

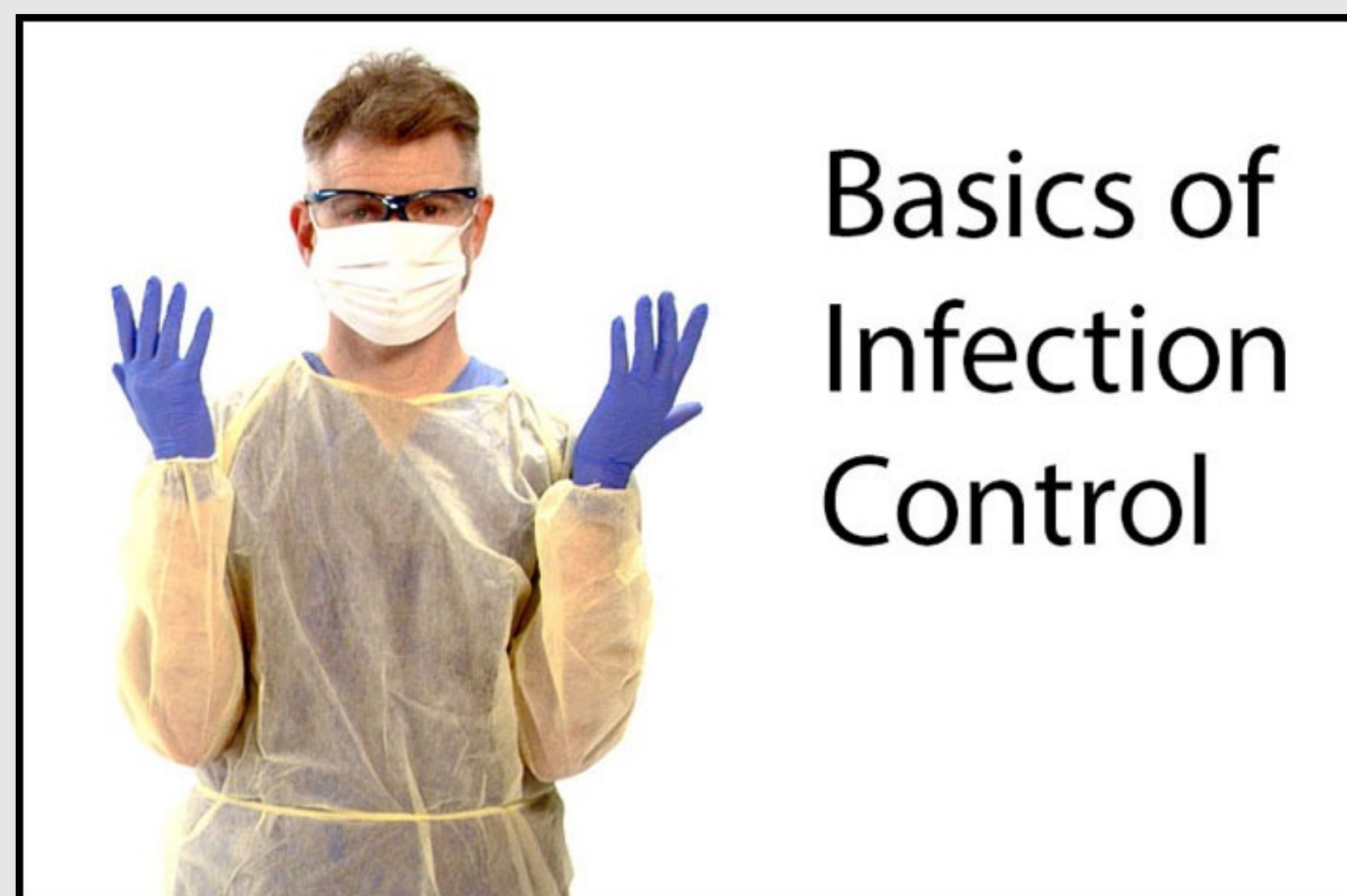
INTRODUCTION

Infection prevention is a critical component of the healthcare value analysis process, focusing on the critical balance between cost efficiency and optimal patient outcomes. Within healthcare settings, the occurrence of hospital-acquired infections (HAIs) poses a significant risk not only to patient safety but also imposes substantial financial burdens on healthcare facilities. Therefore, integrating effective infection prevention measures into the value analysis framework is essential for maintaining high standards of care while simultaneously managing costs.

