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**Vision**

Every nation has a functioning infection control organization

**Mission**

The International Federation of Infection Control provides the essential tools, education materials, and communication that unite the existing Infection Control societies and foster development of Infection Control organizations where they are needed.

# ***ORGANIZATIONAL HANDBOOK:***

## ***HOW TO FORM A SUCCESSFUL INFECTION CONTROL SOCIETY***

***JULY 2006***



# ORGANIZATIONAL HANDBOOK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION**
- II. GENERAL INFORMATION**
  - A. International Federation of Infection Control
  - B. IFIC Publications
  - C. IFIC Conferences
- III. RULES/BYLAWS/CONSTITUTION**
  - A. Model Information
- IV. MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION**



## I. INTRODUCTION

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Many individuals and local infection control (IC) organizations have asked IFIC for information about how to develop a new organization and how to increase effectiveness of professional organizations. The primary goal of this publication is to provide a framework for organizing infection prevention and control groups and suggest forms that may be used when the group is ready to become an infection control professional society. This handbook contains suggested guidelines for the development of an infection control professional organization. It provides suggestions for organizations that vary in size from 15 individuals to several hundred. Some of the information may need to be modified for the specific needs of your organization. Some of the most common questions are answered below. Throughout the booklet, we have used examples provided by IFIC members from around the world.

**What is an infection control society?** Many professionals (architects, doctors and nurses, teachers, and others) form organizations to advance their knowledge, improve the influence of their profession, and provide public education. An infection control society is similar: it meets the needs of the members by uniting them, assisting in the delivery of educational material, providing professional growth opportunities, enhancing the image of the profession and, most of all, improving infection prevention practices in health care facilities.

**What are some advantages of having an infection control society in my country or region?**

Experience and research have both suggested that one of the most effective and rapid methods for improving infection prevention and control within a country or region is to form an organization in which the interested members participate regularly through meetings and telephone conferences to review practices and share information. In this way, the more knowledgeable members help those who are learning, all participate in sharing education, and experience is shared. This maximizes group skills and reduces the sometimes steep learning curve since formal preparation in this field often lags behind the need. In addition, the organization provides credibility for changing practices; it can develop practice guidelines and official regulations in the field. In most countries, government agencies for public health do not focus much attention on preventing healthcare-associated infections (HAI) and professional organizations whose members are closer to the problems and also the solutions provide a valuable contribution.

**Who may belong?** Infection control activities cross many professions. Members of organizations may be physicians, nurses, microbiologists, or others involved in these activities. Most IC societies limit voting members to those who are actively engaged in professional work in the field, however each organization makes its own decisions in that regard: some have extensive non-voting members who are company representatives, retired health professionals, other individuals or corporate sponsors.

**How to start.**

1. Get a group of interested individuals together.
2. Develop a mission statement.
3. Develop an outline of the organization's leadership structure.
4. Develop the constitution/bylaws/rules under which the organization will function. Each country has its own laws for forming scientific societies that must be followed.

**What will make the organization successful?** Commitment of key individuals. Belief in the mission of the society. Enhancing skills of members. Effecting regional and national communication and practices. IFIC board members outlined what made their local organizations successful and the most important factors were: Have meetings frequently with good educational presentations, include time for sharing experiences, and plan how to best encourage local leaders.



## II. GENERAL INFORMATION

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### International Federation of Infection Control

The International Federation of Infection Control (IFIC) is an umbrella organization of societies and associations of healthcare professionals in infection control and related fields worldwide. The goal of IFIC is to minimize the risk of infection within the healthcare setting world-wide through development of a network of infection control organizations for communication, consensus building, education and sharing expertise.

### *The Founding of IFIC*

As a result of networking between infection control professionals from the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands, an international conference entitled *The Role of the Infection Control Nurse in the Surveillance, Prevention and Control of Hospital Associated Infections* was held in 1978 at the European office of the World Health Organization in Copenhagen, Denmark. At the close of the conference, consensus was reached for establishing a multi-disciplinary, international association for the control of hospital-associated infections. This was the major first step toward the establishment of the International Federation of Infection Control. IFIC was officially inaugurated as a multidisciplinary organization in 1987.

