



Job Code: 9657

Grade: K12

HCWR: N

Job Title

Chief of Epidemiology and Infection Control

Department

Medical Administration

This position is exempt from Career Service under the CCH Personnel Rules.

Job Summary

The Chief of Epidemiology and Infection Control is responsible for developing, implementing and supervising infection prevention, control, surveillance and intervention programs intended to minimize the risks of healthcare-associated and occupational infection or injury for patients, visitors and healthcare providers (HCPs) throughout Cook County Health (CCH). The Chief is responsible for ensuring that CCH facilities comply with infection control-related standards and infection reporting requirements established by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (currently monitored at CCH by the Joint Commission), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other regulatory bodies. The Chief will coordinate these activities through regular inter-facility and interdepartmental interactions as reported in monthly meetings of the CCH Infection Control Committees and for supervising Infection Prevention Nurses (IPN)s and infection prevention extenders staffing each of the CCH facilities. The Chief will supervise the infection control programs of each of the clinical care facilities in CCH, including Stroger and Provident Hospitals, Cermak Health Services, and those of the Ambulatory & Community Healthcare Network (ACHN).

General Administrative Responsibilities

Collective Bargaining

- Review applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements and consult with Labor Relations to generate management proposals
- Participate in collective bargaining negotiations, caucus discussions and working meetings

Discipline

- Document, recommend and effectuate discipline at all levels
- Work closely with labor relations and/or labor counsel to effectuate and enforce applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Initiate, authorize and complete disciplinary action pursuant to CCH system rules, policies, procedures and provision of applicable collective bargaining agreements

Supervision

- Direct and effectuate CCH management policies and practices
- Access and proficiently navigate CCH records system to obtain and review information necessary to execute provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements



General Administrative Responsibilities

Management

- Contribute to the management of CCH staff and CCH' systemic development and success
- Discuss and develop CCH system policies and procedures
- Consistently use independent judgment to identify operational staffing issues and needs and perform the following functions as necessary; hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, direct or discipline employees pursuant to applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Work with Labor Relations to discern past practice when necessary

Typical Duties

- Develops and implements system-wide infection surveillance, prevention, and control policies and procedures that adhere to nationally recognized guidelines and regulations
- Documents the infection prevention and control program surveillance, prevention, and control activities in the form of the infection control risk assessment and the infection control plan
- Communicates, reports to, and collaborates with the quality assessment and performance improvement program on infection prevention and control matters
- Trains and educates nursing, medical and ancillary staff on the practical applications of infection prevention and control guidelines, and policies, including training for the prevention of hospital spread of, and protection against acquisition of novel infections such as COVID-19, Ebola and Monkeypox
- Prevents and controls healthcare associated infections, including audits of adherence to infection prevention and control policies and procedures by hospital staff, including medical staff
- Communicates and collaborates with the antibiotic stewardship program
- Promotes awareness of and compliance with infection control and prevention policies and procedures among CCH employees, patients, and visitors via dissemination of information throughout CCH facilities, the CCH intranet including Learning Management System (LMS) and other communications as needed
- Utilizes queries of computerized laboratory, medical, and administrative data supplemented by manual review
- Develops and implements surveillance measures for Clostridium difficile and multi-drug resistant organisms (MDRO)s including MRSA, device related infections, surgical site infections and communicable diseases
- Analyzes these data to stratify infection risk and inform changes in policy and procedure based on hospital location or community environment; patient or population characteristics; treatment and services provided; and impact of previous Infection Prevention and Control interventions.
- Develops and implements tools by which appropriate infection control measurements (e.g., central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSIs), ventilator associated pneumonia (VAP), surgical site infections (SSI)s, C.difficile infections and MRSA) are reported to IDPH.,



Typical Duties

CDC (e.g., to its National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN)) and other regulatory bodies as required by law and/or consistent with prevailing public health standards

