

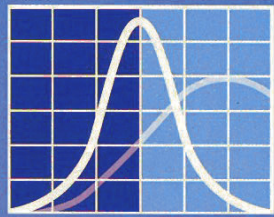
Volume 39, No 2

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CONTENTS

SHEA Expert Guidance

- 127** Duration of Contact Precautions for Acute-Care Settings
David B. Banach, Gonzalo Bearman, Marsha Barnden, Jennifer A. Hanrahan, Surbhi Leekha, Daniel J. Morgan, Rekha Murthy, L. Silvia Munoz-Price, Kaede V. Sullivan, Kyle J. Popovich and Timothy L. Wiemken

Original Articles

- 145** Emergency Airway Management in a Simulation of Highly Contagious Isolated Patients: Both Isolation Strategy and Device Type Matter
Eike Plazikowski, Robert Greif, Jonas Marschall, Tina H. Pedersen, Maren Kleine-Bruuggeney, Roland Albrecht and Lorenz Theiler
- 152** Reduction in Rate of Nosocomial Respiratory Virus Infections in a Children's Hospital Associated With Enhanced Isolation Precautions
Lorry G. Rubin, Nina Kohn, Susan Nullet and Margaret Hill
- 157** Implementation Lessons Learned From the Benefits of Enhanced Terminal Room (BETR) Disinfection Study: Process and Perceptions of Enhanced Disinfection with Ultraviolet Disinfection Devices
Deverick J. Anderson, Lauren P. Knelson, Rebekah W. Moehring, Sarah S. Lewis, David J. Weber, Luke F. Chen, Patricia F. Triplett, Michael Blocker, R. Marty Cooney, J. Conrad Schwab, Yuliya Lokhnygina, William A. Rutala and Daniel J. Sexton, for the CDC Prevention Epicenters Program
- 164** A Bundle of Measures to Control an Outbreak of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* Associated With P-Trap Contamination
Houssein Gbaguidi-Haore, Amélie Varin, Pascal Cholley, Michelle Thouverez, Didier Hocquet and Xavier Bertrand
- 170** Quasi-experimental Studies in the Fields of Infection Control and Antibiotic Resistance, Ten Years Later: A Systematic Review
Rotana Alsaggaf, Lyndsay M. O'Hara, Kristen A. Stafford, Surbhi Leekha and Anthony D. Harris, for the CDC Prevention Epicenters Program
- 177** Screening for Asymptomatic *Clostridium difficile* Among Bone Marrow Transplant Patients: A Mixed-Methods Study of Intervention Effectiveness and Feasibility
Anna K. Barker, Benjamin Krasity, Jackson Musuuza and Nasia Safdar

Commentaries

- 186** Setting the Research Agenda for Preventing Infections From Multidrug-Resistant Organisms in the Veterans Health Administration
Daniel J. Livorsi, Charlesnika T. Evans, Daniel J. Morgan, Heather S. Reisinger, Nasia Safdar, Katie J. Suda and Eli N. Perencevich
- 189** Establishing a Research Agenda for Preventing Transmission of Multidrug-Resistant Organisms in Acute-Care Settings in the Veterans Health Administration
Eli N. Perencevich, Anthony D. Harris, Christopher D. Pfeiffer, Michael A. Rubin, Jennifer N. Hill, Gio J. Baracco, Martin E. Evans, J. Stacey Klutts, Judy A. Streit, Richard E. Nelson, Karim Khader and Heather Schacht Reisinger

