

**The
Provincial Infection Control
Network of BC
(PICNet)**

Annual Report

April 2007 - March 2008

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This Annual Report fulfills a reporting requirement for PICNet and also serves as a key communications piece for the coming year. It provides context and background for our current and future work.

Your feedback is most welcome.
Please send your comments to: picnet@phsa.ca.

Executive Summary

We are pleased to present this, the third Annual Report for the Provincial Infection Control Network of BC (PICNet).

The Provincial Infection Control Network (PICNet) of British Columbia (BC) was launched in 2005. This volunteer, collaborative Community of Practice consists of professionals from every Health Authority within British Columbia. We come together to maximize coordination and integration of activities related to health care-associated infection (HAI) prevention and control practices, using an evidence-based approach.

With the end of the 2007/2008 fiscal year, PICNet has now aligned its strategic and financial accountabilities under the Provincial Health Services Authority corporate leadership. With the guidance of PICNet's Steering Committee and the ongoing commitment from its Working Groups, PICNet has made outstanding progress on a number of important initiatives.

PICNet's accomplishments this past year include:

- PICNet exhibited at the Community and Hospital Infection Control Association-Canada National Education Conference. This year's conference was held in Montreal, Quebec. These conferences allow PICNet to network with colleagues from across Canada, and share our collective experience and knowledge.
- PICNet sponsored access to a total of 37 training sessions presented by Webber Training for all of our Community of Practice across BC. Webber Training is an international lecture series on topics of interest to infection prevention and control professionals and other health care professionals worldwide.
- PICNet co-hosted an international one-day workshop on occupational health in low resource and rural areas at the International Commission for Occupational Health conference in Vancouver. The proceedings of this workshop are currently being collated for publication.
- A system for the collection of surveillance data for *Clostridium difficile*-associated disease (CDAD) in acute care hospitals has been developed and is ready for implementation province-wide through web-based technology.
- PICNet collaborated with BC Association of Medical Microbiologists, in partnership with BC Centre for Disease Control Laboratory Services, on a project to provide a snapshot of the current strains of *C. difficile* currently present in BC. Results of the project will be available in the fall of 2008.
- PICNet published its first best practice guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Outbreaks of Respiratory Illness.
- Guidelines for the Control of Antibiotic Resistant Organisms are under development, with completion anticipated in the summer of 2008.
- Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infections in Home and Community Health Care Settings are under development, with completion anticipated in the fall of 2008.
- PICNet held its second annual Education Conference, with over 140 delegates from across the province in attendance.

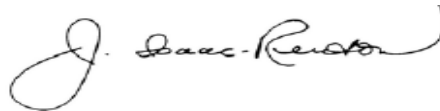
We wish to take this opportunity to thank PICNet's Community of Practice for such solid ongoing support and dedication. Our progress depends on your continued commitment and good will. We also wish to express our sincere appreciation to our leaders in the PICNet Management Office, without which, none of this would be possible.

As Co-Chairs, we are committed to working with you all to see PICNet achieve its full potential.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Bryce, MD, FRCP(C)
Co-Chair
Regional Medical Director,
Infection Control,
Vancouver Coastal Health



Judith Isaac-Renton, MD, DPH, FRCP(C)
Co-Chair
Director, Laboratory Services
BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Message from the PICNet Management Office

The 2007-2008 year has been a year of transition for PICNet. The PICNet Management Office now has three full time staff members: Bruce Gamage (Network Manager), Sarah Pugh (Projects and Communications Coordinator) and Joanne Archer (Consultant/Educator). With the guidance of PICNet's Co-Chairs and the Steering Committee, PICNet continues to move forward on a number of important initiatives.

As we move into our fourth year, PICNet will play a vital role in the prevention and control of health care-associated infections in BC. PICNet continues to focus on the three main areas that fall within its mandate, including surveillance of health care-associated infections, development of best practice guidelines, and education and training.

