



# Australian Infection Control Association

# National News

## Issue 29

**September 2008**

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*The aim of this newsletter is to keep all members informed and updated with the activities of the AICA Executive team. This newsletter is distributed to members quarterly as an insert to Healthcare Infection.*

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### Mission:

*AICA provides infection control practitioners with a professional profile, identifies and promotes professional standards and lobbies with one voice on behalf of infection control practitioners.*

## From the President's Desk

These past months have proved exceptionally busy for the AICA Executive as we continue to engage with external bodies and raise the profile of Infection Control Professionals throughout Australia. We are at an important juncture with respect to our ability to make some crucial advances for our profession. It seems only a short time ago that some of us met in Hobart to learn more about the role of the Australian Commission in Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQHC) and how we might shape the future of infection prevention and control in Australia. It would also appear that the anniversary of my first year as AICA President has come around rather more quickly than I expected and I have chosen some key highlights and challenges that occurred along the way.

### Credentialling

Recently all members were advised of some important issues regarding the purpose and importance of credentialling. I hope that this has stimulated some debate amongst ICP's

*The AICA Executive seeks full endorsement and support from all members for this important professional process and encourages you to take advantage of the proposed initiatives in order to ensure you join the growing number of ICP's undertaking this vital process. Continued.....p6*

### Launch of national Infection Prevention Awareness Week

In line with the APIC tradition and promotion of International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW) AICA will be promoting Infection Prevention Week (IPW) in Australia.

*This year, 20<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> October will be the inaugural IPW and the AICA Executive has chosen the theme "It's in your Hands".* To facilitate IPW activities and programs within health care facilities a IPW page has been added to the AICA website. It is intended that the scope of IPW in Australia will grow in the future and this year I look forward to your comments and ideas in relation to this AICA member benefit. The National IPW will be formally launched at the AICA 2008 Conference.

### Who are we and where are we going??

I find it exceptionally difficult to enter into discussions with bodies such as the ACQSHC when we lack a documented career structure and definitions around the role of the ICP. We do not use standardised titles, nursing awards and pay structures and there is no consistency in scope of practice across the profession. AICA is exploring a number of initiatives that will define who we are which will also assist in uniting us as a profession and we watch with great interest the outcomes of Louise Hobbs work in this edition's Special Feature. To articulate the expanding roles of APIC members (USA), the concept of Infection has been floated on the AICA list and website. In the next year the AICA Executive will be moving to standardise many aspects of our profession. Perhaps at this point we can debate which collective title is appropriate for use in the Australian healthcare context. So to all Infection prevention and control consultants, practitioners, nurses, operators and preventionists I look forward to seeing you at the National conference October 8-10<sup>th</sup> in Melbourne where I will discuss these issues in more detail.

Claire Boardman, AICA President

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## **Australian Capital Territory**

### **Education Sessions**

Our breakfast meetings have continued to be a great success. With approximately 45 to 100 people attending each meeting and feedback has been very positive.

On 14<sup>th</sup> May the breakfast meeting guest speakers were Reimke Kampen and Dr Sanjaya Senanayake who spoke about "Outbreak Management".

The next breakfast meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> August at the Southern Cross Club.

Dr Ashley Watson talked about "Varicella".

Both meetings were very informative and well attended.

### **Scholarships**

A reminder that scholarships are available to members who wish to attend the conference in Melbourne in October.

Scholarships are also available for those who are undertaking education and for members who wish to apply for credentialing with AICA.

### **Elaine Graham Robertson Scholarship**

The Elaine Graham Robertson scholarship is to be awarded at the Melbourne conference. It is open to all AICA members presenting at the conference. Information on the AICA website.

Information and application forms for the above scholarships are available from Wendy Beckingham at [wendy.beckingham@act.gov.au](mailto:wendy.beckingham@act.gov.au)

### **Congratulations**

Sonja Eldridge from Infection Control and Anne-Marie Dunk from Wound Management have received a Covidien Infection Control Scholarship. Well done to you both.

### **Other News**

The AGM will be held on 10<sup>th</sup> September. Members are encouraged to attend. Further details will be available closer to the date.

We are hoping to advertise Infection Control Week (19<sup>th</sup> –24<sup>th</sup> October) in the local papers. Members are encouraged to promote Infection Control Week in their work area.

