

## The History of Northeast Wisconsin APIC

Northeast Wisconsin APIC had its beginnings in 1977 when three women got together over lunch to discuss infection control issues and program development when the Joint Commission and the State of Wisconsin had requirements for infection control programs in healthcare organizations. Two of the women received formal infection control education and one was self taught. These pioneers tell us that they were the sole practitioners in their facilities and needed each other for information and support. They say it would have been an extremely difficult job if they had not had each other and it was networking at its best!

There were others that soon joined a total of 12 in all. 8 were from hospitals and 4 from long term care facilities. Their first meeting was recorded as May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1977. They named their organization Newpic (Northeast Wisconsin Personnel in Infection Control). They discussed the benefits of membership to the National Organization of APIC. The position paper and educational background statement of APIC were reviewed and correspondence sent to National APIC. They realized that being apart of the national organization would be beneficial to their developing infection control programs. They noted that national APIC provided quality educational opportunities, one in particular was the program for infection control that was offered at the CDC in Atlanta which many of the members attended. They discovered that APIC and the CDC provided scientifically based standards and guidelines that gave them clout when presenting infection control recommendations to administration in their respective healthcare organizations. These women discussed goals for their new formed organization, talked about program topics they wanted and set up places to meet throughout 1977-1978. Of interest, they spent the remainder of the meeting discussing these infection control problem areas: Antibiotic Surveillance, IV Catheter and Foley Catheter induced infections and Care of respiratory treatment equipment. They heard back from National APIC and upon their suggestion changed the organizations name to APIC NEW or APIC Northeast Wisconsin.

As it stands today we are a membership of 44 and very proud and thankful for the women who were the pioneers in our organization. We reflect back to how APIC NEW was founded and realize that after 32 years that the same principles we were founded on still guide us today. We are an organization that provides support and education to our membership and as we have grown we have become as an organization that uses the knowledge of our membership to give back infection prevention and control information and education to those that are in need in the communities that are served by Northeast Wisconsin APIC.