Through 2008/2009, PICNet will implement of a province-wide, web-enabled surveillance system for CDAD in acute care hospitals. This project continues to lay the groundwork towards further surveillance of other health care-associated infections (HAI).

In the fall of 2008, PICNet will begin work on two new projects: performing an in depth survey of the Long Term Care and Residential Care Facilities in BC in order to facilitate meeting their needs for Infection Prevention and Control Services, and updating the existing provincial Guidelines for the Management of Outbreaks of Gastrointestinal Illness.

As PICNet continues to grow and mature, we are committed to building and enhancing our accountability to the Health Authorities, and to further empowering health care providers with the tools they need to address the prevention and control of health care associated infections, for the benefit of all British Columbians.

We would like to offer a special thanks to PICNet's Steering Committee and its Co-Chairs, Dr. Judy Isaac-Renton and Dr. Elizabeth Bryce for their ongoing commitment and leadership. We are looking forward to working with the PICNet Community of Practice in the year ahead.

Sincerely,



Bruce Gamage, RN BSC CIC
Network Manager



Sarah Pugh, BA MA
Projects and Communications
Coordinator



Joanne Archer, RN BTech MA
Consultant/Educator

Introduction

The Provincial Infection Control Network (PICNet) is a provincially supported professional collaborative encompassing regional and provincial health organizations. PICNet was developed in 2005 by the BC Ministry of Health.

Our vision continues to be: *Good Science - Good Will.*

PICNet's mission is to maximize coordination and integration of activities related to health care-associated infection prevention, surveillance and control, for the entire province, using an evidence-based approach.

PICNet's network model emphasizes participation, collegiality, and trust. This model fosters and strengthens professional relationships and enables the infection control Community of Practice (COP) to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of others across health care settings in BC. As a result, PICNet's initiatives and best practice guidelines are developed and owned by health care professionals in the province, combining rigorous evidence-based standards with a hands-on knowledge of what is needed within health care settings to achieve the best possible results for infection prevention and control.

Under the aegis and accountability framework of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), the PICNet is a collaborative of many health care disciplines working together to prevent and control health care-associated infections (HAI) across the continuum of care.

PICNet's Community of Practice of does this by:

- Supporting and coordinating initiatives of shared importance
- Providing knowledge to guide best practices
- Sharing information, translating knowledge and training experts
- Assisting and participating in surveillance activities
- Advocating on behalf of all professionals working to prevent and control HAIs in BC.
- Providing advice on relevant policy and issues

PICNet's COP includes – but is not limited to – environmental health officers, epidemiologists, infection control professionals, infectious disease physicians, medical health officers, medical microbiologists, public health nurses and physicians, and occupational health nurses and physicians.

PICNet Objectives and Deliverables, 2007-2008

In August 2007 members of the PICNet Management Office developed the following objectives for PICNet under a two year plan from April 2007 through to March 2009.

Education:

1. To expand PICNet's library of infection prevention and control educational resources, including the development of a catalogue to be posted to PICNet's web site.
2. To ensure the ongoing development, enhancement and review of PICNet's web site as a vehicle for communication and education for PICNet's Community of Practice (COP).
3. To purchase and install reference warehousing software, to be housed on PICNet's server.
4. To develop educational modules for the surveillance and prevention of health care associated infections.
5. To organize and facilitate annual PICNet educational conferences, bringing key leaders and educators together to share their knowledge and expertise with the PICNet COP.
6. To continue to provide ongoing access to educational teleclasses and to explore the hosting of relevant lecture series for the PICNet COP.
7. To advocate for the enhanced education and training opportunities for infection prevention and control professionals and allied health care providers.
8. To practice infection prevention and control-related knowledge transfer by linking with international partners on relevant research-based or practical projects.

