



Network News

Waterloo Wellington Infection Control Network
January/February 2007

Special Interest Articles:

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- **Education Opportunities**
- **Employment Corner: job postings from around the area**

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Outbreak Season Is In Full Swing!

Outbreak season has arrived in Waterloo Wellington and across Ontario. There have been multiple reports of outbreaks of diarrhea and vomiting in long term care homes, hospitals and child care centres.

Respiratory outbreaks in long term care have also occurred as a result of parainfluenza and respiratory syncytial virus.

Influenza isolates characterized to date for this season by the National Microbiology Lab are a match to the strains included in the 2006-07 vaccine: A/Wisconsin and A/New Caledonia.

Prevention of both diarrhea and respiratory illness is achieved by **practicing good hand hygiene and staying away from others when ill.**

Infection prevention and control professionals are hard at work this season reinforcing this message.



Community-Associated MRSA (CA-MRSA)

In the past 18 months, CA-MRSA has started to appear throughout Ontario with increasing frequency. CA-MRSA strains are different from hospital-acquired strains. They occur in adults and children without any exposure to hospitals or healthcare. While they are sometimes associated with jails, intravenous drug use, or homelessness, they also occur without these risk factors. Some cases appear to be associated with travel to areas of the U.S. where community-associated MRSA is common (e.g. Texas and southern

California). Outbreaks have also been reported in sports teams with frequent skin to skin contact such as wrestling and football.

Most infections with community-associated MRSA are skin infections. Typically the infection begins as a small cellulitis with a central necrotic area – people may think that they have a spider bite. By the time that patients are seen the infection is often a large abscess which may need to be drained.

In some areas like Victoria, BC, the incidence of CA-MRSA increased rapidly after the initial

reports. While we are not sure how quickly CA-MRSA will appear in Ontario, healthcare providers should be aware of this potential. For further information see the September/October 2006 issue of *Canadian Journal of Infectious Disease Medical Microbiology* for a supplement titled "Guidelines for the prevention and management of community-associated methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*: a perspective for Canadian healthcare practitioners". You may access a copy of this document through the WWICN office or on-line at www.pulsus.com/infdis/17_SC/Pdf/mrsa_ed.pdf

CIC Study Group Update



The CIC (Certification in Infection Control) Study Group is still going strong. The group has met several times and meetings consist of reviewing practice study questions and discussion on the relevant topics.

The December meeting was hosted by Guelph General Hospital and included a tour of the laboratory and an informal "microbiology 101" lecture

from John Tarbush of the lab at GGH.

A survey of the study group participants was conducted via email to determine if the format of the sessions was meeting individual learning needs. There was a very high response rate and all who responded reported that they are enjoying the group very much and would not change the format in any way.

The group has been meeting since October 2006 and most participants intend to write the exam by April 2007. Others are not yet eligible (2 years of experience are required), and will attend another session of the study group before they write the exam.

Another study group will be gathered in the fall of 2007.

"Creativity is a type of learning process where the teacher and the pupil are located in the same individual"

-- Arthur Koestler

Interesting Web Resources

APIC recently provided input into a new website, www.preventinfluenza.org which was launched by the National Influenza Vaccine Summit for the benefit of healthcare professionals, the public and the press. The site is designed to encourage influenza vaccination during December and into the first months of 2007. Resources on this site include disease information, and flu vaccine facts and myths.

www.infectioncontrolresource.org

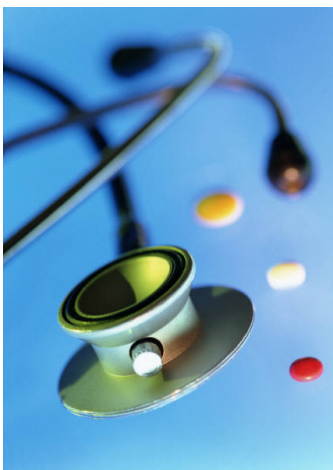
The Infection Control Resource: Prevention Strategies for IC Practitioners and Professional Nurses covers practical, clinically relevant topics in the field of infection control. Articles are intended to be relevant to the infection control practitioner as well as address the information and training needs of the professional nurse. The website aims to be a resource for both groups of professionals in their mutual goal of improving infection control for patients and healthcare workers.

Ask the Expert!

Dr. Martha Fulford, WWICN Medical Coordinator will be answering one infection prevention and control question per newsletter in order to share the answer with all readers. If you have a burning question

that you'd like Dr. Fulford to answer, please send it in to the WWICN Office c/o Sue McCloskey, WWICN Administrative Assistant at 519-621-2333 ext. 3092 or smccloskey@cmh.org.

You can request to stay anonymous, or identify yourself to be credited with the brilliance of your question!



WWICN Resource Library is Expanding!

The WWICN Library is expanding with each resource that we purchase. Thanks to those of you who have given us a wish list of books or DVDs that you would like us to acquire. The list below outlines the major resources that we have acquired so far. If you would like to borrow any of them, please contact Sue McCloskey at 519-621-2333 ext. 3092 or at smccloskey@cmh.org.

Books

- ✓ A Guide to Infection Control in Hospitals
- ✓ APIC Text of Infection Control and Epidemiology
- ✓ APIC Certification Study Guides
- ✓ Control of Communicable Diseases in Man
- ✓ Guidelines for Design and Construction of Health Care Facilities
- ✓ Health and Safety in Emergency Management
- ✓ Home Care Handbook of Infection Control
- ✓ Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Control
- ✓ Infection Control in the Physician's Office
- ✓ Legionella Control in Health Care Facilities
- ✓ Manual of Clinical Microbiology
- ✓ Medical Microbiology
- ✓ Principles and Practice of Infectious Diseases
- ✓ Ready Reference to APIC Text
- ✓ Ready Reference to Infection Control in Select Populations
- ✓ Ready Reference to Microbes
- ✓ Red Book – Report of Committee on Infectious Diseases

DVDs

- ✓ Break the Chain
- ✓ Don of a New Day
- ✓ Infection Control and Bloodborne Pathogens
- ✓ Infection Prevention and Control
- ✓ Pandemic Influenza: Prepare for the Worst, Hope for the Best
- ✓ Personal Protection Against Infection
- ✓ Why Don't We Do It in Our Sleeves?