Membership in IFIC is extended to societies of healthcare professionals in infection control and related fields in countries throughout the world. Organizations that join IFIC are called member societies. Individuals in countries without infection control societies may participate in IFIC activities but may not vote at the Annual General Meeting; these individuals are called 'observers'.

The IFIC board is comprised of 10-13 members: Chair, Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, Editor in Chief and Board Members. IFIC member societies nominate one of their members to a vacant position on the IFIC board as needed and financially support that person for their 4 year term of office. The Board meets twice a year in person and by teleconference as necessary.

### IFIC Publications

- **The IFIC web site** (<http://www.theIFIC.org/>) provides information about IFIC goals and activities and is a forum for networking with organizations, agencies and IFIC corporate sponsors. On the website, current IFIC Newsletters are available for reading or downloading along with *Information Resources in Infection Control* and IFIC educational booklets.
- **The IFIC journal**, *International Journal of Infection Control*, is published twice per year. The aim is to provide a forum for member societies to share information and activities and to provide articles on infection prevention and control practice. It is distributed without charge to member societies as well as to a large number of observers and it may be freely copied and distributed.
- IFIC's basic infection control manual, ***Infection Control: Basic Concepts and Training***, is authored by experts on infection control. The intent of the manual is to provide a foundation of scientifically basic infection control principles and requirements. The advantage of this document is that it is not connected to any country's legal regulations or traditions and therefore it transcends national boundaries. The booklet has been translated into many languages. Lecture sets to accompany each chapter are also available, however only in English.

### IFIC Conferences

IFIC annual conferences are co-sponsored by a local IC society. The conferences emphasize discussions



and workshops with considerable interaction between the audience and invited experts. IFIC conferences are international in scope, with lecturers and participants from all over the world.

### III. RULES/BYLAWS/CONSTITUTION

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#### *MODEL FRAMEWORK*

#### ARTICLE 1 - NAME

##### **Section 1. Name**

The name of this organization is the (**insert name of your association**), hereafter referred to as the Society.

#### ARTICLE II – PURPOSE AND GOALS

##### **Section 1. Purpose**

The general purpose of an infection control society is to improve health by reducing risk for infections and by serving the needs and aims common to all disciplines that are united by infection prevention and control and epidemiology activities.

##### **Section 2. Goals (add goals of your association – A to C are suggestions)**

- A. To direct, support and improve the practice and management of infection control and the application of epidemiology.
- B. To advance knowledge of, foster scientific interest in, and disseminate information about the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections to medical and allied professionals for the benefit of the public.
- C. To ensure that the Society's mission is supported by its resources and activities.

#### ARTICLE III - TAX STATUS

##### **Section 1. Tax Status**

**(Insert appropriate language for your country)**

#### ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

##### **Section 1. Privileges**

- A. Categories
  1. Active/Full/Ordinary Membership  
Active members shall be individuals occupationally or professionally involved in the practice and management of infection control and/or the application of epidemiology. Such members may vote in elections, serve on committees, and hold elected office.
  2. Associate Membership  
Associate membership is open to any person who wishes to join the Society and is not eligible for active/full/ordinary membership. Such members may not vote or hold elected office.
  3. Retired Membership  
Retired members shall be individuals who are no longer employed in any capacity and who have had (**FILL IN NUMBER**) consecutive years of Active/Full/Ordinary or Associate membership prior to retirement. Retired members may not vote or hold elected office; however, they may serve in appointed capacities.
  4. Honorary Membership



Honorary members shall be individuals elected to this category in recognition of their contribution to the Society.

5. Corporate/Patron Membership

Commercial companies concerned with or having an interest in infection control may join the Society as a group requiring one single subscription. They will not have a voting right.

B. Membership Renewals

Membership shall be based on a calendar year.