**Kerry Gill**

Newsletter Representative, ACT

## **New South Wales**

### **Education**

Infection Control seminars and education days are being planned for ICANSW members and other interested parties in the latter part of this year and early 2009. A Seminar Day and AGM are to be held on 17<sup>th</sup> October at the Burwood RSL Club. Information on topics as well as minutes and agenda for the AGM will be forwarded to all members. A Regional Education Day is being planned for November 2008 and another in the Hunter Valley in March 2009 (This

Education Day is timed to follow on from the Australian Society of Infectious Diseases conference).

### **Scholarships**

ICANSW maintain funds to provide scholarships for its members. The scholarships on offer have been reviewed and it was decided to increase amounts offered for scholarships as well as offer another scholarship for members who undertake further education in the field of Infection Control. We now offer 4 different scholarships – one for attending a State Conference; one for attendance at the National Conference; one for attendance at an International Conference; and the fourth for education. Members can apply after 2 years of continuous membership, and can reapply for scholarships after a further 2 years of continuous membership for State Conference or 5 years continuous membership for the other categories.

### **Membership Update**

Another potential change for ICANSW members is the way they can pay for membership, education days, State Conference, etc. With the increasing number of people who do the bulk of their banking on-line we are looking into setting up a B-Pay facility in order to offer another choice for payment.

Members are asked to ensure that their contact details are kept up to date with the Association, so that all information is received by the members. Please contact Michelle on (02) 9745 9613 or via email [ica@nursing.edu.au](mailto:ica@nursing.edu.au) to update your particulars. There have been some problems with changes to email addresses within Area Health Services which have not been notified to Michelle.

**Helen O'Harae.**

Newsletter Representative, NSW ICA

## **Tasmania**

### **TICA Education Grant & Conference Bursary**

TICA has granted 2 Cynthia Bryce Education Grant. Congratulations to Brett Mitchell and Tanya Field. The grant will assist Brett to attend the Australian Society of Microbiologists Conference and Tania will complete A Professional Development Certificate in Infection Control run by the College of Nursing NSW.

The AICA Biennial Conference Bursary is offered to members of TICA to encourage attendance at this important national event. TICA will offer 5 bursaries this year. The bursary will allow TICA members exposure to a scientific and practice based meeting, as well as network opportunities. Funding is aimed at assisting members to cover the costs of travel, accommodation and registration for the conference. Applications for this bursary closed on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008. Successful candidates will be notified by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in September.

### **Tasmanian Infection Prevention & Control Unit (TIPCU)**

In June all interested parties providing acute care from both public and private sectors attended a meeting at Ross to discuss and finalize the criteria and definitions for collection of MRO's and BSI to give consistency to a state wide data base.

TICA, together with TIPCU hosted an education session in August. This session was held in the south of the state on 13th August at the Old Wool Store Tasmanian. It was an exciting day offering practical education and information covering HAI's, pandemic Influenza, hand hygiene, environmental cleaning, and much more. The day was well supported with approx 65 delegates attending. The feed back through the evaluation form was very positive and the day enjoyed by all.

Sanofi Pasteur and CHCT will sponsor 2 evening education sessions on latest guidelines in Immunization and Pertussis Vaccination on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September. These will be held in Hobart at the Cascade Visitors Centre from 6.30pm 9.30pm

In June TICA was very pleased to host Suezanne Solvyns, Director of National CJD Support Network for an education and discussion forum. This Session was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended and we would like to extend thanks to Suezanne for sharing her time and expert knowledge with our group

A reminder to all members that the AGM will be held at Campbell Town on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The President, Secretary, and Vice President's roles are all up for election.

**Jenny Stubbings**  
Newsletter Representative, TICA

## **Victoria**

### **VICPA AGM 2008**

The VICPA AGM was held on the 22nd July 2008 following a very successful metropolitan workshop. Six VICPA executive vacancies were successfully filled. VICPA would like to congratulate Judy Brett, Donna Cameron, Lorraine Wilson, and Matt Mason on their re-election and also welcome new members Sue Atkins and Catina Eyres. The new VICPA Executive line up for 2008-2009 is as follows:

- President: Judy Brett
- Vice President: Wendy Bacalja
- Secretary: Lorraine Wilson
- Treasurer: Matt Mason
- Membership Secretary: Robyn Kelly
- Education Officers: Louise Wright, Sue Atkins and Catina Eyres
- Publicity & Newsletter: Donna Cameron
- Conference Convenor: AICA 2008: Judy Brett

- AICA: John Greenough

VICPA would like to thank and acknowledge outgoing executive members Bernadette Brogan and Richard Bartolo for their hard work and significant contributions to the organisation and wish them all the best in their future endeavours. AGM reports can be obtained on the website [www.vicpa.org.au](http://www.vicpa.org.au).