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- 196** Research Agenda for Antimicrobial Stewardship in the Veterans Health Administration
Katie J. Suda, Daniel J. Livorsi, Michihiko Goto, Graeme N. Forrest, Makoto M. Jones, Melinda M. Neuhauser, Brian M. Hoff, Dilek Ince, Margaret Carrel, Rajeshwari Nair, Mary Jo Knobloch and Matthew B. Goetz
- 202** Research Agenda for Microbiome Based Research for Multidrug-resistant Organism Prevention in the Veterans Health Administration System
Ashley E. Kates, Jessica S. Tischendorf, Marin Schweizer, Loreen Herwaldt, Matthew Samore, Kimberly C. Dukes, Dale N. Gerding, Daniel J. Diekema and Nasia Safdar
- 210** Setting a Research Agenda in Prevention of Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAIs) and Multidrug-Resistant Organisms (MDROs) Outside of Acute Care Settings
Charlesnika T. Evans, Robin L. Jump, Sarah L. Krein, Suzanne F. Bradley, Christopher J. Crnich, Kalpana Gupta, Eli N. Perencevich, Mark W. Vander Weg and Daniel J. Morgan
- 214** Diagnostic Stewardship for Healthcare-Associated Infections: Opportunities and Challenges to Safely Reduce Test Use
Gregory R. Madden, Robert A. Weinstein and Costi D. Sifri

Concise Communications

- 219** High Hand Contamination Rates During Norovirus Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Facilities
Geun Woo Park, Keenan J. Williamson, Emilio DeBess, Paul R. Cieslak, Nicole Gregoricus, Elizabeth De Nardo, Christopher Fricker, Verónica Costantini and Jan Vinjé
- 222** Unnecessary Removal of Central Venous Catheters in Cancer Patients with Bloodstream Infections
Anne Marie Chaftari, Ray Hachem, Sammy Raad, Ying Jiang, Elizabeth Natividad, Patrick Chaftari and Issam Raad
- 226** Institution-wide and Within-Patient Evolution of Daptomycin Susceptibility in Vancomycin-Resistant *Enterococcus faecium* Bloodstream Infections
Robert J. Woods, Twisha S. Patel, Jerod L. Nagel, Duane W. Newton and Andrew F. Read
- 229** Performance of a Novel Antipseudomonal Antibiotic Consumption Metric Among Academic Medical Centers in the United States
John Daniel Markley, Amy L. Pakyz, Roy T. Sabo, Gonzalo Bearman, Samuel F. Hohmann and Michael P. Stevens

Research Briefs

- 233** A Randomized Trial to Determine Whether Wearing Short-Sleeved White Coats Reduces the Risk for Pathogen Transmission
Amrita R. John, Heba Alhmidi, Melany I. Gonzalez-Orta, Jennifer L. Cadnum and Curtis J. Donskey
- 234** A Successful Strategy to Decrease Hospital-Onset *Clostridium difficile*
Lou Ann Bruno-Murtha, Rebecca A. Osgood and Casey E. Alexandre

Letters to the Editor

- 237** Multistate Outbreak of an Emerging *Burkholderia cepacia* Complex Strain Associated With Contaminated Oral Liquid Docusate Sodium
Ibukunoluwa C. Akinboyo, Anna C. Sick-Samuels, Emily Singeltary, James Fackler, Judith Ascenzi, Karen C. Carroll, Yvonne Maldonado, Richard B. Brooks, Isaac Benowitz, Lucy E. Wilson, John J. LiPuma and Aaron M. Milstone
- 239** A Colonization Outbreak of Penicillin-Susceptible *mecA*-Positive *Staphylococcus aureus* in a Neonatal Ward of Children's Hospital
Kisei Minami, Runa Terakawa, Masanori Sato, Yasuhiro Shoji, Takehiko Hiroma, Tomohiko Nakamura, Ayaka Horiuchi, Ayaka Otsuka, Noriko Kubota, Eiko Hidaka, Yoshiyuki Kawakami, Meiji Soe Aung and Nobumichi Kobayashi