**Section 3. Dues/Fees/Subscription**

A. Dues/subscriptions for each year shall be determined by the Board of Directors/Executive Committee.

B. The annual dues/subscription shall be payable on the 1st day of October in every year (**FILL IN APPROPRIATE DATE**).

**ARTICLE V - MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. Meetings**

A. Annual General Meetings

1. The annual general meeting (AGM) of this Society shall be held at the time of the Annual Conference.
2. Extraordinary meetings may be convened with 30 days written notice.
3. Notice of all meetings of the Society shall state the time and place of the meeting and the business to be discussed. Notice will be provided in writing and sent to each member at the address recorded on the membership database.
4. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting shall previously have been circulated before items for the new agenda are requested.
5. Every Member shall be entitled to vote either personally or by proxy on any matter at any General Meeting.

B. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of at least (**FILL IN NUMBER**) members.

**ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS**

**Section 1. Composition**

The officers shall be a Chairman/President, a Vice chair/vice president, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws, perform those duties as usually pertain to their respective offices; and perform those duties prescribed by the Board of Directors/Executive Committee.

**Section 2. Duties**

A. The Chairman/President shall

1. preside at all meetings of the Society;
2. prepare the agenda for all meetings in conjunction with the Secretary;
3. have a casting vote in the event of any tied vote;
4. receive reports on any subcommittees and advise the Committee on such reports when necessary;
5. act as the spokesperson for the Society always abiding by the Society's policies; and



6. review all minutes prior to distribution.
- B. The Vice-Chairman/Vice-President shall
1. fill the position of President in the event the position becomes vacant;
  2. deputise for the Chairman/President or any other officer of the Society; and
  3. assist the Chairman/President where necessary.
- C. The Treasurer shall
1. oversee and be responsible for the management of the financial affairs of the Society;
  2. keep accurate financial records of the affairs of the Society;
  3. prepare financial reports on a bi-annual basis and as required by the Members;
  4. be responsible for the prompt payment of all accounts of the Society;
  5. ensure that no expenditure of the Society is incurred without approval of the Board/Executive Committee; and
  6. prepare and present the annual financial statement of the Society at the Annual General Meeting.
- D. The Secretary shall
1. be responsible for the accurate recording and transcribing of the minutes of all meetings;
  2. submit all minutes to the Board of Directors in accord with established procedure;
  3. receive and answer all correspondence;
  4. assist the Chairman/President to prepare the agenda for all meetings;
  5. maintain an accurate record of all correspondence and appraise the Chairman/President of all mail prior to each meeting; and
  6. present a written report of the Society activities to the Members at the Annual General Meeting.

### **Section 3. Terms of Office**

- A. The Chairman/President shall hold office for a term of (**ADD NUMBER OF YEARS, e.g., 2-4**) years.
- B. The Vice-Chairman/Vice-President shall hold office for a term of (**ADD NUMBER OF YEARS, e.g., 2-4**) years or until a successor has assumed office.
- C. The Secretary shall serve for a term of (**ADD NUMBER OF YEARS, e.g., 2-4**) years or until a successor has assumed office and shall be elected in the odd-numbered years.
- D. The Treasurer shall serve for a term of (**ADD NUMBER OF YEARS, e.g., 2-4**) years or until a successor has assumed office and shall be elected in the even-numbered years.
- E. No officer or director shall serve more than consecutive terms in the same office.
- F. All terms of office shall begin at the first meeting of the calendar year.

## **ARTICLE VII - BOARD OF DIRECTORS/COUNCIL**

### **Section 1. Composition**

The Board of Directors/Council shall consist of the four officers and no less than (***insert number***) and no more than (***insert number***) directors.

### **Section 2. Terms**

The Directors shall serve a term of (**ADD NUMBER OF YEARS, e.g., 2-4**) years or until a successor has assumed office. They shall be elected on a rotating basis with no less than (***insert number***) and no more than (***insert number***) elected each year.



**Section 3. Duties**

- A. The Board of Directors/Council/Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Society and shall establish policy for conducting the business and management functions. Duties include:
  - 1. review committee and officer reports and make recommendations concerning committee activities;
  - 2. authorize the official acts of the elected officials and committees; and
  - 3. approve a slate of candidates for the ballot.

