

SC APIC Palmetto

Message from the President

Dear APIC Members,

I hope this message finds you well and inspired. As we return from our recent APIC National Conference, I want to take a moment to reflect on what was truly an extraordinary gathering of infection prevention professionals.

It was energizing to see so much a great representation from APIC SC Palmetto Chapter. I would like to give a big shout out to Rachel Ronne and Shaye Beville, Connie Steed and our National APIC President Kathy Ward for representing SC so well!

Together, we're shaping the future of our profession—advocating for science, promoting best practices, and supporting each other as we meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. Looking ahead, APIC SC Palmetto remains steadfast in our mission to support infection prevention influence to provide healthcare without infections throughout South Carolina. Whether through continued education, advocacy, or community-building, we are committed to supporting you in every aspect of your work.

With the National Conference behind us we now turn our attention on the Annual SC APIC Palmetto Chapter's Conference that will be held in October 15-17, 2025, at the Doubletree by Hilton in Columbia, SC. The planning committee has been hard at work and has a robust agenda that you won't want to miss. From evening dinners to phenomenal speakers and time with vendors you won't want to miss it. Please make plans to register, network with IP's across the state, and support South Carolina's efforts to promote healthcare without infections.

With sincere appreciation,

Scott Bernshausen, MAM, BSN, RN, CIC, ASSE 12080

President - APIC SC Palmetto Chapter



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ALERT!

APIC South Carolina Palmetto has a new email address (Apicpalmettoprogram@apicsc.org). Please be sure that your facility will allow emails from the @apicsc.org domain.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Registration for the 43rd APIC SC Palmetto Fall Education Conference
scheduled for October 15-17, 2025 is OPEN!**

*Plan to Attend our 43rd APIC SC Palmetto Fall
Education Conference
October 15-17, 2025!
Double Tree by Hilton and Conference Center
Columbia, SC
Registration Information to come soon*

[Link to Register HERE](#)

During this year's conference theme, 'The Many Hats of Infection Prevention', attendees are encouraged to wear certain hats depending on the theme of that day. Be on the lookout in the coming weeks for more information regarding each day's theme and start planning on a hat to wear!

Each day will have a theme, and we encourage you to create a "hat" to wear for that day!

October 15 – Hats Off to IP!

October 16 – Oh, The Hats We Wear!

October 17 – Hold on to Your Hats!



Bothersome Bugs CRAB

Carbapenem-resistant
Acinetobacter baumannii

Carbapenem-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii* (CRAB) is an opportunistic pathogen which can cause a variety of infections that do not respond to common antibiotics. Some CRAB are resistant to ALL available antibiotics. Most CRAB in the United States produce enzymes (carbapenemases) that inactivate β -lactam antibiotics and carbapenem.

Spread: CRAB can spread easily by direct and indirect contact with infected or colonized patients. CRAB can be transmitted via person to person by contaminated hands or shared medical equipment. This can cause large outbreaks in healthcare facilities.

Who is at risk? Hospitalized patients and long-term care facility residents. Others at risk include those who:

- Receive medical care that is complex such as intensive care settings or have invasive devices
- Have chronic or extensive wounds
- Have taken recent course of antibiotics
- Admitted to the same room or unit as a colonized or infected patient with CRAB

Colonization is defined as having an organism found in or on the body which is not causing symptoms or a disease state. CRAB primarily is colonized in the digestive tract, respiratory tract, skin or wounds, but can be found in any body site.

To prevent the spread of CRAB:

- Follow SC DPH recommendations for CRAB screening
- Perform Hand Hygiene diligently
- Wear gown and gloves and ensure proper signage is available noting disease status and required PPE
- Clean and disinfect shared medical equipment, using dedicated equipment if possible
- Clean and disinfect the room daily, ensuring high-touch surfaces are cleaned
- Use EPA-registered one-step hospital-grade disinfects, following IFUs for proper use

Source: [CRAB Carbapenem-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii*](#)



Dissolution of HICPAC

"HICPAC, a federal advisory committee, weighs science and public discussion to inform their recommendations to CDC. Consisting of experts from healthcare infection prevention and control fields who work outside of CDC, the federal advisory committee process allows for wide-ranging input while reducing concerns about conflicts of interest". CDC Archive. (2024, November). CDC. <https://archive.cdc.gov/#/details?q=HICPAC&start=10&rows=10&url=https://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/php/about/updates.html> APIC, SHEA, IDSA, and PIDS have responded to the announcement by sending a joint letter to HHS Secretary Kennedy opposing the position of HHS. Read the letter here: https://apic.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/APIC_SHEA_IDSA_PIDS_Final_3_26_25-1.pdf HICPAC has been an indispensable resource regarding employee and patient safety concerns across hospitals, outpatient facilities, and extended care facilities. They have offered guidelines as basis for facility-level policies, procedures, and standard of care.

This decision could leave healthcare facilities with little direction as to evidence-based, expert recommendations in an era of emerging pathogens and antimicrobial resistance on the rise.