### **AICA 2008 Conference hosted by VICPA**

VICPA is hosting AICA 2008, the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial national conference to be held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> October 2008. The conference promises a wide range of educational opportunities for all infection control personnel from novice to expert. Registration is now open and further details can be found on the website [www.aica2008.com](http://www.aica2008.com).

### **VICNISS / ANZICS working party**

VICNISS, in conjunction with the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society (ANZICS), are establishing a working party to review a number of aspects of infection surveillance in the intensive care setting, including appropriate benchmarking of hospitals and standardisation of infection rates. VICPA has assisted with the recruitment of two suitably qualified infection control professionals, Matt Richards from the Royal Melbourne Hospital and Leanne Houston from The Alfred, to be included on the working party.

### **Infection Prevention Awareness Week 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

VICPA will once again promote Infection Prevention Awareness Week providing members a great opportunity to engage staff and highlight the importance of Infection Prevention within the healthcare setting. To assist participating members in the planning of their Infection Prevention Awareness Week resources and ideas are available on the VICPA website [www.vicpa.org.au](http://www.vicpa.org.au).

### **Bi-Monthly VICPA/VICNISS Journal Club**

For full event information regarding future journal clubs due to be held in 2008/2009 visit the VICPA website [www.vicpa.org.au](http://www.vicpa.org.au)

**Judy Brett**  
Newsletter Representative, VICPA

## **Western Australia**

### **ICAWA Quarterly Education Sessions**

The next education session planned for August will be presented by the CJD Support Network. Rural infection control nurses will be able to participate by videoteleconference.

A general meeting for ICAWA members will be held prior to the education.

### **ICAWA Seminar**

A one-day Seminar planned for 15 September, 2008 is titled "Evidence into Action – Infection Prevention and Control". Dr Gary Dowse, who has recently returned from work in the Antarctica, will present the Aileen Plant Memorial lecture on "Vaccine Preventable Diseases in health-care settings – the tip of the iceberg." Other topics include MRSA, neonatal issues, pandemic update, HCW vaccination, teaching tool for PPE use and equine influenza.

### **ICAWA Annual General Meeting**

This will be held at the one-day seminar in September. Nomination forms for vacant positions, including that of the President, are due for distribution at the end of July.

### **AICA Conference 2010.**

ICAWA will host the AICA 2010 Conference in Perth on behalf of AICA. Further to the distribution for Expressions of Interest among ICAWA members, an organising committee has been formed. An action plan has been developed by the group, and work commenced on planning for the Conference.

### **Australian Commission on Safety & Quality in Healthcare (The Commission)**

ICAWA continues to inform and update members on the Commission's program on the management of healthcare associated infections.

### **Amendment to the March issue of AICA National News - "ICAWA executive members support medical student education"**

ICAWA executive would like to clarify that this initiative was not driven by them but they were given the opportunity to participate with other IC personnel from the hospitals

**Allison Peterson**

**Newsletter Representative – ICAWA**

## **South Australia**

### **Education Seminars**

The September seminar on Design, Construction and Renovation will be addressing many interesting and relevant themes with expert speakers to capture the audience's attention.

ICASA will be holding computer workshops in November. Additional information and expressions of interest regarding this day will be forwarded to members in the near future.

Planning is underway to hold the combined seminar day with SAWMA and SAVNS, "The Patient Journey" in the Metropolitan Region in February 2008. The scheduled seminar day in Mt Gambier for November 1 has been cancelled. Regional members are invited to attend the planned combined seminar in February.

ICASA has invited expressions of interest for a computer software training day to be held in November. More

information regarding this will be circulated as it becomes available.

### **SA Health Infection Control Service**

Linda Henderson was appointed in June as the new Infection Control Nurse Advisor in the Infection Control Service. Linda's immediate past experience was as the Infection Control Clinical Nurse Consultant in the Royal District Nursing Society (RDNS). This experience of more than 8 years with the RDNS brings considerable insight regarding infection control in the community setting. Linda joined the ICASA Executive as a committee member in 2007, and has indicated that she is keen to take up additional duties in the 2008/2009 committee. We look forward to working with Linda and sharing her valuable expertise.

### **ICASA Scholarship for 2008 AICA Conference, Melbourne**

The ICASA executive committee would like to congratulate Lisa Ryan and Sally Clarke as the successful recipients of this scholarship. This will cover the cost of conference registrations, and a workshop of their choice. Both Lisa and Sally will be submitting an article on a topic of interest from the conference for the December edition of the ICASA Newsletter.

