

A reflection on  
CIC certification



BY LITA JO HENMAN,  
MPH, CIC

**“Regardless of where you are in the journey, I commend your dedication to the profession and, more importantly, to the public by demonstrating your competency in infection prevention through the validated process of CIC® certification.”**

**WHILE TRAVELING TO** CBIC’s recent Board of Directors meeting, I was struck by the differing speeds at which people moved through the airport. Some were running through the airport trying to get to the next gate. Several were utilizing the technology of moving sidewalks, but even then, there were differences. A few were content to stand on the moving conveyor belt and let the machine move them ahead with minimal effort. Many were walking on the belt, which propelled them further and faster than standing. A couple of people were taking a break and watching the scenery while sitting in rocking chairs that were placed overlooking the runway. Maybe because I was headed off to a CBIC Board meeting, this scene prompted a reflection on CIC® certification.

I believe a shared goal of everyone in our profession is to have a skilled and competent infection preventionist (IP) workforce. CIC® certification is the recognized demonstration of infection prevention competency and is endorsed by our professional association, APIC. The tireless help of the item-writing, item-editing, and forms review teams that make up the Test Committee help to create a contemporary exam that is scientifically validated to demonstrate competency. These teams are comprised of hard-working IPs who practice in their field every day. They represent a diverse background, both geographically and from a practice setting perspective. Your peers have generously volunteered their time and expertise to ensure the CIC® exam reflects those key skills and knowledge that are required for every competent IP. Additionally, we receive guidance from a professional testing company that is experienced, and has a worldwide presence to ensure the highest exam quality is achieved and maintained. And, because we hold ourselves to the very highest level of professional demonstration, the certification exam goes through an accreditation process. This is an achievement that only a small percentage of all professional certification exams can claim.

If you are not currently certified, where are you in the process of preparing for certification? Are you contemplating the benefits of the exam, like those individuals in the airport who were taking in the information around them? If so, the candidate handbook is a great place to start. It will explain the entire process of becoming certified in detail and provide the information you need to take the next step in the journey toward certification. Perhaps you’ve stepped onto the moving sidewalk and decided that this is the year to become certified and you’ve taken a few steps in preparing. If so, the CBIC website section dedicated to preparing for initial certification is a great roadmap for this part of your voyage. Maybe you’ve scheduled your exam and have picked up the pace as you move closer to the end goal of certification. I would encourage you to approach this just like any other project implementation at work. Create a study action plan and work through it to prepare for the exam. If you’ve moved through the sojourns outlined and will be taking the exam in the next few weeks, I recommend that you review what to expect on the day of your exam, which is found on the testing center website ([www.prometric.com/cbic](http://www.prometric.com/cbic)). Regardless of where you are in the journey, I commend your dedication to the profession and, more importantly, to the public by demonstrating your competency in infection prevention through the validated process of CIC® certification. **P**

Lita Jo Henman, MPH, CIC  
2017 CBIC President