

APIC launches Program of Distinction, bestows first designation

Arlington, Va., December 5, 2017 – The APIC® Program of Distinction, a new recognition program developed by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), has awarded its first designation to Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) in Nashville, Tennessee.

The APIC® Program of Distinction confers a designation of excellence to acute care facilities and health systems for infection prevention and control (IPC) programs that meet a set of high-level standards. Developed by a team of experts and APIC leaders, the program aims to identify excellence in infection prevention and control and provides a new set of standards for the field. The *APIC® Program of Distinction Standards for Excellence in Infection Prevention and Control* represent the highest standards for IPC programs, versus minimum standards set forth by other entities.

Facilities who are awarded the Program of Distinction designation undergo a rigorous process including a comprehensive document review and an onsite assessment by a team of APIC surveyors. VUMC is the first facility to receive this designation.

Terrie Lee, RN, MS, MPH, CIC, FAPIC, former president of APIC and the Certification Board of Infection Control and Epidemiology (CBIC), played a lead role in the development of the Program of Distinction and participated in the onsite survey of VUMC.

“We saw collaboration at all levels of the organization, and provision of infection prevention and control within the various aspects of patient care,” said Lee. “We also noted many examples of distinction that went beyond traditional problem-solving. The VUMC programs for infection surveillance and data management, antibiotic stewardship, instrument reprocessing (sterilization and high-level disinfection), and the unit for care of patients with highly infectious diseases were all excellent.”

The program was first announced in June 2017 at the APIC Annual Conference by APIC CEO Katrina Crist, MBA, CAE. “The Program of Distinction marks new territory for APIC as we launch our first set of standards and define the components of an infection prevention and control program of excellence,” said Crist. “We are pleased to award the first APIC® Program of Distinction designation to Vanderbilt University Medical Center.”

“We’re incredibly honored to be the first institution in the country to receive this designation,” said Thomas Talbot, MD, MPH, Chief Hospital Epidemiologist at VUMC. “This achievement validates our institution-wide dedication to patient safety, our collaboration and teamwork, and every individual’s effort in implementing and consistently following best practices to prevent healthcare-associated infections.”

“This review process has been important, not only for our team, to confirm that they’re doing great work, but also within the institution, to reaffirm strong, collaborative relationships with other teams like environmental services, facilities management, and environmental health and safety,” said Director of Infection Prevention Vicki Brinsko, MSN, RN, CIC, FAPIC. “We work closely together every day, and this is an outside agency coming in, looking at how we do things and saying, ‘Thumbs up!’”

The Program of Distinction is a three-year designation. Visit www.programofdistinction.org for more information.

ABOUT APIC

APIC's mission is to create a safer world through prevention of infection. The association's more than 15,000 members direct infection prevention programs that save lives and improve the bottom line for hospitals and other healthcare facilities. APIC advances its mission through patient safety, implementation science, competencies and certification, advocacy, and data standardization. Visit APIC online at www.apic.org. Follow APIC on Twitter: www.twitter.com/apic and Facebook: www.facebook.com/APICThroughPreventionandYou. For information on what patients and families can do, visit APIC's Infection Prevention and You website at www.apic.org/infectionpreventionandyou.