

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)

Background

Membership:

Over 10,000 members who are primarily infection control professionals with backgrounds in nursing, medicine, medical technology, and public health who work in a variety of health care settings (e.g., acute care, ambulatory care, long-term care, mental health, rehabilitation, and public health).

Responsibilities in bioterrorism/WMD events:

APIC members are responsible for preparing and supporting the response to actual, suspected, and potential bioterrorism events and emerging infectious diseases in health care settings. Specific bioterrorism-related responsibilities include:

- Identifying and developing relevant bioterrorism-related information for use in responding to an event.
- Developing and implementing bioterrorism response plans.
- Disseminating bioterrorism information to healthcare personnel in their organization, local health care providers, and the communities they serve
- Serving as a liaison between their facilities and the local public health and emergency response systems.

Past bioterrorism/WMD information dissemination activities to members:

APIC has distributed APIC/CDC's *Bioterrorism Readiness Plan: A Template for Healthcare Facilities* through their network of local chapters. Many chapters sponsored meetings and workshops to allow their members to discuss this document and adapt it for their local needs. These meetings were also opportunities for local networks to form to develop and implement local bioterrorism response plans.

Current modes of communication with members:

1. Print materials
 - a. Twice quarterly peer reviewed journal (*American Journal of Infection Control*)
 - b. Bimonthly news magazine (*APIC News*)
 - c. Quarterly newsletter for non-acute care practitioners (*Infection Control Connection*)
2. Electronic
 - a. Website (<http://www.apic.org/>)
 - b. Electronically distributed bimonthly news magazine (*APIC News*)
 - c. Listserv (*APICList*)
 - d. Push email

Project

Target audience(s):

1. All members

Target need(s):

1. Assess ability to disseminate information through APIC chapter networks.

Project goals:

1. Determine the effectiveness and efficiency of specific communication methods to its members

2. Demonstrate how APIC chapters work as a network to facilitate rapid transfer of information to frontline healthcare workers at the local level
3. Measure the dissemination of information to healthcare providers within the broad range of healthcare facilities served by APIC members.

Information to be disseminated:

1. Just-in-case SARS-related information
2. Just-in-time or immediate/urgent need-to-know information should an emergency arise

Dissemination strategy:

1. Pre-dissemination survey to APIC Chapter Presidents:
 - a. How have chapters disseminated important information to members
 - b. How have APIC members further disseminated this information to frontline healthcare providers
 - c. How have APIC chapter members assisted each other in developing local plans
2. Results of the surveys returned to Chapter Presidents in the form of current practices.
3. CDC Target Information Dissemination
 - a. New relevant SARS information or other urgent information developed by the CDC
 - b. Distributed to all APIC Chapter Presidents via email with instructions for further use and dissemination to chapter members
 - c. Chapter Presidents will be instructed to provide guidance to chapter members and encourage them to quantify their dissemination efforts

Evaluation strategy:

1. Follow up telephone survey of all Chapter Presidents via scripted tool and qualitative and semi-quantitative evaluation tool:
 - a. Could all attachments be opened?
 - b. How did Chapter Presidents use the information?
 - c. What methods did the President use to disseminate to members?
 - d. Was information timely/useful for President and members?
 - e. Presidents' evaluations of effectiveness of information and of dissemination process
 - f. Presidents' input regarding improvements
2. Follow up assessment of members in selected chapters to validate responses from Chapter Presidents and to receive additional feedback