Surveillance:

1. To facilitate the creation and adoption of Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA), Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs) and necessary protocols relating to the sharing of CDAD data between Health Authorities and PICNet.
2. To develop and further plan with the COP and begin to implement an operational plan for the Surveillance of Health Care- Associated Infections Program for BC (SHAIP-BC).
3. To develop the necessary infrastructure to support data collection, analysis and reporting of SHAIP-BC data to PICNet's COP and appropriate authorities.
4. To create a plan for approval and implementation of appropriate data sharing upon written approval by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Health Authorities.

Best Practices:

1. To develop best practice guidelines for the prevention and control of Antibiotic Resistant Organisms and for prevention and control of infections in home and community health care settings.
2. To develop an evaluation tool for reviewing and updating new and existing PICNet best practice guidelines.
3. To encourage the PICNet COP to submit proposals for PICNet best practice guidelines development using the existing PICNet process, channeled through the Project Priority and Planning Committee.
4. To further engage the PICNet COP in the collaborative guideline development process.

Objectives/Deliverables Table

The following table details the deliverable for each of the above objectives and PICNet's progress towards completion of those deliverables.

Objectives	Deliverables	Completed	Milestones
Education	1. Expanding PICNet's library of infection prevention and control educational resources, including the development of a catalogue to be posted to PICNet's web site.	50%	Over the year PICNet has acquired several reference texts and educational CDs. A catalogue of these resources will be posted to the web site in the coming year.
	2. Ensuring the ongoing development, enhancement and review of PICNet's web site as a vehicle for communication and education for PICNet's COP.	75%	The PICNet web site is constantly reviewed and updated. The Communications Leadership Group will be doing a complete review of the web site over the coming year.
	3. Purchasing and installing reference warehousing software, to be housed on PICNet's server.	100%	Endnote® software has been purchased and installed on each PICNet personal computer. Files can be housed on the common PHSA drive.
	4. Developing the educational modules for the surveillance and prevention of health care associated infection programme.	0%	The development of an educational module for prevention of surgical site infections will be done in 2008/2009.
	5. Organizing and facilitating annual PICNet educational conferences, bringing key leaders and educators together to share their knowledge and expertise with the PICNet COP.	100%	The second annual PICNet Educational Conference was held May 8-9, 2008, with over 140 attendees from across BC.
	6. Continuing to provide ongoing access to educational teleclasses and to explore the hosting of relevant lecture series for the PICNet COP.	100%	PICNet continues to provide access to a series of educational sessions hosted by Webber Training. This year 37 classes were offered on a variety of infection control related topics.

	<p>7. Advocating for enhanced education and training opportunities for infection prevention and control professionals and allied health care providers.</p> <p>8. Practicing infection prevention and control-related knowledge transfer by linking with international partners on relevant research-based or practical projects.</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>85%</p>	<p>This year PICNet established an educational resource fund. Members of the COP may apply for funding to attend educational conferences or classes to enhance their infection control knowledge.</p> <p>This year PICNet co-sponsored an international workshop on the provision of Occupational health services in rural and low resources areas. The proceedings of the workshop will be published by the NIOSH in the coming year. PICNet was also a supporting partner of an international Occupational Health and Infection Control “Healthy Hospitals” audit in Ecuador.</p>
Surveillance	<p>1. Facilitating the creation and adoption of Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA), Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs) and necessary protocols relating to the sharing of CDAD data between Health Authorities and PICNet.</p> <p>2. Working with the COP to further develop and implementation plan for SHAIP-BC.</p> <p>3. Developing the necessary infrastructure to support data collection, analysis and reporting of SHAIP-BC data to PICNet’s COP and appropriate authorities.</p> <p>4. Creating a plan for approval and implementation of appropriate data sharing, related to SHAIP-BC, upon written approval by MOH and Health Authorities.</p>	<p>85%</p> <p>50%</p> <p>50%</p> <p>50%</p>	<p>Given that the data to be shared between the Health Authorities and PICNet will be anonymized, only a participation agreement (PA) is needed for the sharing of this data. This PA will be implemented in the fall of 2008.</p> <p>Further work on developing an implementation plan for the SHAIP-BC project is awaiting funding from the Ministry of Health (MOH).</p> <p>PICNet continues to lay the groundwork for expanding our HAI surveillance program.</p> <p>The CDAD PA lays the groundwork for further sharing of HAI data between the Health Authorities and PICNet. As above, further work to move this project ahead is awaiting funding from the MOH.</p>

