

APUA Public Health Education Capabilities

The Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics (APUA) has been the leading global non-governmental organization fighting to preserve the effectiveness of antimicrobial drugs since 1981. With affiliated chapters in over 66 developed and developing countries, we conduct research, education and advocacy programs to control antimicrobial resistance and ensure access to effective antibiotics for current and future generations.

Since 2001, APUA has produced more than 10 effective health provider education programs for organizations such as the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP), American Association of Hospital Pharmacists (AAHP), the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy (ICAAC), and the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA). Past session evaluations indicated these programs were rated an average of 4+ on a 5-point scale. APUA has also co-sponsored educational conferences such as “Building Stewardship: A Team Approach” with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, drawing an attendance of over 60 healthcare facilities within the state.

APUA first called attention to the rising incidence of *C. difficile* infections in 2008 through the APUA Clinical Newsletter Vol. 26 No. 2&3. It would now be timely to report again on the current status of *C. difficile* infection rates in communities and in healthcare settings, and on the strategies that are being used to fight them.

In August 2011, APUA was awarded a position as a subcontractor on a team led by Abt Associates to participate in an IDIQ grant from the CDC on “HAI Prevention Research Implementation.” APUA was selected based on the strength of APUA’s past research (both clinical and microbiological) on infection control and antibiotic resistance. For example, the study conducted with John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County was the first of its kind to assess the full extent of antibiotic-resistant infections to the healthcare system. APUA has also produced situational analyses and needs reports on pharmacies and hospitals in Uganda and Zambia, analyzing their antibiotic prescribing practices, their microbiology lab capabilities, and the extent to which widespread pathogens had become antibiotic-resistant. In collaboration with the Clorox Company, APUA has also published a public health research study that identifies easy-to-implement, low-cost infection control methods for households – especially those that have members who are immunocompromised or otherwise vulnerable to healthcare-associated and community-associated infections like *C. difficile* and MRSA.

In the past year APUA has also been chosen as a strategic partner on two nationwide CDC public education campaigns. For their “Get Smart About Antibiotics” campaign, the CDC disseminated fact sheets, brochures, radio interviews, videos, podcasts, and other promotional materials to consumers and to practitioners at every level of healthcare facility. APUA publicized the message through the APUA website, social media channels (Facebook and Twitter), and regular publications such as the APUA Highlights and Clinical Newsletter. APUA staff members were also asked to be expert contributors on a live Twitter chat with Dr. Richard Besser (medical editor for ABC News), in which hundreds of viewers could ask questions about antibiotic use and health and comment on or re-post the responses.

The campaign “Vital Signs: Making Healthcare Safer” is a similar educational campaign held every month to raise awareness about a key public health issue. APUA was chosen as an expert partner for the March campaign on “Stopping *C. difficile* Infections.” Throughout the campaign APUA

publicized CDC-created patient educational material (fact sheets, infographics, press releases, and a special edition of the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*) on the APUA website, as well as material generated by APUA research over the years (such as fact sheets, reports, and presentations from Congressional briefings). The campaign culminated with the *Boston Globe* reporting on CDC's collaboration with APUA in the article "Massachusetts teams help reduce spread of often fatal germ."