



The Virginia Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) Advisory Group (VHAG) 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 HAIs, 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 2022 highlights of the Virginia HAI Advisory Group.

New Look for 2023!

In collaboration with VDH graphic design experts, VHAG has updated its logo and style guide. A document header and standalone logo tag, along with a five-color palette, are now available for branding VHAG content.



Infection Prevention & Control Assessment Consensus Statement

VHAG stakeholders drafted, signed, and promoted the 2022 Consensus Statement Promoting Healthcare Facility Participation in Proactive Infection Prevention and Control Assessments (IPCAs). This consensus statement strongly recommends that healthcare facilities from focused settings consider participating in a proactive IPCA. The outlined benefits include supporting facilities by enhancing IPC capacity, strengthening collaborative relationships between VDH and facilities, and providing guidance and resources to address areas identified for improvement. More information on conducting IPCAs with VDH can be found on the VDH Infection Control Assessment and Response [website](#).

Safe Antibiotic Stewardship Innovators (SASI) Workgroup

The SASI Workgroup hosted the [Antimicrobial Stewardship Summer Camp](#) from June-August 2022. Three webinars covered the following topics: 1) Building an Antimicrobial Stewardship Program using the CDC Core Elements, 2) Antimicrobial Stewardship Program: Using Data, and 3) Reducing Hospital Onset Clostridioides difficile infection (CDI) through Diagnostic Stewardship. This Workgroup was also responsible for analyzing the antibiotic stewardship data within the Patient Safety Annual Facility Survey. Lastly, in November 2022, the SASI Workgroup promoted U.S. Antibiotics Awareness Week.

Annual Priority Workgroup: Surgical Site Infections

The Annual Priority Workgroup completed the second and final year focusing on abdominal hysterectomy surgical site infections (SSIs) in Virginia hospitals. This Workgroup included infection preventionists (IPs) from six hospitals and collaboration with VDH to review quarterly data from CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). To address concerns related to elevated abdominal hysterectomy SSIs, the Annual Priority Workgroup created and completed a 4-part educational webinar series to address identified risk factors and evidence-based best practices. The webinars included: 1) [Optimizing SSI Rates after Hysterectomy Through Infection Prevention Bundles](#), 2) [Abdominal Hysterectomy SSI Microorganisms & Antibiotic Management](#), 3) [Surgical Site Infection Sources: Endogenous, Exogenous, and the Preventable](#), and 4) [Abdominal Hysterectomy SSI Prevention & Best Practices](#). During the project period, NHSN data reflected a lower standardized infection ratio (SIR) for SSIs following abdominal hysterectomies in Virginia hospitals, and the goal was met and sustained for four quarters through 2022 Quarter 1 data.

Infection Prevention Education Workgroup

The VHAG Infection Prevention Education Workgroup continued to develop the Virginia Infection Prevention and Control Training Alliance (VIPTA), a statewide infection prevention and control (IPC) education collaborative. Planned VIPTA products include a monthly bulletin, a curated IPC education and training resource library, and a statewide calendar of IPC-related educational events. VIPTA partners will be assembled and the VIPTA website will launch in 2023.

2022