DESCRIPTION

AJIC covers key topics and issues in infection control and epidemiology. Infection control professionals, including physicians, nurses, and epidemiologists, rely on AJIC for peer-reviewed articles covering clinical topics as well as original research. As the official publication of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), AJIC is the foremost resource on infection control, epidemiology, infectious diseases, quality management, occupational health, and disease prevention. AJIC also publishes infection control guidelines from APIC and the CDC. AJIC is included in Index Medicus and CINAHL.

Benefits to authors
We also provide many author benefits, such as free PDFs, a liberal copyright policy, special discounts on Elsevier publications and much more. Please click here for more information on our author services.

Please see our Guide for Authors for information on article submission. If you require any further information or help, please visit our Support Center

IMPACT FACTOR

2019: 2.294 © Clarivate Analytics Journal Citation Reports 2020

ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING

Scopus
PubMed/Medline
CINAHL
Web of Science
Science Citation Index Expanded
Embase

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor in Chief
Patricia Stone, New York, New York
Managing Editor
Jeanne Brandt, New York, New York

Associate Editors
Janet Hass, New York, New York, United States of America
Lisa Hall, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
Hugo Sax, Genève, Switzerland
Emily Sickbert-Bennett, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, United States of America

Section Editor
Daniel Bronson-Lowe, Urbana, Illinois, United States of America
Heather Gilmartin, Denver, Colorado, United States of America
Joan Hebdon, Baltimore, NSW 2680, Maryland, United States
Hillary Hei, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America
Amanda Hessels, , United States of America
Monika Pogorzelska-Maziarz, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America

Editorial Board
Mansi Agarwal, New York, New York, United States of America
Kathy Aureden, Elgin, Illinois, United States of America
David J. Birnbach, Miami, Florida, United States of America
Daniel Bronson-Lowe, Urbana, Illinois, United States of America
Bernard Camins, Birmingham, Alabama, United States of America
L. Rand Carpenter, Nairobi, Kenya, New York, United States of America
Eileen Carter, New York, New York, United States of America
Bevin Cohen, New York, New York, United States of America
Richard Danila, Saint Paul, Minnesota, United States of America
Paul Eliot, Canterbury, United Kingdom
Charlesnika Evans, Chicago, Illinois, United States of America
Mattheu Eveillard, Angers, France
N. Deborah Friedman, Geelong, Australia
Peg Gilbert, Omaha, Nebraska, United States of America
Janet Glowicz, Atlanta, Georgia, United States of America
Dinah Gould, London, UK, United Kingdom
Patti Grant, Addison, Texas, United States of America
Christopher Griffith, Cardiff, Wales, United Kingdom
Nancy Havill, , United States of America
Crystal Heishman, Louisville, Kentucky, United States of America
Robert Hulette, Nashville, Tennessee, United States of America
Mary Jo Knobloch, Madison, Wisconsin, United States of America
Kathleen Kohut, Greensboro, North Carolina, United States of America
Gavin Leslie, Perth, Western Australia, Australia
Alejandro Macias, Leon, Mexico, Mexico
Emily Martin, Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States of America
Mary Louise Mclaws, Sydney, Australia
Carol Mclay, Louisville, Kentucky, United States of America
Elizabeth A. Monsees, Kansas City, Missouri, United States of America
Jeffrey Neo, Ithaca, New York, United States of America
Cori Ofstead, St. Paul, Minnesota, United States of America
Sonya Osborne, Australia
Kelley Reveles, Austin, Texas, United States of America
Victor Rosenthal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Argentina
Phillip Leviston Russo, Clayton, Victoria, Australia
Hugo Sax, Genève, Switzerland, Switzerland
Mitchell J. Schwaber, Tel Aviv, Israel, Israel
Stephanie Stroever, Brookfield, Connecticut, United States of America
Lorna Suen, Hung Hom, Hong Kong
Ellen Taylor, Concord, California, Ohio, United States of America
GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION
The American Journal of Infection Control (AJIC) is a professional, peer-reviewed journal and the official scientific publication of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc. AJIC welcomes original articles in English pertaining to the prevention, surveillance, and control of infections and related complications in health care facilities and the community, and the application of epidemiologic principles to reduce risks among patients and health care professionals.