### **ICASA Member Survey**

Thank you to all the ICASA members who responded to our recent survey. There was an excellent return rate of 41%. The results are currently being collated and will be used in the development of ICASA strategic plans to ensure members' needs are being met. The final report will be posted on the ICASA website in the near future.

### **ICASA AGM**

ICASA held its AGM on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August. The new executive committee members will be posted on the ICASA website and in the September Newsletter. After the AGM, members and their partners attended the traditional midyear dinner.

The ICASA Executive for 2008-2009 is as follows:

- President: Marija Juraja
- Vice President/AICA Rep: Beth Bint
- Secretary: Lyndall Finn
- Treasurer: Craig Anderson
- Membership & Website: Chris Cope
- Membership: Linda Henderson
- Committee Members: Lisa Ryan and Judy Hicks

### **Scholarship Advanced Notice**

Applications for ICASA's 2009 Scholarship will be called for in December 2008. This can be used for Infection Control related: conferences; workshops; short and formal courses. Start planning your application now.

**Marija Juraja**

**Newsletter Representative – ICASA**

## Queensland

### HOLD THE DATE – ICPAQ 2009 Bi-annual conference

The Infection Control Practitioners Association of Queensland is pleased to announce its 2009 Bi-annual Conference "Prevention in Paradise" scheduled to be held at the Gold Coast International Hotel, Surfers Paradise from the 26-28<sup>th</sup> August 2009.

More than just a tax deductible opportunity to escape the winter chills of southern and western parts of Australia, the content of this conference will be state-of-the-art and designed to attract ICPs from South East Asia, New Zealand and all parts of Australia irrespective of whether they work in public, private, long term or acute care sectors. Delegates from academic and commercial settings will also be warmly welcomed.

The planning committee is currently negotiating with some exciting and motivational keynote and invited speakers whose contributions will have the potential to revolutionise the way that delegates perform their critical roles in infection prevention and patient safety. The committee is delighted to have negotiated the opportunity to work with ICMS as professional conference planners in delivering this conference in 2009. Abstract submission and early registration dates are currently being finalised and we urge you to keep an eye on progress for "Prevention in Paradise" through the ICPAQ website at [www.icpaq.org](http://www.icpaq.org). We will continue to provide updates to all AICA members through the AICA newsletter.

If you have specific questions or suggestions regarding this meeting please contact Dr Cath Murphy by phone on 0419 953 680 or e-mail at [cmurp@icp.au.com](mailto:cmurp@icp.au.com)

### ICPAQ General Meetings - Education Forums

Four ICPAQ general meetings were scheduled this year and the format has been changed to rotate the location between different hospitals/healthcare facilities with the intent of profiling ICPs from the public, private and aged/residential care sectors in the local area.

The June meeting was held at the Mater Health Services which has recently undergone substantial building and renovation projects that provided the theme for the meeting. Presentations were provided by Jan Evans (Mater Adult Hospital), Martyn Tilse (Director of Microbiology) and Mandy Mitchie (Mater Private Hospital).

In September the AGM will be held at the Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital and information on the new office bearers will be provided in the next newsletter. The Education Forum that will be held in conjunction with the AGM will include a presentation by David Paterson who will address "Hot Topics in Infectious Diseases". The December meeting is planned as a Christmas function and will be held at the Logan Hospital.

**Louise Davis**

**Newsletter Representative – ICPAQ**

## Special Feature

### Developing Competencies Standards for the Victorian Infection Control Professional.

It is recognised that a successful infection control program requires a qualified infection control professional to oversee its implementation. The aim of this study was to develop a set of competency standards for Victorian Infection Control Professionals that would provide a framework for identifying professional development needs of the workforce. The study first sought to define the scope of practice of the infection control professional.

Twelve identified experts from the field of infection control were invited to participate in a series of three workshops to develop competency standards for the infection control professional (ICP). The first workshop, based on a DACUM technique, identified eight key performance areas (domains) of practice and their associated capabilities. The outcomes of this workshop were validated by survey of the broader Victorian infection control community.

The domains of practice and capabilities identified within the first workshop were used to guide the development of the competency standards. Participants in workshop two were asked to develop three quality statements, based on Benner's (1984) model, to describe the typical workplace performance of a novice, competent and expert for each of the capabilities. In the last workshop a pair wise comparison technique was used. Participants were asked to place each of the three quality statements for a capability onto a blank board according to their relative difficulty. This process was repeated for all of the capabilities within a domain. Layers became visible and could be separated to identify the thresholds between developmental levels. An interpretation of the criteria positioned at approximately the same levels was then able to be made, with each successive layer representing an increasing level of performance. Four levels of practice were identified; novice/advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert.

