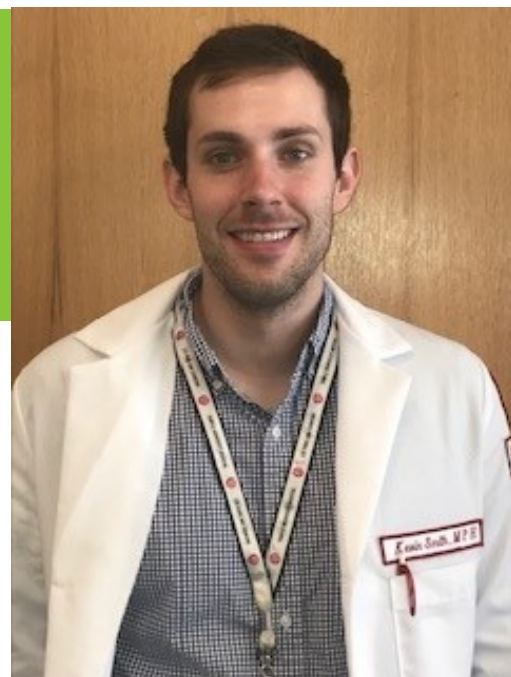


Member of the Month

Kevin Smith

Interviewed and written by Hillary Hei



Role: Infection Control Practitioner, Temple University Hospital

Years of IP service: 3.5 years.

While in his 2nd year of a Master of Public Health program, Kevin was interested in the newly created Certificate in Infectious Disease Prevention and Control. Through his coursework, he learned about the role of an IP and secured an internship with Lynn Kleina at the former Mercy Hospital in West Philadelphia. Kevin quickly became involved in a *C. Diff* project where he did hand hygiene observations, collected data around antibiotic use, and performed ATP swabs in the patient care environment. After graduation, he knew he wanted to continue in infection prevention.

Hardest part starting out: As a non-clinical MPH graduate, it was a steep learning curve understanding clinical terminology, how a hospital runs, and how different departments interact. He remembers, “When I was investigating CLABSIs, what should I even be looking for?” Luckily he had a great seasoned team that could teach him the ropes.

Best resources: Kevin immediately credited his coworkers who answered questions and served as mentors. Other resources for him included the APIC text to reinforce knowledge, the CDC website, and free webinars from CDC and APIC corporate partners.

“I think it’s important to value the knowledge that [new] people are bringing in [who are] fresh out of school. Embrace the generational change.”

Fun facts about Kevin:

Originally from: Lawrenceville, NJ

Best vacation: Recently went to Los Angeles, CA. “It was nice to experience the beach, the nice weather, and friends and to take a break from COVID.”

Hobbies: Recently began hiking during the pandemic (Wissahickon, Bucks County), also enjoys discovering new restaurants and exploring Philly. “I’m a big foodie.”

Pets: None. “Just all my plants in my apartment.”

Favorite food/meal: “Nothing beats a good pizza.”

First job: Worked at Target

Next travel destination: Italy

Favorite part of the job: “I like how challenging it’s been. I feel like each day is different, and I really wanted that in a career.”

Additional skills that have helped: “My data skills that I learned from my MPH classes.” He has been able to help create more digestible data for his department and implement processes that make things simpler and more efficient.

Thoughts as a newer IP: “There’s always so much to learn.” But Kevin emphasized the importance of newer IPs also having a voice because they can always contribute something.

Favorite tool/skill learned: Kevin just recently also graduated with his MBA, and he took a Lean/Six Sigma course as part of his coursework. He enjoyed learning about process improvement and all of the tools used—fishbones, control charts, etc. “It’s great to figure out... We have a problem here, and it’s outside of the norm.”

Where he sees himself in 3-5 years: Kevin enjoys likes the field. “If I were to transition, I would do something more IT-based or leveraging data within performance improvement.”

Kevin can be reached at: Kevin.Smith@tuhs.temple.edu