Best Practices	1. Developing best practice guidelines for the prevention and control of Antibiotic Resistant Organisms and for the prevention and control of infections in home and community health care settings.	75%	Best practice guidelines for the prevention and control of Antibiotic Resistant Organisms and for prevention and control of infections in the home and community health care settings are nearing completion and expected to be released in the summer and fall of 2008, respectively.
	2. Developing an evaluation tool for reviewing and updating new and existing PICNet best practice guidelines.	0%	The development of an evaluation tool for PICNet best practice guidelines will be done in 2008/2009.
	3. Encouraging the PICNet COP to submit proposals for PICNet best practice guidelines development using the existing PICNet process, channeled through the Project Priority and Planning Committee.	100%	PICNet received two proposals from our COP for the coming year – a needs assessment for infection control resources in Long Term Care settings and development of best practice guidelines for Gastrointestinal Illness Outbreaks. Both of these projects have been channeled through the PPPC committee and have been approved by the PICNet Steering Committee.
	4. Further engaging the PICNet COP in the collaborative guideline development process.	50%	Working groups for both of the above mentioned projects will be formed from our COP. Work will begin in the fall of 2008.

Standing Committee Reports

Steering Committee

PICNet's Steering Committee was designed to ensure that its members are representative of areas of expertise and experience, while ensuring representation from all Regional Health Authorities. Expertise and experience includes not just specific professional expertise but knowledge and experience in the varied physical and institutional environments across the province.

The 2007-2008 Steering Committee Members are listed below (*italics indicate non-voting members*):

- Joanne Archer, Regional Manager Infection Prevention and Control, Northern Health
- Dr. William Bowie, Adult Infectious Diseases, Vancouver General Hospital, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Dr. Elizabeth Bryce, PICNet Steering Committee Co-Chair, Regional Medical Director, Infection Control, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Dr. Sylvie Champagne, President, BC Association of Medical Microbiologists
- Janice DeHeer, Infection Control Practice Leader, Interior Health Authority
- *Dr. Thomas Dorran, Director, Patient Safety Division, BC Ministry of Health*
- Bruce Gamage, Network Manager, PICNet, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. Bonnie Henry, Physician Epidemiologist, BCCDC, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. Judy Isaac-Renton, PICNet Steering Committee Co-Chair, Director of BCCDC Laboratory Services, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. Pamela Kibsey, Medical Microbiologist/Infection Control, Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Dr. Ben Mack, Medical Microbiologist, Fraser Health
- Kathleen McWhinney, Infection Control Manager, Fraser Health
- Dr. Rob Parker, Medical Health Officer, Interior Health Authority
- Dr. Peter Riben, Medical Consultant, Interior Health Authority
- Dr. Chris Sherlock, Head, Division of Medical Microbiology, Providence Health Care
- Dr. Eva Thomas, Director Microbiology/Virology/Infection Control, Women's and Children's Health Centre of BC, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. Annalee Yassi, Occupational Health Physician, University of British Columbia
- *Shirley Paton, Chief, Nosocomial and Occupational Infections, Blood Safety Surveillance and Health Care Acquired Infections, Public Health Agency of Canada*

Project Priority and Planning Committee

In June 2006, the Project Priority and Planning Committee (PPPC) was formed to act as the operational arm of PICNet and “triage” all project requests on behalf of the PICNet Steering Committee (SC). The PPPC acts on behalf of the SC to determine whether requests for action are consistent with PICNet’s mandate and if so, are triaged and eventually implemented as projects with articulated deliverables and designated timelines. The Project Priority and Planning Committee reports to the PICNet Steering Committee on a quarterly basis.