**ARTICLE VIII – ELECTIONS**

**Section 1.**

Elections shall be held annually prior to the beginning of the terms of office.

**SECTION 2. VOTING**

- A. Only Active/Full members may vote.
- B. Voting shall/may be by mail ballot.
- C. A majority vote shall elect when there are less than three candidates.
- D. Tie votes shall be broken by the Board.

**Section 3. Eligibility Of Candidates - General Qualifications**

- A. Shall be current Active/Full/Ordinary member.

**ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES**

**Section 1. Standing and Special Committees**

Standing and Special Committees are appointed by the Board/Council/Executive Committee. The composition, terms, and duties of these committees shall be determined by the Directors. Appointments shall be made on a year-by-year basis.

**Section 2. Executive Committee**

- A. Shall be comprised of the Officers and such other members as determined by the Directors.
- B. Shall make all necessary decisions, between Board meetings, to insure the continuous functioning of the Association.

**Section 3. Nominating Committee**

- A. Qualifications: To be eligible to serve on the Nominating Committee, an individual shall be a current active/full member.
- B. Composition and Duties
  - 1. Shall consist of *(insert number)* members to be elected by the membership for a two-year term on a rotating basis with *(insert number)* members elected each even-numbered year and *(insert number)* members elected each odd-numbered year.
  - 2. Shall not be eligible to run for any office while serving on the Nominating Committee.
  - 3. Shall be headed by a chairperson appointed from the committee members.
  - 4. Shall solicit nominations representative of the organization.
  - 5. Shall develop procedures for the conduct of elections.
  - 6. Shall develop and submit a slate of candidates for the ballot.
  - 7. Shall notify all nominees of their status regarding their candidacy.



## ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

### **Section 1. Process**

These Rules/Bylaws/Constitution may be amended upon two-thirds (2/3) vote of those Active/Full/Ordinary Members present at an Annual General Meeting, provided that such proposed amendments have been presented, in writing, to the voting membership at least fourteen (14) days prior to the vote.

### **Section 2. Approval**

Amendments approved by the voting membership shall not become final until they have been submitted to the Society Coordinator, who will then seek final approval from Legal Counsel/ Charity Commissioners or other authority having charitable jurisdiction. Nothing herein contained shall authorize any amendment or deletion or addition to this Rules/Bylaws/Constitution the effect of which would cause the Society at any time to cease to be a charity in law.

## ARTICLE XIII - FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

The Society shall keep accurate and complete books and records of its accounts, meetings, and proceedings of the organization. There may be an annual audit of the books and accounts in such a manner as directed by the Board of Directors/Council/Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall submit necessary documentation as required by the Association.

## ARTICLE XV - DISSOLUTION OF THE ORGANIZATION

The dissolution of the Society may be done only by a resolution passed by a three-fourths majority (or two thirds majority – fill in one) of the members of the Society present in person at a Special General Meeting convened for that purpose and of which notice has been served on every then member of the Society. A period of 21 days notice shall have been given to the members.

Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of the Society, provided that if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities such property shall not be paid to or distributed among members of the Society. Remaining property shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions which have similar aims as the Society.



## IV. MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION

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### **Introduction**

Membership promotion should be an ongoing process. The effectiveness of internal membership operations is reflected in your success in gaining and retaining new members.

### **Membership Recruitment**

Good planning and communication are critical to the success of any membership promotion. First, establish your objectives and goals for the campaign:

- What will be the focus of the campaign?
- What audience will you be addressing?
- How many names of potential members need to be generated for the campaign?
- How many new members are required to qualify as a "successful" campaign?
- Will you be able to provide a specific additional benefit if your campaign is successful?

The type of campaign undertaken will depend on the anticipated results the campaign will produce in your specific area.

### **Conclusion**

The most important item to remember is that your membership is the lifeline of your association. The highest priority should be placed on the recruitment of new members and the retention of current members. A steadily growing membership of active participants will ensure a strong successful association.