

2018 Summary: Virginia Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) Advisory Group

The **Virginia HAI Advisory Group** is a voluntary, statewide, multidisciplinary group that coordinates the efforts of the Commonwealth's HAI stakeholders to align strategies, share information and resources, and produce synergies that will accelerate statewide and individual institutional progress in providing safe, high quality, healthcare for Virginia residents by preventing HAIs and antimicrobial resistance (AR).



The group includes persons with expertise in the surveillance, prevention, and control of healthcare-associated infections, including representation from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Health Quality Innovators (HQI), the Virginia Quality Innovation Network – Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO), the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association (VHHA), the Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology – Virginia Chapter (APIC-VA), healthcare providers, infection preventionists, pharmacists, consumers, and physician champions.

This document outlines 2018 work of the Virginia HAI Advisory Group.

Flu Vaccination Press Event, October

At an [event](#) in Richmond sponsored by VDH, state and local health leaders joined together to highlight the importance of the influenza vaccine, especially for healthcare workers, and to receive a flu vaccine themselves. Speakers included Secretary of Health and Human Resources Dr. Daniel Carey, and Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. M. Norman Oliver. Also present at the event to promote the flu vaccine were Behavioral Health and Developmental Services Commissioner Dr. S. Hughes Melton, and VDH Deputy Commissioner for Population Health, Dr. Laurie Forlano. The public health messages were spread widely by partner agencies and the media.

Regional Antibigram, November

[Statewide and regional cumulative antibiograms](#) were created for the first time to develop a better understanding of antimicrobial susceptibility and resistance among bacterial isolates in Virginia. To do so, 2017 facility-level antibiograms were gathered and analyzed from 76 Virginia hospitals (89% of all Virginia hospitals). The Advisory Group also recognized the importance of this antibiogram in helping small hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, physician practices and other facilities choose the appropriate antibiotics based on regional susceptibility since these facilities often do not have enough clinical isolates to create an antibiogram. An updated statewide antibiogram will be produced annually.

Viral Upper Respiratory Infection Algorithms, June

The Safe Antibiotic Stewardship Innovators (SASI) workgroup identified the need to reduce inappropriate antibiotic prescribing. The SASI workgroup developed [algorithms](#) for the three most common mis-diagnosed viral upper respiratory infections: bronchitis, sinusitis and pharyngitis. These algorithms can be used by practitioners in all settings of care to support appropriate antibiotic prescribing. The algorithms have been shared through newsletters, listservs, the Virginia HAI Advisory Group website and partner websites.

Promoting U. S. Antibiotic Awareness Week 2018, November

Initiatives were developed and implemented during U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week to promote safe antibiotic use and antimicrobial stewardship.

- ◆ **Social Media Posts:** VHHA, HQI and VDH crafted and posted unique social media messages, using graphics that were developed for the Advisory Group for U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week. Each organization then shared each other's social media posts, promoting the message that the Advisory Group is unified in the effort to fight antimicrobial resistance.
- ◆ **Nursing Education Campaign:** A [statewide education campaign](#) was conducted to help nurses become more educated on antimicrobial resistance. They were asked to read a CDC/ANA White Paper – Redefining the Antibiotic Stewardship Team: Recommendations from the American Nurses Association/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Workgroup on the Role of Registered Nurses in Hospital Antibiotic Stewardship Practices – and then asked to complete a short quiz. The quiz tested their knowledge and also asked about what antimicrobial stewardship tasks they would like to be more involved with, and what education they would like to receive.

Dialysis Center ICAR, November

The Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) tool is a valuable tool used to directly observe infection control practices in healthcare settings. This tool is most often utilized by the Department of Health, but is useful information for all organizations working on quality improvement. ICAR tools are available for acute care, dialysis, long-term care, and outpatient settings. The Virginia Department of Health and Health Quality Innovators partnered together to identify and successfully complete the first Virginia dialysis ICAR.

APIC Nuts and Bolts of Infection Prevention Across the Settings of Care, October

In 2018, the Education Workgroup partnered with Virginia APIC to present the Virginia APIC pre-conference. This education included sessions on standard precautions, transmission precautions, microbiology, environmental cleaning and disinfection, and occupational health. Many settings of care were represented at the training, including ambulatory surgery, physician practices, behavioral health, nursing home and acute care.

Reaching Additional Settings of Care

Advisory Group membership has expanded to include a more diverse membership, reaching across different settings of care. New members in 2018 included representatives from long-term acute care hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, the state public health laboratory and the Medical Society of Virginia.

APIC-VA Award

The collaborative work done by the Advisory Group was recently recognized by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC). The APIC-VA chapter was honored with a chapter excellence award in the category of Synergistic Alliances for its membership in the Advisory Group, and for participating in and supporting the 2017 consensus statement on the annual vaccination of healthcare workers for influenza prevention.