The value analysis process evaluates products, technologies, and procedures based on their ability to meet desired outcomes efficiently and cost-effectively. When considering infection prevention, this involves a meticulous assessment of sterilization and disinfection equipment, antimicrobial products, and procedural innovations aimed at reducing the incidence of HAIs. By prioritizing products and practices that have proven efficacy in controlling infections, healthcare facilities can ensure better patient outcomes, which in turn reduces the length of hospital stays and the need for expensive treatments for HAIs.

Moreover, infection prevention is not only a clinical priority but also a regulatory and reputational one. Regulatory bodies often set stringent standards regarding infection control, and non-compliance can lead to penalties, loss of accreditation, and damage to the institution's reputation. Healthcare value analysis professionals play a crucial role in aligning hospital practices with these regulations by selecting products and services that enhance the facility's compliance with current infection control standards, thereby safeguarding both patient health and institutional credibility.

Finally, the broader implementation of effective infection prevention measures through the healthcare value analysis process leads to substantial long-term savings and a stronger overall healthcare system. By reducing the rates of HAIs, hospitals can decrease the overall cost of care delivery, avoid penalties associated with high infection rates, and improve the efficiency of healthcare services. This strategic approach not only improves the quality of patient care but also enhances the value provided by healthcare institutions, aligning economic incentives with health outcomes and contributing to the sustainability of healthcare systems.



OBJECTIVES

The Association of Healthcare Value Analysis Professionals (AHVAP) Certification Center has launched an innovative, micro-credentialing program focused on building core practices for Infection Prevention & Control. The new credentialing program modeled the CDC Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) Core Practices for Infection Prevention & Control.

Infection Control Specialist Micro-Credential Program:

The Infection Control Specialist training series that will equip you with the skills you need to improve teamwork and communication in your workplace. TeamSTEPPS is an evidence-based teamwork system that has been proven to enhance patient safety and quality of care. By focusing on communication, leadership, and situational awareness, TeamSTEPPS helps healthcare teams work together more effectively and efficiently.

The training series consists of multiple sessions, each focusing on a different aspect of Infection Prevention and Control. Topics will include:

- Core Practices for Infection Prevention & Control
- Infection Control Regulations, Guidelines, and Evidence-Based Practices
- Overview of FDA Regulated Medical Devices
- Overview of EPA Regulated Infection Control Devices

Whether you are a value analysis leader, professional, infection preventionists, consultant, industry partner, or other healthcare professional, this training series will provide you with valuable skills that you can apply in your day-to-day work.

The training sessions are led by a team of experienced and board-certified Infection Preventionists and will review each of the following core infection prevention and control interventions:

- Hand hygiene
- Aseptic technique
- Safe injection practices
- Standard and transmission-based precautions
- Training and education of healthcare personnel
- Patient and family education
- Environmental hygiene
- Leadership support
- Monitoring of practice
- Employee/Occupational health
- Early removal of invasive devices

CERTIFICATION VS. CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Credentialing is an overarching term that includes processes, policies, and practices that support credentials such as a license, registration, certification, qualification, or assessment-based certificate to demonstrate that an organization or individual has met predetermined and standardized criteria. Given the range of terms, different interpretations and distinctions between mandatory versus voluntary requirements among these credentials, can create confusion. This document serves as the first in a series of brief statements that clarify and communicate the value of credentials to stakeholders, beginning with certification.

