SHEA Newsletter

Edited by Robert A. Weinstein, MD

The Society of Hospital Epidemiologists of America

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SHEA Board Meeting Summary

The SHEA Board met Saturday, January 30, 1988 in Orlando, Florida. This site was chosen to facilitate interactions with the board of the Association of Practitioners in Infection Control (APIC) which met in Orlando that weekend. On January 31, the joint SHEA-APIC AIDS Task Force also met. Timothy Townsend, MD, SHEA secretary and cochair of the joint AIDS Task Force, filed the following summaries of these two meetings.

As of December 31, 1987 the SHE.4 membership was 461. Because of' the new affiliation with the journal, *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology*, and the attendant new dues-subscription structure, the Board felt that it would be difficult to predict membership changes and finances for this coming, transitional year. SHEA may still need to seek outside funding, at least for the near future.

The issue of organizational liability has not yet been resolved satisfactorily, and Walter J. Hierholzer, Jr., MD will work with legal counsel on this matter.

An outline of' the SHEA/CDC course for hospital epidemiologists to be piloted in August 1988 in Atlanta, was presented (see below). Initial plans for a national conference focusing on the expanded role of the hospital epidemiologist were also discussed. It was agreed that a long-range planning committee consisting of past presidents of' SHEA will have its first meeting in spring 1988.

The Educational Committee has had a disappointingly limited response to calls for applications for the small grants program. The scope of that program will probably be curtailed in the future.

The SHEA and APIC presidents attended each other's board meetings to continue the open line of communication between the two organizations.

SHEA/APIC AIDS Task Force Meeting

The first joint venture between SHEA and APIC, the AIDS Task Force, reviewed its first year's activities:

- Members of the task force attended two meetings at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and one meeting at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
- A joint resolution was developed to encourage state and local AIDS advisory committees to include infection control persons as committee members.
- In conjunction with the APIC Education Committee, an AIDS packet was revised and updated and is now available through the APIC national office.
- An educational brochure about AIDS and the health care worker was developed and is ready for distribution to SHEA and APIC members.
- A response to OSHA's Advanced Notice of' Proposed Rule Making was sent by APIC.

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Please send me an application form and information about membership in The Society of Hospital Epidemiologists of America (SHEA). (Eligibility for membership requires a doctoral degree and either activity in hospital epidemiology or current participation in a training program in this field.)

My address is: (Please print) _____

Mail this request to Timothy R. Townsend, MD, SHEA Secretary, Brady 119, Johns Hopkins Hospital, 600 N. Wolfe St., Baltimore, MD 21205.

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Despite the above activity, the task force felt that a more proactive position was needed, especially with regard to key guideline, policy, and regulatory groups. To this end, members of the task force will make periodic contact with key staff persons at the CDC, OSHA, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the American Hospital Association (AHA), the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to insure SHEA/APIC input into future deliberations by those groups.

Finally, it was announced that the SHEA Board had voted that recommendations of the task force could represent SHEA without requiring full Board review and approval if approval is granted by the SHEA president. The purpose of this arrangement is to enable the task force to respond to outside groups in a more timely fashion.

Results of SHEA Membership Survey

This month's Readers' Forum article, "A Survey of SHEA Members on Universal Precautions and HIV Screening" by Miller and Farr (pp 163-165), indicates that there is overwhelming support fbr universal precautions among hospital epidemiologists from across the nation. The results also demonstrate strong opposition to routine screening of all low-risk patients for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) antibody. The publication of this survey at a time when OSHA is in the process of establishing regulations in this area demonstrates how SHEA can potentially exert a positive influence on national policies.

SHEA Nominations Deadline

Bryan Simmons, MD has been appointed chairperson of this year's SHEA nominating committee. The deadline for submitting nominations is May 20, 1988. Positions to be filled in this year's election are: vice-president, treasurer, and two councilors. SHEA members wishing to suggest candidates for these positions should submit nominations in writing to Bryan Simmons, MD, Methodist Central. 1265 Union Ave., Memphis, TN 38104.

SHEA-CDC Training Course

The SHEA-CDC training program for new hospital epidemiologists and for infectious disease fellows interested in careers in infection control and hospital epidemiology (see February SHEA news) will have a pilot course August 11-13, 1988 in Atlanta, Georgia. Because this is a pilot course, enrollment will be limited to approximately 20 students and the course fee will be waivecl. Individuals interested in attending should contact Allen B. Kaiser, MD, Chief, Department of' Medicine, St. Thomas Hospital, PO Box 380, Nashville, TN 37202.

Brief items of interest for the SHEA Newsletter may be sent to Robert A. Weinstein, MD, SHEA Newsletter Editor, Division of Infectious Diseases, Michael Reese Hospital, Lake Shore Drive at 31st St., Chicago, IL 60616. Copy must be typed, double-spaced, and may not exceed five pages.

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