

**PHYSICIAN DIRECTOR
GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

CHICA, PHAC, Accreditation Canada & CPSI Partnership for National Harmonized Definitions for Nosocomial Surveillance

The Government and Public Affairs Committee members, and CHICA members in general, expressed concern over the growing number of disparate definitions and requirements for nosocomial infection surveillance and reporting to a wide variety of government and non-government organizations. I brought this to the attention of Accreditation Canada, CPSI and PHAC and was able to negotiate a partnership to begin to address the issue. CPSI generously supported a preliminary meeting in August 2008 and PHAC/CNISP supported the development of harmonized minimum definitions for MRSA, VRE and *C. difficile* surveillance. A working group was established to assist with these definitions and they are now in their final versions. The next step will be for CHICA and its partners to promote these to CPSI, Accreditation Canada and to each province that requires reporting etc. I suggest that PHAC and CNISP may be able to assist in promoting these to the provinces. Consideration should be given to a paper to accompany these definitions to explain their purpose and the advantages of a national set of harmonized minimum definitions. An agreement will have to be hammered out to make it clear how these definitions are maintained over time. I recommend a working group of the partners involved to work through CNISP to do this as CNISP has a long history of success in national surveillance.

CCHSA Accreditation Standards and CHICA Partnership

CCHSA has changed its name to Accreditation Canada. As the designated representative to Accreditation Canada on behalf of CHICA-Canada I have been working with their accreditation specialists to consider new Required Organizational Practices (ROPs). Under consideration are:

1. Documentation of the education provided on infection prevention and control to staff
2. Objective monitoring of environmental cleaning with fluorescent marker
3. Antimicrobial stewardship
4. Compliance with MRSA and VRE screening cultures

At CHICA's request the ROP for pneumococcal vaccination has been amended to apply to long term care environments only.

I will be seeking input from CHICA members on the current Accreditation Canada standards with a view to providing feedback to Accreditation Canada.

I have recently joined the ranks as a surveyor for Accreditation Canada.

The "Power of One" Campaign to eliminate CDAD

At the CHICA Board meeting in Montreal in June 2008 I proposed a resolution for a CHICA research fund dedicated to *C. difficile* control. This motion was supported at the Board and ratified at the AGM. Applications were accepted and funds were awarded to the successful application. It is important that CHICA-Canada is seen to be leading in the battle against *C. difficile* and funding new research is a very important way to do this especially as the publicly funded research base for nosocomial infection research is very limited in Canada.

Also at the last Board meeting I proposed that CHICA issue a challenge to the federal, provincial and territorial governments to create a research fund on *C. difficile*. This too was supported by the Board and ratified at the AGM in Montreal. The intent is to ask for one loonie per Canadian in the fund for a total of \$35 million. Given the political environment in the later half of 2008 in Canada it was not possible or wise to formally issue this challenge but we must go forward with this some time in 2009.

Industrial Relations Committee (IRC)

At the annual CHICA-Canada conference in Edmonton, we met with Patron Members and proposed our new Industrial Membership policy including a new membership fee structure. As well terms of reference for an Industrial Relations Committee was discussed at the Board meeting and pitched to prospective Industry Members. We sent the package out for comment from Industry Members. The major issue identified is ability of smaller companies to afford the entry level package of industrial membership. The draft Industrial Membership Policy, and the Terms of reference of the Industrial Relations Committee will be used for a year to assess progress and then be reviewed.

The inaugural meeting of the IRC was successfully held at the Montreal meeting in June 2008. Membership was selected and terms of office determined by lottery. Issues to collaborate on included the speed and quality of product review by Health Canada and negative incentive to product development such as Natural Health Products Directorate reviewing alcohol hand sanitizers with a very slow process. Concerns exist that the quality of product review is not stringent enough as well. It was felt that this would be a good issue for CHICA IRC to work on. But it will require a well prepared review of the issues in advance by IRC experts in this area.

Long Term Care Resources for Infection Control (LTC RICH)

The study, funded by CHICA with support from 3M, ArjoHuntleigh and Tyco Healthcare, is completed and was published in the March 2009 issue of AJIC.

Acute Care Resources for Infection Control III (Acute Care RICH III)

This PHAC sponsored project is complete and published in the December 2008 issue of AJIC.

Reflections of 12 Years as Physician Director

It has been my privilege to serve CHICA-Canada and its membership as Physician Director and Board member for the last 12 years, almost half of CHICA's history. Much as has been accomplished and there remains much to do. CHICA has matured and grown into an important force for change. We have a revamped industrial relations and membership structure that will serve industrial members and CHICA well and provide many new exciting opportunities. CHICA Canada is now a key partner with Accreditation Canada, CPSI and PHAC. CHICA has been represented well internationally and is highly respected for its advocacy and efforts across the country and globe.

I wish my fellow Board Members success, courage and tenacity as they lead CHICA in the future. I also encourage all CHICA members to contribute to and stay involved with the work and life of CHICA Canada. There is no finer organization anywhere!

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Zoutman MD FRCPC
Physician Director