151

October 20

Infection Control Association WA Inc
15TH ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE
Sheraton Perth Hotel
Keynote speaker: Mr John Babb (UK)
Details Conference Convenor:
Rebecca McCann
PO Box 674
Claremont, WA 6010

October 26 & 27

Infection Control Association NSW Inc
19TH ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE
"Infection Control Enlightened by the Sea"

Novatel Wollongong
Details
Jean Seidmann 042 26 6955
Yvonne DeMain 042 29 8233

November 3-4

Victorian Infection Control Nurses
Association
7TH STATE CONFERENCE
Radisson President Hotel
Queens Street, Melbourne, Vic 3004
Details Ms B Mander
C/o Western Hospital
Gordon Street, Footscray, VIC 3011
Telephone: 03 319 6666
Fax: 03 318 5349

May 1996

Sydney, NSW
AICA INC. 10TH NATIONAL
CONFERENCE
Regent Hotel
Details: Sue Greig
Infection Control Association NSW Inc
150-154 Albion Street
Surry Hills, NSW 2010

September 10-14 1996

Dublin, Ireland
INFECTION CONTROL INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE
"Towards New Horizons"
Details: Mrs Janet Roberts
Senior Infection Control Nurse
Wirral Medical Microbiology
Wirral Hospital
Clatterbridge, Wirral L63 4 IY
Telephone: 051 604 7411

APIC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

APIC '96

Atlanta Georgia
Atlanta Inforum

June 1-6

APIC '97

New Orleans, Louisiana
New Orleans Convention Centre

June 7-12

APIC '98

San Diego, California
San Diego Convention Centre

May 10-14

APIC '99

Baltimore, Maryland
Baltimore Convention Centre

June 20-24

We have unfortunately had two resignations from the Executive. We wish Trish Cox well and thank her for all the time she has given to the Executive over the last couple of years. Also Kris Farrar has had to leave us.

Welcome to Yvonne DeMain, who has taken on the position of Assistant Secretary.

The On Call timetable has been adjusted and this information was disseminated in the Executive Bulletin.

The Buddy System

This system was introduced so the country Regions had an individual contact on the Executive, therefore enhancing the distribution of information and enabling the Executive members to get to know their country colleges. There are a few slight changes to the Buddies due to the resignations and the Regions were just a little incorrect in the first issue of the journal, please accept our apologies.

This is an updated and correct record of the Region Buddies.

Region	Executive Buddy
South East	Cathryn Murphy
Hunter	Sue Resnik
Illawarra	Valda Mentjox
South West	Sheila Tranter
Mid North Coast	Lorraine Dorrington
Northern Rivers	Dianne Dalton
Central West	Yvonne DeMain
Orana & Far West	Joy Borgert
New England	Sue Greig
Central Coast	to be appointed

Sydney Hospital Post Registration Course

I have just completed the Post Registration Course in Infection control run by Sydney Hospital and found it to be of enormous benefit. Being new to Infection Control and willing to learn, it became evident that I needed direction, Dalcross Private Hospital (my employer) made it possible for me to attend this course. The course is face to face learning and establishes networking. The lecturers were of a very high standard and



Sydney Hospital Course Graduation Back Row: (Left to right) Janet Stretton & Dr. Ian Rewell. Front Row: Maryann Ford, Brenda Hayman, Robyn Edwards, Cathryn Murphy & Annette McKeith

ample opportunity was given for asking questions. This soon overcame the fear of not studying for 25 years. The nature of the course was stimulating and challenging, thus making age no barrier.

There were four courses running concurrently and the participants came together at different times for lectures. This proved very valuable as we were able to share problems and look at them from another aspect.

Nursing and clinical placements proved to be very valuable with lots of information being gained. The clinical placements were at Eastpath Laboratory (Prince of Wales Hospital), Sydney Hospital Sexual Health Centre, Albion Street Centre, Qantas Food Catering, Parramatta Linen Service, Repatriation Hospital Concord, Northmead Treatment Works, Baxter Laboratories and Endoscopy units.

Infection control encompasses all

New South Wales Editorial Committee

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DIANNE DALTON

areas of Health Care, this 26 week course has given me the ability to face the daily issues with confidence.

I would highly recommend the course to anyone wanting to increase their knowledge in the field of Infection control. To the course Co-ordinators and the organisers congratulations on a well run course.

Robyn Edwards
Clinical Nurse Specialist
Infection Control
Dalcross Private Hospital

INFECTION CONTROL ENLIGHTENED BY THE SEA

19th Annual State Conference – Infection Control Association NSW Inc
Monday 30th & Tuesday 31st October 1995

Novotel Northbeach, Wollongong, NSW

Proposed Topics: Urology ▪ Hepatitis Update ▪ Community Issues
▪ Competencies ▪ Policies ▪ Hospital Issues ▪ Workshops

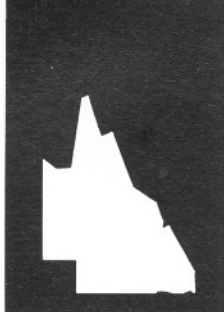
Registration Fees: Paid by 29.8.95

Full Delegate (Association Member) **\$250.00**

Full Delegate (Non Member) **\$270.00**

Cocktail Party, Conference Dinner & AGM Breakfast extra.

Enquiries to: **Jean Seidmann (042) 26 6955 or Yvonne DeMain (042) 29 8233**



Members, Do You Know Your Management Committee? Here We Are

From left to right:

ANN VOLTER. Ann is Assistant Treasurer, and works at the Prince Charles Hospital, Brisbane as a Clinical Nurse Consultant.

Telephone 07 350 8646.

RUTH NUGENT. Ruth is Treasurer, and is the Director of Nursing, Palm Beach, Currumbin Clinic.

Telephone 075 34 4944.

JEANETTE MUSTCHIN. Jeanette is Secretary, and works as a Clinical Nurse Consultant, at Palm Beach Currumbin Clinic. Telephone 075 34 4944.

MARY MOTT. Mary is President, and works as a private consultant, in Infection Control and Prevention. Telephone 07 289 0174.

JENNY STACKELROTH. Jenny is Public Relations Officer. She works as an Infection Control Practitioner, at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, South Brisbane. Telephone 07 240 5128.

KERRI GARRAD. Kerri is Assistant Secretary/Librarian, and works as a Nurse Educator, Freemasons' Home, Sandgate. Telephone 07 269 4011.

CAROLYN WILLS. Carolyn is the Editor and is an Infection Control Scientist at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, South Brisbane. Telephone 07 240 2948.

BARBARA JOHNSON. Barbara is the Vice-President, and is a Research Assistant at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, South Brisbane. Telephone 07 240 5408.

Mary Mott
Sub Editor
Queensland
Telephone: 07 289 0174



POLICIES and STANDARDS are we in control?

ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE

Infection Control Practitioners Association Queensland

Friday 13th and Saturday 14th October 1995

Society of St Vincent de Paul

38 Warry Street, Fortitude Valley 4006

Keynote Speaker will address

Role of the Australian Council for Health Care Standards

Role of the National Health & Medical Research Council

Legal Issues

Sexual Health

REGISTRATION FEES

EARLY BIRD Closing 31.7.95

\$100 per day

After 31.7.95

\$125 per day

\$200 for both days

\$250 for both days

Enquiries to:

Mary Mott (07) 289 0174

Carolyn Wills (07) 240 2111 Page 847

Calling for Papers

Abstracts will only be accepted on the official forms

Forms available from Mary Mott or Carolyn Wills