Certification is a process by which an entity grants formal recognition to individuals that meet predetermined, standardized criteria. The certification process involves determination of eligibility, an assessment of demonstration of competence, and requirements for regular recertification. Certification is usually voluntary and established by a non-governmental entity.

Certification holders benefit from:

- Increased recognition by peers and respect of colleagues in the profession
- Improved opportunities for employability and advancement
- Greater confidence in their professional competence
- Increased professional trust from employers or the public
- Increased autonomy in the workplace
- Better compensation and career longevity

Consumers benefit from:

- Objective, independent, third-party evaluation and assessment of professional competence
- Commitment to public safety and/or consumer protection
- Accountability through ethical conduct standards and/or a disciplinary process
- Recertification requirements for continued or enhanced competence

Employers benefit from:

- Qualified individuals for employment or advancement
- Recertification requirements for continued or enhanced competence
- Commitment to public safety and/or consumer protection
- Reduced risk of errors, accidents and/or legal liability
- Reduced employee turnover and increased job satisfaction
- Justification for potential compensation differential

An Assessment-based Certificate (ABC) program is a non-degree-granting program that: a) provides instruction and training to aid participants in acquiring specific knowledge, skills and/or competencies associated with intended outcomes; b) evaluates participants' achievement of the intended learning outcomes; and c) awards a certificate only to those participants who meet the performance, proficiency, or passing standard on an assessment verifying learning. This distinguishes assessment-based certificate programs from those that only require attendance and/or participation.

Value of Assessment-based Certificates:

Certificate programs can help build capacity in an industry, emerging profession or specialty area. When there is an ongoing learning gap to fulfill a role or become workforce ready, an Assessment-based Certificate (ABC) program is well suited to address this gap. Because ABC programs are built on a needs analysis, the learning and assessment are directly tied to a knowledge, skill, or ability gap that the program is designed to fill. Finally, when highly specialized knowledge or skills are required for a particular job or role, a well-designed training program with learning objectives that are aligned to an assessment can help confirm attainment of the requisite skills or competencies.

Certificate holders benefit from:

- Learning from a focused course of instruction
- Acquisition of new skills
- Opportunity to learn new content or skills specifically tied to workplace needs (through a needs analysis)
- Recognition of accomplishment for demonstrating desired educational outcomes
- Increased recognition by peers and respect of colleagues in the profession
- Improved opportunities for employability and advancement
- Greater confidence in their professional competence
- Increased professional trust from employers or the public
- Increased autonomy in the workplace
- Potential for higher compensation and greater career longevity

Consumers benefit from:

- Better trained workforce / training targeted to needs
- Objective, independent, third-party evaluation and assessment of professional knowledge
- Knowing the certificate holder is committed to continuous professional development