The final competency statements for each domain were modelled on current nursing standards framework and were written to reflect competent level of practice. The competency statements constructed within the workshops will be used to guide the development of a self assessment tool.

**Louise Hobbs BHSc, MHSc(hons)**

**Manager – Infection Prevention and Surveillance Service  
Melbourne Health**

## Why is credentialling important to AICA and our members ?

Members would be aware that for some years AICA has provided an important professional development opportunity for senior infection control professionals (ICPs) through the process of credentialling. Since the establishment of the AICA Credentialling Committee (previously known as Credentialling Board) there has been considerable debate regarding the merits and need for such a process. During recent meetings of the AICA Executive there has been renewed support and understanding about the importance of Credentialling and, the need to encourage members to become credentialled.

To date efforts to mobilise the membership to explore this avenue of professional development have not been broadly accepted which may be due to a lack of understanding regarding the process and potential benefits in undertaking the process.

Recently a letter\* was sent to all members and highlighted some of the important changes occurring at a National level and to engage the State and Territory Associations in support of this process. **The AICA Executive extends the challenge to all State and Territory Executive members to become credentialled by the end of 2008 and that in so doing so we are collectively leading by example.** This important step will enable senior ICPs to be in a position to assist those considering the process by way enhances the profile of infection control professionals as a group, and has positive benefits at a personal and professional level by demonstrating to employers a commitment to, and recognised expertise in, the prevention and control of infection. *\*the letter is available in full from the AICA website*

### Why is credentialling important to the AICA membership?

In summary it is timely we revisit the need and requirement for experienced ICP's to undertake the process for the following reasons:

- AICA is working closely with (ACQSHC) on a number of initiatives including the scope of practice and professional development of ICP's so that they are better equipped to undertake the proposed projects such as the implementation of prevention strategies (toolkits)
- the NHMRC Infection Control guidelines are currently being reviewed. There is an expectation that the role and scope of the ICP will be included and, will contain criteria for what is required for an ICP to run a program. In addition the Commission has tendered a project regarding Scope of Practice of the Australian ICP that will add weight to the arguments we have already put forward.
- preliminary discussions with ACHS include the need to have a credentialled ICP coordinating the program as a requirement under EQulP 4.

- due to a lack of documented career structure, and definitions around the role of the ICP there is a real need to provide some sort of assessment for ICP's working independently or as part of a team and providing expert infection control advice. To date there have been no basic qualification and training requirements for ICP's which begs the question – how competent are ICP's to practice in their health service/area?
- the self regulating nature of this process (which is voluntary) will hopefully encourage professionally minded ICP's to join their peers in undertaking the process. Other bodies have had this process forced upon them by external regulatory bodies which is something we would like to avoid. Further to this with the revised National Nursing Board structure proposed there are considerations regarding the ICP's ability to demonstrate competence as a nurse.

### Key initiatives in 2008

#### *Credentialling workshop AICA Conference 2008*

To assist ICPs in this process AICA is holding a Credentialling Workshop facilitated by Louise Hobbs (Chair of CC) and Deborah Macbeth at the forthcoming AICA conference. Potential applicants are invited to attend this workshop to find out more about the process and commence work on their applications. Members of the Credentialling Committee will also be present to provide support and assistance.

#### *Fee amnesty until 31 December 2008.*

Until the end of the year the normal fee of \$350 will be waived for ALL AICA members who would like to become credentialled. Normal fees for credentialling have been waived, so applicants will only pay a \$100 fee on submission of the application. Next year normal fees will apply.

#### *AICA Website - Tips and support information*

Several examples and tips for submission are now available on the AICA website to assist and guide applicants through the process: [www.aica.org.au](http://www.aica.org.au). This site is regularly revised to reflect the experiences of several recently credentialled members.

### Congratulations to the following ICP's who took up the challenge in the last 2 months

- Wendy Beckingham (ACT)
- Dianne Dreimanis (ACT)
- Elizabeth Gillespie (Vic)
- Louise Hobbs (Vic)
- Brett Mitchell (Tas)

If you would like to discuss this process further please feel free at any time to contact myself or a member of the CC for clarification and support.

Sincerely

**Claire Boardman**

**President, AICA**