- Monitors and oversees documentation of hand hygiene adherence and reporting
- Oversees the detection and investigation of infection epidemics within CCH facilities or affecting populations served by the CCH
- Coordinates system wide response to emerging pathogen threats including H1N1, SARS, MERS, COVID-19, EBOLA and Monkeypox
- Collaborates with colleagues in the CDPH, the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH), the IDPH and the CDC in surveillance, reporting and intervening in community infection epidemics
- Collaborates with leadership in the CCDPH, Division of Infectious Diseases (ID), Employee Health Service (EHS), Emergency Department and CCH administration to coordinate CCH response, including coordination of vaccination campaigns and escalation of infection control procedures, to epidemics and pandemics of influenza and other respiratory pathogens
- Provides consultation as needed to intra- and extramural incident command structures established in response to staged or actual regional disasters
- Collaborates with EHS leadership in developing and implementing policies and procedures to prevent occupational infection or needle-stick injury; and, in the event of relevant employee exposures, to deploy post-exposure prophylaxis to minimize occupational infection risk; and, in the event of occupational infection, to guide effective infection treatment
- Collaborate with environmental service providers across the CCH to ensure that cleaning and disinfection procedures are thorough and effective
- Collaborate with appropriate CCH staff to ensure that demolition or construction projects on or near CCH facilities pose minimal risk of transmission of airborne particulates or infectious agents to CCH patients, visitors and employees
- Collaborates with appropriate CCH supply chain staff to ensure that all equipment obtained for caring for CCH patients and for use in CCH facilities is designed to minimize risk of employee, patient or environment contamination
- Monitors and enforces the use of appropriate sterilization procedures for equipment used in patient procedures and maintenance of sterilizers
- Collaborates with CCH clinical leaders in the control, prevention and treatment of tuberculosis
- Chairs monthly CCH Infection Control Committee meetings held at Stroger and Provident Hospitals and Cermak Health Services
- Attends or provides representation for infection control meetings held at other CCH facilities
- Prepares and presents regular reports on infection control activities and measures to appropriate CCH Oversight bodies such as the Stroger Hospital Quality Assurance committee and the Stroger Hospital Executive Medical Staff
- Maintains an active clinical load (patient care) of approximately 40% time
- Participates in the teaching activities of the Division of Infectious Diseases, including regular attendance at teaching conferences and supervision of trainees
- Participates in clinical research related to infection control as appropriate
- Functions as a leader and resource among medical, nursing and support service personnel for infection control-related issues
- Performs other duties as assigned



Reporting Relationship

Reports to the Chief Medical Officer

Minimum Qualifications

- Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) degree from an accredited medical school
- Licensed as a physician in the State of Illinois or have the ability to obtain Illinois physician licensure before starting employment
- Completion of an accredited fellowship program in Infectious Diseases
- Certification in Infectious Diseases by the American Board of Internal Medicine
- Completion of a training program in hospital epidemiology offered by the CDC or by an accredited graduate program in public health
- At least five (5) years of experience as a Hospital Epidemiologist in a United States acute care hospital
- At least two (2) years of work experience in administrating clinical, educational, quality assurance or research program related to Epidemiology
- Current and valid Illinois Controlled Substances License or have the ability to obtain license prior to starting employment
- Current and valid licensure with the Federal DEA or have the ability to obtain license prior to starting employment
- Proficiency using Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint)
- Must be accessible to CCH leadership at all times
- Must have valid driver's license and be able to travel to all CCH sites

Preferred Qualifications

- NA

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics

- Knowledge of infection prevention, control, surveillance and intervention practices
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills necessary to communicate with all levels of staff and a patient population composed of diverse cultures and age groups
- Strong customer service and empathy skills
- Ability to recommend and oversee the management of staff
- Ability to collaborate on interdisciplinary projects
- Ability to participate in the activities and educational programs appropriate to the specialty
- Ability to adhere to department policies and standards utilizing best practices incorporating the use of electronic health record (EHR)



Physical and Environmental Demands

This position is functioning within a healthcare environment. The incumbent is responsible for adherence to all hospital and department specific safety requirements. This includes but is not limited to the following policies and procedures: complying with Personal Protective Equipment requirements, hand washing and sanitizing practices, complying with department specific engineering and work practice controls and any other work area safety precautions as specified by hospital wide policy and departmental procedures.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of the personnel so classified.

For purposes of the American with Disabilities Act, “Typical Duties” are essential job functions.