The committee is comprised of three members of the PICNet Steering committee and four representatives from project Working Groups. The PPPC members for 2007-2008 were:

- Joanne Archer, Northern Health Authority
- Janice DeHeer, Interior Health Authority
- Leslie Forrester, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Bruce Gamage, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. Jennifer Grant, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Services Authority (Chair)
- Felicia Laing, Fraser Health Authority

Communications Leadership Group

In July 2006 the PICNet Communications Leadership Group (CLG) was founded as a standing committee to provide policy development and leadership to the PICNet Management Office (PMO) with regards to communications priorities and activities. The purpose of the CLG is to develop and implement communication strategies that will further enable PICNet to meet its mandate.

PICNet produces a monthly electronic newsletter in order to keep the infection prevention and control Community of Practice up-to-date on current PICNet activities. The newsletter is sent to all Community of Practice members via email and is linked directly to the PICNet web site.

Part of PICNet’s mandate is to promote ourselves externally. PICNet exhibits each year at the Community and Hospital Infection Control Association-Canada National Education Conference. This year’s conference was held in Montreal, Quebec. These conferences allow PICNet to network with colleagues from across Canada and share our collective experience and knowledge.

PICNet continues to sponsor access to Webber Training teleclasses for all of PICNet’s Community of Practice who may not otherwise have access through their employers. Webber Training is an international lecture series on topics of interest to infection control professionals and other health care professionals worldwide. A total of 37 training sessions were sponsored by PICNet between March 2007 and March 2008.

PICNet will continue to work closely with all Health Authorities and infection control professionals across the continuum of care to build our Network through transparency, communication and action.

PICNet wishes to thank the members of the Communications Leadership group for their hard work throughout the year.

- Deb Connell, BC Government Health Services
- Janice DeHeer, Interior Health Authority
- Terry Dickson, Fraser Health Authority
- Bruce Gamage, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Deanna Hembroff, Northern Health Authority
- Margaret McLaughlin, Fraser Health Authority
- Cathy Munford, Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Sarah Pugh, Provincial Infection Control Network.

Special Projects and Research Committee

The PICNet Special Projects and Research Committee is in the initial stages of formation, with the mandate to bring together ideas and expertise to develop special project proposals and research opportunities consistent with PICNet's mandate at a local/provincial/national and/or international level on behalf of the Steering Committee. The responsibilities of the PICNet Special Projects and Research Committee would include:

- Identifying opportunities for special infection control related projects/research for PICNet at a local/provincial/national/international level.
- Identifying partners and ensuring that there is adequate support, communication and commitment to a common project vision.
- Receiving and triaging special projects/research requests on behalf of the PICNet Steering Committee
- Taking special projects and research opportunities directly to PICNet's Steering Committee for approval

In October of 2007 PICNet co-hosted an international workshop on Occupational Health in low resource and rural areas at the International Commission for Occupational Health conference in Vancouver, BC. The proceedings of this workshop are currently being collated for publication by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

Working Groups Reports

***Clostridium Difficile* Associated Disease Surveillance Working Group**

In the fall of 2005, an ad hoc Working Group was formed to address surveillance of CDAD in BC. The Working Group, in collaboration with the BC Association of Medical Microbiologists (BCAMM), developed the surveillance protocol for CDAD for acute care facilities in BC.

During the winter of 2006, the approved guidelines were piloted. This pilot provided valuable lessons, ensuring that recommendations were feasible.

In order to carry forward the work of the ad-hoc group, in January of 2007, a new CDAD Working Group was formed. The goals of the current membership are to:

- Perform an evaluation of the PICNet CDAD surveillance protocol based on experience of current users;
- Develop a participation agreement to allow the sharing of anonymized data from the Health authorities with PICNet;
- Develop a web-based tool for data collection, storage, analysis and sharing;
- Develop an on-site training module and checklist for use of the CDAD surveillance tool and data base;
- Explore the implementation of a standardized CDAD surveillance tool province-wide that employs standard case definitions;
- Integrate laboratory surveillance into the project through typing of a representative number of isolates.

