



Intravenous news: Infection Control Today report “Every healthcare institution should be working toward a goal of zero needlestick and sharps injuries to protect healthcare personnel and patients from exposure to infection, according to Susan A. Dolan, RN, MS, CIC, the public policy committee chair of APIC — the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology.

Dolan, who is hospital epidemiologist at The Childrens Hospital in Denver, spoke at an event today organized by the American Nurses Association marking the 10-year anniversary of the federal Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act. The briefing kicked off a campaign to educate healthcare professionals about the law and steps they can take to make their workplace safer.

Dolan described the sharps safety prevention program at her own facility, which was developed as a result of the federal Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act. Through the diligence of her hospitals task force, which evaluates needlestick safety products and analyzes each occupational exposure, their bloodborne pathogen exposure rate due to sharps injuries has dropped significantly.

“Many APIC members work in facilities that have seen tremendous successes with decreasing these exposures through sharps safety prevention programs,” says Dolan. “All healthcare personnel deserve access to safe, usable tools that will prevent unnecessary exposure in their daily practice.”

In her remarks, Dolan outlined the role of infection preventionists in helping to prevent the 385,000 needlestick injuries occurring in U.S. healthcare facilities each year and highlighted areas for improvement, including perioperative services, dialysis centers and ambulatory settings. APIC recently published a position paper on “Safe injection, infusion and medication vial practices in healthcare,” co-written by Dolan, which addresses the important issue of healthcare personnel using sharps safety devices.”

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