

ENHANCING INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE IN THE PRE-HOSPITAL SETTING

St John WA's experience with the Infection Prevention and Control Champion program

Introduction

St John WA wanted to find a way to enhance the knowledge and skill of its clinicians relating to infection prevention and control not just through the COVID-19 pandemic, but their ongoing practice with officers on the frontline championing behaviour and practice change.

It was to address this need the Infection Prevention and Control Champion (IPCC) program was initiated.

Training

16 WEEKS

Officers undertake a 16-week intensive secondment working alongside the Infection Prevention and Control Specialist who has extensive industry experience.

FIPC COURSE

Recognised training through the Australasian College of Infection Prevention and Control (ACIPC) Foundation of Infection Prevention and Control (FIPC) course.

FOUR GRADUATES

Four paramedics have successfully completed the FIPC course with a further staff member currently enrolled.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

AUDITING

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

IPCC

GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT

MENTORING

COVID-19 RESPONSE

EQUIPMENT REVIEW

Conclusion

The program generated significant interest and resulted in increased engagement from frontline staff wanting to improve their practice, and furthering IP&C quality improvement projects available within the service with the additional resources. Recruitment for extending the program into 2023 is under consideration.

Disclosures

The author was the inaugural Infection Prevention and Control Champion and as such has received salary and training benefits from St John WA.

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Outcomes

INCREASED IP&C CAPACITY

Additional trained staff members have been well positioned to help with the increased focus on Infection Prevention and Control practices seen during the COVID-19 pandemic including managing staff enquiries, being part of the internal respiratory protection program and providing advice to the organisations Incident Management Team.

100+ INTERACTIONS

Since the program commenced the team of IP&C Champions have been engaging with both the career and volunteer workforce having peer-to-peer conversations about infection prevention and control practice including during the peak of Western Australia's COVID-19 outbreak encouraging good practice and providing practical advice based on frontline experience.

FOUR QI PROJECTS

Each IP&C Champion is tasked with completing a quality improvement project designed to enhance practices in frontline ambulance.

So far these have included: Introduction of ATP swabbing, a disposable mop head to replace existing mops, cannulation packs to improve aseptic technique, and development of new wound care clinical practice guidelines.