Dr. Deverick J. Anderson, MD, MPH, FSHEA, FIDSA, Professor of Medicine Division of Infectious Disease Duke University Medical Center has this to say on the recent announcement. "I was very disappointed by the decision to dissolve HICPAC. For the entirety of my 20+ years in the field, the guidance and information provided by this group has been critical for the successful practice of infection prevention in US acute care hospitals. Essentially, HICPAC and the CDC provide the "playbook" for us to use to keep patients safe. Without HICPAC, I'm worried care in US hospitals will suffer, become less safe, and strategies to prevent harm will become less standardized".

"I am concerned by the termination of the CDC Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) on March 31, 2025, under a shroud of bureaucratic restructuring that deemed it was "unnecessary". Created in 1991, HICPAC has been advising CDC and supporting its mission by providing expert input into CDC's guidelines and recommendations for prevention of healthcare associated infections (HAIs) and antimicrobial resistance. As a recent HICPAC member, I am troubled that the ongoing work of the Isolation and Personnel Health Work Groups that were making needed revisions to guidelines were abruptly halted. I fear that these efforts will be lost due to the current lack of infrastructure and changing priorities. At present, existing CDC guidelines remain and are available on the CDC Website. Guidelines that are in stages of development are in limbo and there is lack of clarity regarding guidelines maintenance and change going forward.

How do we move forward? APIC / SHEA has appointed a workgroup on which I serve. We released a statement : [Importance of Reinstating CDC's Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee \(HICPAC\) - APIC](#) and are awaiting the appointment of the new CDC Director. At that time, we will collaborate with CDC to address the concerns related to public health and infection prevention and control infrastructure including guidelines and timely communication about emerging pathogens. Stay tuned."

Connie Steed, MSN, RN, CIC, FAPIC

References:

APIC. (2025, March 28). *IPs, epidemiologists, and ID physicians ask HHS to support HICPAC - APIC*. https://apic.org/advocacy_update/ips-epidemiologists-and-id-physicians-ask-hhs-to-support-hicpac/

McLay, C., Weber, D. J., Tan, T., & Bill Steinbach. (2025). *Letter to the Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. regarding the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee*. https://apic.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/APIC_SHEA_IDSA_PIDS_Final_3_26_25-1.pdf

Shea. (n.d.). *Importance of reinstating CDC's Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) – SHEA*. <https://shea-online.org/importance-of-reinstating-cdcs-healthcare-infection-control-practices-advisory-committee-hicpac/#:~:text=The%20decision%20to%20terminate%20HICPAC, resistance%20are%20on%20the%20rise.>

It's a CIC Celebration!

APIC Palmetto wants to celebrate your accomplishments—please use the form below to submit the information of any first-time CBIC Certifications (CIC, aIPC, LTC-CIP, AL-CIP) earned in 2024 or 2025.

Google form for CBIC Submissions—[2024 - 2025 CBIC Certification](#)



APIC Palmetto Youtube

The APIC Palmetto Education Committee will soon begin recording Youtube videos focused on aiding Infection Preventionists in studying for the Certification of Infection Control (CIC) examination. All videos will be posted to the APIC Palmetto channel (Link to channel coming soon!)

Videos will offer questions and rationales from official APIC study guides, as well as real-world examples and pictures, from APIC Palmetto members who are CIC certified. Topics will vary and follow the structure of the APIC CIC Study Guide.

Coming Soon!

Our [APIC Palmetto Website](#) is under construction! Be on the lookout in the near future for design and content updates.

Find APIC Palmetto on Facebook!

Like and follow APIC Palmetto Chapter on [Facebook](#)!

Membership/Mentorship Committee

APIC National has updated and changed their website over the past year. Since this update to the website, when reviewing the membership list, several members have renewed their national membership but have not renewed their APIC Palmetto chapter membership. Please note that when renewing your membership, that you need to renew both your national and local memberships at the same time. You must **manually** select local chapters to join, this process is not automatic. Monthly emails have been sent to those members that show this membership difference/discrepancy. If you receive an email that describes this issue, and you know that you have renewed both memberships please let APIC National and Paige Storm know so that we can ensure that the membership list is correct. For any demographic changes, change of address, email address, employer, etc., the member must notify APIC National directly. It is also recommended that members check the APIC website periodically after you renew and throughout the year to make sure that your membership information and status is still showing correctly so that you don't inadvertently fall off of our membership list and miss out on all of the wonderful educational meetings, conferences, and other Infection Control opportunities that APIC SC Palmetto Chapter offers .

For any Membership/Mentorship questions or needs, please feel free to contact me at either paige.storm@mcleodhealth.org or 843-687-9482.

NEEDED ELECTED OFFICERS FOR 2026:

EXPLORE YOUR SKILLS & INTERESTS TO FIND YOUR SERVICE MATCH!
GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR SELF-REFLECTION

- ☐ What strengths or talents do you possess that aren't being used?
- ☐ Which competencies are you least proficient in?
- ☐ Which competency are you most proficient in? How can you increase your proficiency in these areas?
- ☐ Where do you see yourself in APIC SC Palmetto? Where do you see yourself in one year? Five years?