Tool Kits

- ✓ Best Practices for ESBL and Klebsiella
- ✓ Construction and Renovation Tool Kit
- ✓ Infection Control Audit Tool Kit
- ✓ Infection Control for Long Term Care Facilities

If you know of a good resource that the WWICN library should hold, please let us know and we will acquire it as the budget allows.

Education Opportunities

"The wisest mind has something yet to learn."

-- George Santayana

- **ARO Workshop – Waterloo Wellington Infection Control Network**
 - February 19, 2007
 - Guelph, ON
 - smccloskey@cmh.org to register
- **CIPHI Communicable Disease Conference – Operation CDI**
 - May 3 – 4, 2007
 - Toronto, Airport Holiday Inn
 - jaimie.chow@region.durham.on.ca
- **2007 Healthcare Worker Safety Forum – OSACH and CSA**
 - March 5-6, 2007
 - Mississauga, ON
 - www.learningcentre.csa.ca
- **Webber Training Teleclasses**
 - www.webbertraining.com
- **CHICA-Canada Conference**
 - June 9-14, 2007
 - Edmonton, Alberta
 - www.chica.org

Foodhandler Training – from your public health unit

- ✚ **Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health --- (519) 821-2370**
 - January 30
 - February 12
 - March 6
 - February 28, Fergus
- ✚ **Region of Waterloo Public Health --- (519) 883-2008**
 - February 7 and 8
 - March 21
 - April 3 and 4
 - May 1 -- Cambridge
 - June 19 and 20
 - There is also a home study option.*

On-Line Infection Prevention and Control Courses – www.chica.org
 Visit the Community and Hospital Infection Control Association of Canada website for info on the on-line courses from the following universities:

- ❖ University of British Columbia
- ❖ University of Calgary
- ❖ Queen's University

Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci

Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci (VRE for short) is an antibiotic resistant organism that has been on the rise in health care agencies recently.

VRE can colonize a person's intestinal tract and cause no symptoms at all, but can cause infection later or be spread to another person if touched by contaminated hands or equipment. If VRE gets into a wound or the bloodstream, serious infections can occur that

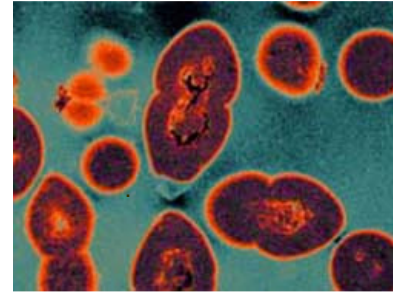
are difficult to treat. VRE infections can be fatal.

To prevent the transmission of VRE, the following things are important:

- Scrupulous hand hygiene between caring for patients/residents
- Dedicated equipment for the patient or resident or disinfection between uses
- Environmental cleaning – particularly “high touch areas” such as bed rails, door knobs, phones, call bells

- Notification of health care providers when person is transferred from one agency or provider to another
- Education of staff, clients and families of the precautions to take

Precautions are different depending on the healthcare setting of the VRE positive person. Precautions for VRE are more strict in hospitals as fellow patients are more critically ill and there is more direct intense care that is provided compared to other settings. Long term care homes have a lower risk of transmission, and thus have less stringent control



WWICN Steering Committee Update

In November, the WWICN Steering Committee embarked on its strategic planning process. Steering Committee members participated in an all-day session facilitated by a consulting group to help develop the WWICN's Mission, Vision and Values.

Priority goals were identified, and activities to achieve these goals were also identified by participants. Goals were identified using information collected during introductory visits made by the WWICN Network and

Medical Coordinators to various health care agencies in the area, the topics of inquiries coming into the Network, and Steering Committee members' own experiences.

The next stage of the process is to draft a strategic plan that can be presented to WWICN stakeholders for their consideration and input. Focus groups will be held around the Waterloo Wellington area in the near future to solicit feedback and input to ensure that all identified needs are being

met for all agencies across the continuum.

The WWICN strategic planning process is occurring in parallel with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's strategic planning process. The Network Coordinators, Medical Coordinators and Steering Committee Chairs are participating at the provincial table which will ensure consistency across the province.

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*The WWICN office will soon
be on the move.*

*A permanent home has been
found in the Canamera
Medical Centre in Cambridge.
Watch for the details of our
address and an invitation to
attend our open house!*

Employment Corner

Several recent postings for Infection Control Practitioners have been noted. Please see the organization's website for more information.

❖ **Hôpital Glengarry Memorial Hospital (HGMH), Alexandria**
Infection Prevention and Control and Occupational Health Practitioner Position
www.hgmh.on.ca

❖ **Hamilton Health Sciences, Hamilton**
Infection Control Practitioner
www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca

❖ **Homewood Health Centre Inc., Guelph**
Full-Time Infection Control Practitioner
www.homewood.org

❖ **St. Joseph's Health Centre, Toronto**
Infection Control Practitioner
www.stjoe.on.ca



Fast Fact

There are **three key components** to an effective Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) program:

- 1) Use a **multidisciplinary team** to build consensus, disseminate information and assist with investigation and prevention efforts.
- 2) Regular **education** sessions to introduce and remind about appropriate IPAC interventions.
- 3) Constant **data dissemination** to show the impact of interventions.