To date this Working Group has completed a survey of users of the PICNet CDAD surveillance protocol for the purpose of review and evaluation. This evaluation allowed the protocol to be modified prior to a web-based tool for data collection being implemented.

In January of 2008 a focus group of persons responsible for the collection and analysis of surveillance data for each Health Authority met for a day long session to establish a minimal data set, case definitions and business rules for the collection of province wide CDAD surveillance. Following that exercise this group has collaborated with the CDAD Surveillance Working Group to finalize these key elements for the development of the web based data collection tool and data base.

Working with an external Information Technology company, a system for extracting and exporting data files from the Health Authorities to the PICNet database to be located on a PHSA server has been developed. The system has been piloted in Fraser Health Authority and is ready for further implementation province-wide.

A Participation Agreement for the sharing of anonymized CDAD case data has been created, with the help of the Vancouver Coastal Health legal council, which details the roles of the Health Authorities and PICNet in the implementation of the CDAD Surveillance System.

In March of 2008, PICNet collaborated with BCAMM, in partnership with the BC Centre for Disease Control Laboratory Services, on a project to provide a snapshot of the current strains of *C. difficile* currently present in BC. Isolates from laboratories from across BC were submitted for typing and virulence testing. Results of the project will be available in the fall of 2008.

The PICNet Management Office is currently reviewing the Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (Ontario) Guidelines for the Management of *C. difficile* in all Health Care Settings for adoption in BC.

PICNet wishes to thank the Working Group members who have contributed to the progress towards development PICNet's CDAD Surveillance Project:

- Joanne Archer, Northern Health Authority
- Maureen Anderson, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. William Bowie, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Dr. Sylvie Champagne, Providence Health Care
- Jun Chen Collet, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Janice DeHeer, Interior Health Authority
- Leslie Forrester, Vancouver Coastal Health (Project Leader)
- Bruce Gamage, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. Linda Hoang, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Dr. Pamela Kibsey, Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Felicia Laing, Fraser Health Authority
- Renée Sebastian, Providence Health Care

Antibiotic Resistant Organisms Guidelines Working Group

In April of 2007 the PICNet Antibiotic Resistant Organism Guidelines Working Group began the work of updating and revising the existing provincial guidelines. This group has been working over the last year through a series of face-to face and teleconference meetings to develop a new draft of guidelines. This work has culminated in a final draft that has been vetted by the PICNet Steering Committee and posted to the PICNet web site in the spring of 2008 for review and feedback from our larger Community of Practice. On completion of that review the document will be revised with anticipated completion over the summer of 2008.

PICNet wishes to thank the members of the Antibiotic Resistant Organism Working Group for their ongoing excellent work on these guidelines:

- Ian Connell, Fraser Health Authority
- Jim Curtin, Providence Health Care
- Shelley Franklin, BC Ambulance Service
- Dave Forrest, Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Bruce Gamage, Provincial Health Services Authority

- Réka Gustafson, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Deanna Hembroff, Northern Health Authority
- Linda Hoang, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Pamela Kibsey, Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Linda Kingsbury, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Tracy Lanier, Interior Health Authority
- Fawziah Marra, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Sarah Pugh, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Coleen Reiswig, Interior Health Authority
- Jackie Ratzlaff, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Fred Roberts, Fraser Health Authority
- Joanne Tench, Interior Health Authority
- Phyllis Stoffman (Writer)

Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for the Home and Community Health Care Setting Working Group

In January of 2008 the Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for the Home and Community Health Care Settings Working Group was formed. The group undertook the work of creating these guidelines based on existing guidelines created by the Canadian Committee on Antibiotic Resistance (CCAR). With the aid of a writer and after several face-to-face and teleconference meetings this group has produced a first draft of the document. Work will continue over the summer of 2008 to review and revise this first draft, with a goal of completing the guidelines in the fall of 2008.