- 241** Predicting Multidrug-Resistant Gram-Negative Bacterial Colonization and Associated Infection on Hospital Admission: Methodological Issues
Kamyar Mansori, Erfan Ayubi and Saeid Safiri
- 242** An Increase in the Prevalence of KPC Nosocomial Bacteremia as a Trigger for Growing Polymyxin Resistance Among Other Multidrug-Resistant Non-KPC-Producing Enterobacteriaceae Isolates
Leandro Reus Rodrigues Perez
- 243** Validation and Evaluation of Antimicrobial Orders Indication for Use
Nan Wang, Elizabeth A. Neuner, Andrea M. Pallotta, Vasilios Athans, Jill Wesolowski, Marc A. Willner, Kaitlyn R. Rivard, Pavithra Srinivas, Thomas G. Fraser and Steven M. Gordon
- 245** The Impact of Isolation Precautions on Hand Hygiene Frequency by Healthcare Workers
Sátiro Ribeiro de França, Edson Américo Sant'Ana, Ana Carolina Cintra Nunes Mafra, Marcelo Prado, Guilherme Machado Gagliardi, Michael B. Edmond and Alexandre R. Marra
- 247** Adherence to HIV Postexposure Prophylaxis in a Major Hospital in Northwestern Nigeria
Farouq Muhammad Dayyab, Garba Iiyasu and Abdulrazaq Garba Habib
- 248** Healthcare Personnel Relationships Related to Coordination of Catheter Care
Pranavi V. Sreeramoju and Robert C. Connally

Erratum

- 251** *S. aureus* Infections in Chicago, 2006-2014: Increase in CA MSSA and Decrease in MRSA Incidence –
ERRATUM

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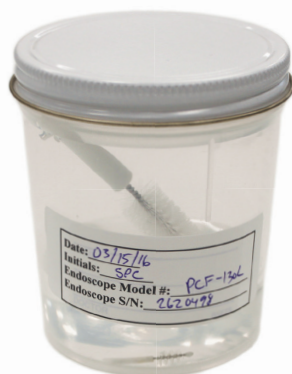


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Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology (ISSN 0899-823X) is published monthly by Cambridge University Press, One Liberty Plaza, New York, NY 10006, USA.

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Communications should be addressed to the Editor, *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology*, One Liberty Plaza, New York, NY 10006 (email: iche.managingeditor@cambridge.org). Contributors should consult the Instructions for Contributors, which is available at the journal's Web site.

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About the cover:



Since 2015, the cover format of each volume of *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology* has been designed to honor one of the many professionals throughout history who not only recognized how disease might be spread but also how to apply those principles to reduce healthcare-associated infections.

John Snow (1813–1858) was 1 of 9 children born to a working-class family in York, England. At the age of 14, he was apprenticed as a surgeon-apothecary with a family friend in Newcastle. He was sent to tend the afflicted in a nearby mining town during a cholera outbreak in 1832. He pursued his medical degree at the University of London, with the sponsorship of a wealthy uncle, and he initially set up a general practice in Soho. He gained fame as a practitioner of the new discipline of anesthesia and tended to Queen Victoria during the births of her children.

On August 24, 1854, a baby died of cholera on Broad Street near Soho. Shortly thereafter, 700 deaths from cholera occurred within a radius of 250 yards, and Snow happened to live nearby. As an anesthetist, he recognized how gases dissipated, and he rejected the prevailing dogma that cholera was spread through the inhalation of atmospheric vapors from decaying material because it would not explain how patients were affected miles away from the source. Snow hypothesized that water, contaminated with some cholera agent in feces, was the more likely explanation.

Using epidemiological principles, he identified who was affected using death certificates and where the illness was acquired (e.g., where case patients lived), then he determined what water supply they had used. He discovered that most households with a cholera case obtained water from the Broad Street pump. Snow ordered that the pump handle be removed. A local curate, Henry Whitehead, initially sought to disprove Snow's suspicions through further surveillance. Instead, Whitehead found that 8-fold more case patients had drunk from the pump than had not. Furthermore, he revealed that deaths occurred more often among residents who resided closest to the pump than in houses located farther away or that used a different water source. Ultimately, a leak between the Broad Street pump and a neighboring cesspool was discovered.

John Snow continued to carefully study the relationship between water contamination and cholera. Unfortunately, his work in epidemiology was ignored or pilloried in editorials in major journals. Snow would not live long enough to be recognized as a founder of modern epidemiology; he died of "apoplexy" or stroke at the age of 45 years. The John Snow Inn and a replica of the Broad Street pump can still be found in what is now called Broadwick Street in Soho, central London.

Cover image: A replica of the original 1854 Broad Street Pump has stood at the corner of Broadwick and Lexington Streets in Soho, London since 1992. The John Snow Pub can be seen in the background. Image "John Snow memorial and pub," copyright Justinc - made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic license.