



# CERTIFICATION

## THE DEFINING DIFFERENCE

On any given day **one of every 31 hospitalized patients will contract an HAI**. Some of these infections will be minor and easy to treat, others will be life-threatening. It is estimated that **687,000 infections occur each year**, and approximately **72,000 patients with HAIs will die during their hospitalization**. However, many HAIs are preventable through the implementation of proven, evidence-based infection prevention protocols and procedures.

***All patients deserve to have highly qualified personnel keeping them safe from infections and research shows that certified IPs tend to outperform their noncertified counterparts.***

## Why is certification important?

The relationship between certified nurses and patient-care quality is well established. High performing organizations with Magnet status or other specialty certifications recognize that credentialed staff is an important indicator to patients and employers that their professionals are qualified and competent.<sup>1</sup>

Certified IPs are:

- better prepared to interpret evidence and act as champions for key infection prevention practices within their facilities;
- two to three times more likely to perceive the evidence of certain infection prevention practices as strong; and,
- more likely to implement certain infection control measures.<sup>2-3</sup>

**Hospitals with infection prevention and control programs led by a CIC<sup>®</sup> have significantly lower rates of Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bloodstream infections.<sup>4</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. AACN Certification Corporation. Safeguarding the patient and the profession: the value of critical care nurse certification. Am J Crit Care 2003;12:154-64.

<sup>2</sup>Krein SL, Hofer TP, Kowalski CP, et al. Use of central venous catheter-related bloodstream infection prevention practices by US hospitals. Mayo Clin Proc 2007; 82: 672-678.

<sup>3</sup>Saint S, Greene MT, Olmsted RN, Chopra V, Meddings J, Safdar N, Krein SL. Perceived strength of evidence supporting practices to prevent health care-associated infection: results from a national survey of infection prevention personnel. Am J Infect Control. 2013 Feb; 41 (2):100-6.

<sup>4</sup>Pogorzelska M, Stone PW, Larson EL. Certification in infection control matters: Impact of infection control department characteristics and policies on rates of multidrug-resistant infections. Am J Infect Control. 2012 Mar; 40 (2):96-101.

## Who are infection preventionists?

Infection Preventionists (IPs) are professionals who dedicate their careers to preventing healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) and the resulting harm to patients. They play a significant role in:

- Developing proven policies to ensure a safe environment for patients.
- Ensuring compliance with standards and regulations designed to protect patients and healthcare workers.
- Tracking and monitoring activities to identify HAIs and other infectious agents.
- Serving as leaders in emergency preparedness to be ready for events, such as an influenza pandemic or acts of bioterrorism.
- Leading and participating in healthcare quality improvement efforts.

## What would the proposed legislation do?

The legislation would provide criteria for IPs to practice in a hospital setting. Specifically, for an IP to practice in a hospital he/she would need to:

- pass a nationally accredited organization's infection prevention and epidemiology exam (e.g. CBIC); or,
- be employed as an IP for one year or more prior to the bill's passage.

## Would non-certified IPs still be able to practice in a hospital?

Yes, there are several ways for non-certified IPs to practice if the bill is passed. Such as:

- an IP gets certified within three years of hire;
- a hospital shows they performed a thorough search and could not find a certified IP;
- an IP has more than one year of experience prior to the bill's passage.

## Where can I find out more about this legislation?

<http://cqrcengage.com/apic/getcertified>