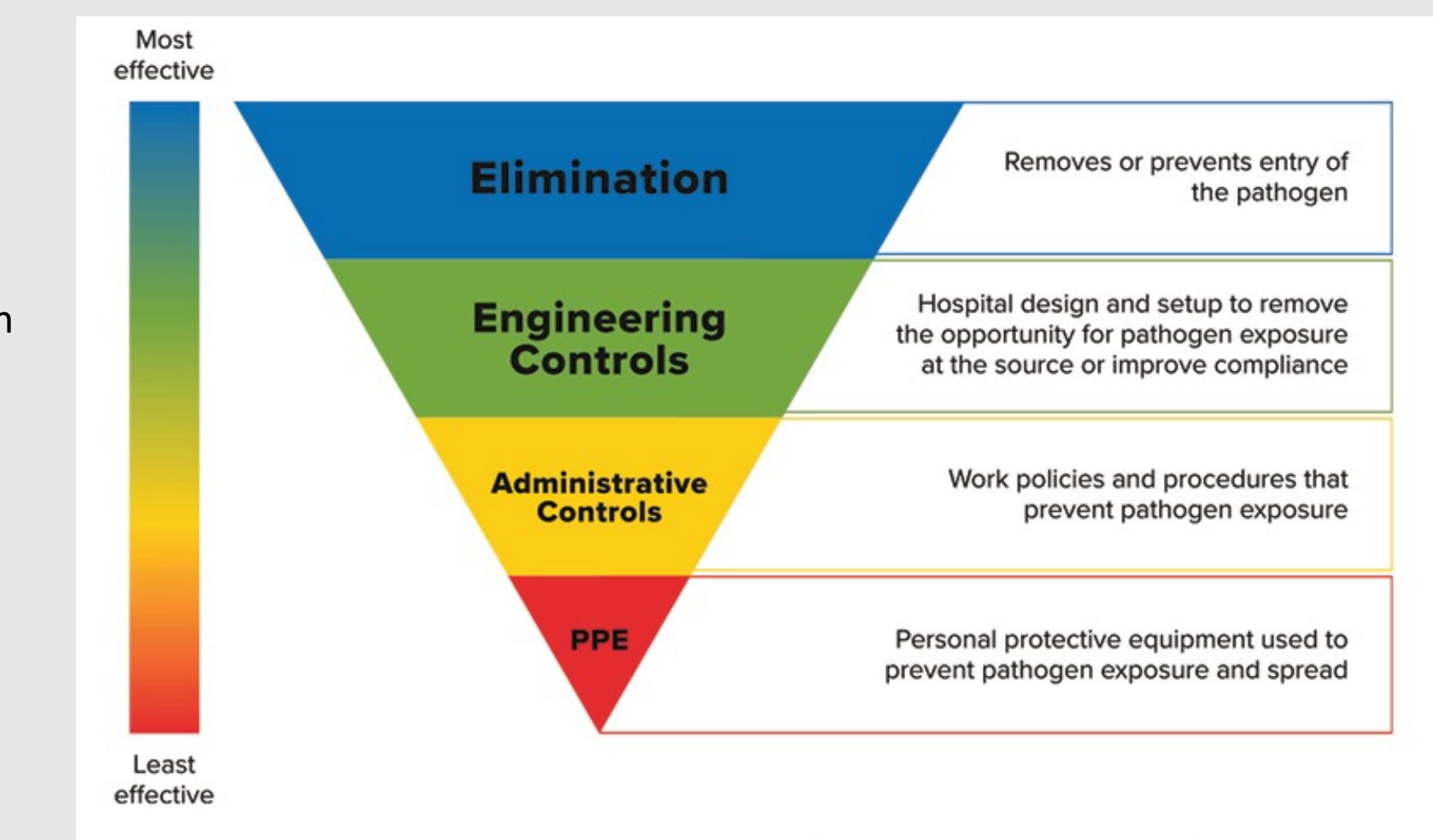
Employers benefit from:

- Better-qualified individuals for employment or advancement
- Ability to match workplace needs with current, relevant training
- Justification for potential compensation differential

CONCLUSIONS

Over the past few years, healthcare has experienced a global pandemic, a tremendous loss in qualified healthcare workers, and regression in our efforts to eliminate Healthcare-Associated Infections. To protect patients from preventable harm caused by these infections requires an interprofessional approach to prevention. By providing a deeper level of competency regarding infection control for healthcare professionals and leaders, patient safety can be improved dramatically across the entire healthcare continuum.

Infection Control programs require leadership commitment and accountability from the executive team. This builds sustainable success and enables the Infection Prevention team to reach the highest level of success. Through this new innovative micro-credential program, a wide variety of healthcare professionals can be exposed to a new way of building competency across the entire continuum. This results in reductions in harm, improvements in clinical outcomes, and improved patient experiences.



Contact Information:

To learn more about the AHVAP Certification Center Programs:
<https://www.ahvap.org/ahvap-certification-center>

For Further Information:
 Dr. Hudson Garrett
 Chief Credentialing Officer
 AHVAP Certification Center
 Email: Hudson.garrett@ahvap.org