Are you highly organized?
Are you a people person?
Are you a "big picture" thinker?

President-Elect



Do you consider yourself a facilitator of meetings?

Are you skilled at organizing activities that touch a range of interests?

**Regional Director
(LowCountry or Upstate)**



Are you a people person?
Can you articulate your love for APIC SC Palmetto to others?

Do you have a knack for promoting a sense of belonging?

Nominating Committee





The Awards Committee is excited to announce that we will begin accepting nominations for 2025 SC Palmetto APIC awards. The deadline for nominations is Tuesday, September 30, 2025. This is the time to acknowledge those who are doing exemplary work while wearing the many hats of IP! The award categories are:

- 1) **Horizon award** – Has given significant time, resources, vision, and/or leadership to the success and growth of SC Palmetto APIC Chapter in the past year (September 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025).
- 2) **Blazing New Trails award** – Has made an impact on a specific area of work, which supports the vision and strategic plan of APIC Palmetto Chapter in the past year (September 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025).
- 3) **IP of the Year award** - Has noteworthy accomplishments for each area below during the past year (September 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025). Please limit documentation to five (5) pages. Criteria for consideration for IP of the Year award should include:

- **Clinical** (e.g., designing/implementing infection prevention or control practices which resulted in a reduction in nosocomial infection rate or employee exposures.)
- **Education** (e.g., participation in in-service programs, design or development of educational tools and resources for Infection Control for colleagues, other professionals, patients, or the community.)
- **Research/ Publication** (e.g., performance of clinical, microbiological, or epidemiological research which has had a major impact on infection prevention and control.)
- **Service** (e.g., work for the Chapter, for the National organization, or other organizations.
- **Other Areas of Accomplishment** (e.g., personal, educational, or professional achievement.)

Please describe the impact each accomplishment had on one or more of the following groups: Patients, your facility's healthcare workers, other professional groups or organizations, the community, APIC Palmetto or National APIC members.

To submit a nomination, email Tonya Brown (tonbrown@tidelandshealth.org) with:

- The award the person is being nominated for
- Name of the nominee
- Name and address of the Employer
- Name of individual submitting nomination
- Telephone number
- Criteria met by nominee



WILLINGNESS-TO-SERVE

(For term of office starting: **2026**)

Personal/Professional Background

Certified? ☐ Yes ☐ No Number of Years in Infection Prevention & Control _____

APIC Membership ID Number _____ Number of Years APIC Member _____

Name: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

Home Address: _____

Employer: _____

Employer Address: _____

Current Scope of Practice: _____

Work Phone: _____ Work FAX: _____ Home Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Educational Background/Continuing Education/Information/Comments:

For descriptions of the various positions/committees, see the additional pages of the WTS form.

Officers Elected to start serving in 2026.

- ☐ **President-Elect**
- ☐ **Director – Upstate**
- ☐ **Director – Low Country**
- ☐ **Nominating Committee (need to elect 3)**

Appointed by President to Committee Service

Please indicate with numbers indicating 1st, 2nd, 3rd choice, etc.)

- ___ **Awards**
- ___ **By-Laws/Policies**
- ___ **Certification**
- ___ **Education**
- ___ **Membership/Mentoring**
- ___ **Serve as a Mentor**
- ___ **Communication/Website**
- ___ **Infection Prevention Re-certification (IPUs)**
- ___ **Program**

I agree to serve as an officer of APIC SC Palmetto in the position listed above, if nominated and elected, or as a contributing member of the committee.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

E-mail: amanda.mclaughlin@mcleodhealth.org, gwen.usry@prismahealth.org, or johnsole@muscd.edu

New to Infection Prevention???

We would like to know how we can support you. Feel free to send in questions

to slarrimore@cmc-sc.com
jennifer.burke@mcleodhealth.org
or Max.Habicht@PrismaHealth.org.

The following are some resources we find helpful:

CDC Infection Control Training:

<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/training/strive.html>

NC SPICE: Infection Control Part 1 and Part 2 – These are actual classes held by NC Statewide Program for Infection Control & Epidemiology. There is a fee for the class but worth every penny for new IPs. They have great resources for all kinds of IP things. They also have other classes and on-line learning.

Statewide Program for Infection Control & Epidemiology - Education to prevent and control healthcare associated infections across the healthcare spectrum (unc.edu)

NHSN | CDC : NHSN has some great training tools. (It will not let me copy the link for some reason) Go to NHSN home page. There are tiles on the right side. Choose the NHSN the training tile.

APIC Must be a member: Education and Certification:

<https://apic.org/education-and-events/overview/>

APIC Webinars: <https://secure.apic.org/web/apic/EStore/webinars.aspx> - many are free, but some require purchase to view.

APIC text – accessed by purchase only but very valuable.

APIC on-line learning: <https://secure.apic.org/web/apic/EStore/online-courses.aspx> - again, many are free, but some require purchase.