PICNet wishes to thank the members of the Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for Home and Community Health Care Settings for their ongoing excellent work on these guidelines:

- Jacquie D’Auria (writer)
- Nicki Gill, Interior Health Authority Louise Holmes, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Bruce Gamage, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Marilyn Jack, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Kim Leslie, Interior Health Authority
- Kathleen McWhinney, Fraser Health Authority
- Sarah Pugh, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Shelley Sing, Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Lisa Schwartz, Interior Health Authority

PICNet's Plans for 2008-2009

As the Provincial Infection Control Network moves into its fourth year, it continues to play a vital role in the prevention and control of health care-associated infections (HAI) in BC. PICNet's reputation continues to grow, both provincially and nationally, and now, more than ever before, PICNet has in place the model, the experience, the network and the professional support to continue to move forward in identifying and working towards ambitious and practical solutions for the province's pressing infection prevention and control challenges. PICNet continues to focus on the three main areas that fall within its mandate, surveillance of health care-associated infections, development of best practice guidelines, and education and training.

Surveillance

For the 2008/2009 year, PICNet will continue with the implementation of a province-wide, web-enabled surveillance system for CDAD in acute care hospitals. Establishing Participation Agreements between PICNet and the Health Authorities is important towards establishing such surveillance for other HAI in the future under SHAIP-BC. The proposed Strategic Plan and Options Paper presented by the PICNet to the Ministry of Health, if funded, will also be an important step towards meeting this goal.

In 2006, PICNet undertook a comprehensive needs assessment and gap analysis of the infection prevention and control resources in the province of British Columbia. One of the major gaps identified in this project was the lack of resources available to Long Term Care and Residential Care settings. As a follow up to this previous work, the PPPC has accepted a proposal to perform an in depth survey of the Long Term Care and Residential Care Facilities in BC in order to facilitate meeting their needs for Infection Prevention and Control Services.

Best Practices

Following on the success of the PICNet Reference for Respiratory Outbreak Prevention & Control Guidelines, a new Working Group was struck in April of 2007 with the goal of updating and revising the current provincial Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Antibiotic Resistant Organisms. This group plans to complete these guidelines by the summer of 2008. As mentioned previously, the Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for Home and Community Health Care Settings Working Group is also working towards completion of those guidelines, with an anticipated completion date for the fall of 2008.

For the 2008/2009 fiscal year, the PPPC has recommended that PICNet form a Working Group to update the existing provincial Guidelines for the Management of Outbreaks of Gastrointestinal Illness. Preliminary work on these guidelines has begun, in partnership with the BC Enteric Illness Policy Working Group, with the creating of guidelines for the prevention and control of these outbreaks in early childhood education settings.

Education and Training

In May of 2008, PICNet held its second full Educational Conference. This successful event brought together over 140 members of our wide-spread Community of Practice from across the province for two full days of networking and education. Evaluations from the conference have been very positive, with all respondents indicating they would be interested in attending future PICNet Educational Conferences. Planning for the PICNet's 2009 Educational Conference will commence this fall.

Thanks to the ongoing excellent participation in Webber Training, PICNet will once again be making these teleclasses available to our Community of Practice throughout the province in 2008/2009.

In rounding out our PICNet management office with a full time educator and consultant, Joanne Archer, PICNet looks forward to offering several other educational opportunities for our Community of Practice. An on-line educational module for the prevention of surgical site infections will be completed this year. As well several educational events related to the implementation of the CDAD surveillance system will be offered in various locations in each of the five geographical health regions in the province.

Concluding Remarks

PICNet has a clear vision and plan for this coming year, and we look forward to working together towards an increasingly consistent and effective approach to infection prevention and control in BC.

Once again, it is only through the invaluable commitment of all Health Authorities and the dedication and expertise of infection prevention and control professionals from across BC that PICNet is able to move forward effectively, efficiently and in a collaborative manner.