

Member of the Month: Julie Paoline

Interviewed and written by Carol Samel



Years of service in public health and infection prevention: almost 18

Current Role: Julie is a Public Health Specialist in the Bureau of Epidemiology at the Pennsylvania Department of Health for the Healthcare-Associated Infection Prevention and Antimicrobial Stewardship program. Her work includes coordinating outbreak investigation/responses for high-concern organisms and responding to infection control breaches. She is also dedicated to implementing regional and statewide prevention strategies aimed to reduce the spread of antimicrobial resistance (AR) through improved infection prevention and control practices. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Julie serves as the team's COVID-19 Outbreak Coordinator for the state's Infection Control and Outbreak Response (ICOR) team.

Background: Before her career in public health, Julie worked in behavioral health as a counselor for dually diagnosed clients. She became certified as an HIV tester and counselor. She then transitioned into a role with the Montgomery County Health Department as a disease intervention specialist (DIS) with the HIV program and quickly advanced in learning the ropes to respond to many communicable diseases. Julie was promoted to Director of Communicable Disease Control, where she was instrumental in investigations of community-acquired and healthcare-related outbreaks. Success in that role led her to her current position in an expanded program at the PA DOH dedicated to HAI/AR work.

Best part of the job: Every day is different. It is very interesting and rewarding to support many different healthcare settings.

Challenging part of the job: It is most challenging when the problem is bigger than the solutions one team or one system can provide. There are times when hands are tied and there is no simple resolution. Working together is of great importance!

Pearls of wisdom for a new IP: While you may feel there is so much that you don't know yet, your fresh perspective will lend so much to the dialogue – please speak up and contribute to the discussion.

Pearls of wisdom for a seasoned IP: Make sure those new IPs are at the table. Invite their contributions.

Fun Facts

Guilty Pleasure: Reality TV

Hobbies: Reading, photography, fashion reviews

Favorite Book: Crazy Love by Leslie Morgan Steiner

Favorite Movie: Steel Magnolias

Favorite Beach Destination: Ocean City, MD

Bucket List: Travel to Paris, France and Italy

Favorite food: raw oysters are a favorite (worth the risk!)

Favorite drink: Bloody Mary

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