Article Types
Authors may submit any of the following types of articles.

Major articles. Articles in this category usually present results of original research undertaken by the author. Typically these articles average 12-15 double-spaced typewritten pages with up to 5 tables and/or figures, and 15-25 references. Authors must include a structured abstract of 150 to 200 words. Structured abstracts should include Background, Methods, Results (including some data), Discussion, and Conclusions. Articles which focus on comparative effectiveness research and implementation or translational science are particularly welcome.

Brief reports. Articles in this category should be limited to 1000 words or less and may include two illustrations or tables and a maximum of 10 references. A summary (non-structured) 2-3 sentence abstract of 50 to 75 words should accompany Brief Reports.

Commentary. Opinions, philosophy, or comments related to infection control and prevention practice should be submitted through the editorial system for review. They should be brief and referenced whenever appropriate. Do not include an abstract.

Correspondence. Letters pertaining to articles published in the Journal or concerned with issues of current interest to readers should be submitted through the online editorial system and kept to 2-3 double-spaced pages. They are subject to review and/or responses by authors of the pertinent papers.

Practice Forum. Reports of infection prevention and control practices and related applications of epidemiology will be published. Items should be limited to two to five typed double-spaced pages, referenced whenever appropriate. A summary abstract of 50 to 75 (non-structured) words should accompany these submissions.

State of the Science Reviews. Comprehensive or systematic reviews and meta-analyses of topics relevant to infection prevention and control. The PRISMA Statement for transparent reporting of systematic reviews and meta-analyses (http://www.prisma-statement.org/) should be used as a guideline.

Submission checklist
You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

Ensure that the following items are present:

One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details:
• E-mail address
• Full postal address

All necessary files have been uploaded:
Manuscript:
• Include keywords
• All figures (include relevant captions)
• All tables (including titles, description, footnotes)
• Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided
• Indicate clearly if color should be used for any figures in print
Graphical Abstracts / Highlights files (where applicable)
Supplemental files (where applicable)
Further considerations
• Manuscript has been 'spell checked' and 'grammar checked'
• All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa
• Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)
• A competing interests statement is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare
• Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed
• Referee suggestions and contact details provided, based on journal requirements

For further information, visit our Support Center.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Ethics in publishing
Please see our information on Ethics in publishing.

Institutional Review Board
When research involves human participants, authors should state in the "Methods" section the procedure used to ensure ethical conduct of research.

Conflict of Interest
Please note in your cover letter to the editor accompanying your submission whether any of the contributing authors may have a conflict of interest. This is in addition to uploading the signed Conflict of Interest forms. All authors must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of potential conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. Please see the ICMJE author responsibilities regarding conflicts of interest (http://www.icmje.org/conflicts-of-interest/). This form must be completed by ALL contributing authors and uploaded with the manuscript at the time of submission.

Financial Disclosure
Authors are requested to disclose to the editors receipt of financial and/or material support from an organization that may either gain or lose financially from the results or conclusions of their study or commentary. Such disclosure(s) will not be released to peer reviewers.

Prior Publication
At the time of submission, editorial manager (EM) will prompt the corresponding author to state whether any portion the data or results are under consideration by another journal or have been published elsewhere.

AJIC disapproves of duplicate publication. Authors should avoid reporting results of the same component of a study in separate manuscripts submitted to separate journals. For example, authors should refrain from submitting data from the same study that is analyzed in a similar fashion to construct two seemingly distinct papers. The Journal does not consider conference abstracts that report preliminary research findings as an instance of prior publication.

Submission declaration and verification
Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract, a published lecture or academic thesis, see 'Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication' for more information), that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, that its publication is approved by all authors and tacitly or explicitly by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out, and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, including electronically without the written consent of the copyright-holder. To verify originality, your article may be checked by the originality detection service Crossref Similarity Check.

Use of inclusive language
Inclusive language acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities. Content should make no assumptions about the beliefs or commitments of any reader; contain nothing which might imply that one individual is superior to another on the grounds of age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability or health condition; and use inclusive language throughout. Authors should ensure that writing is free from bias, stereotypes, slang, reference to dominant culture and/or cultural assumptions. We advise to seek
gender neutrality by using plural nouns ("clinicians, patients/clients") as default/wherever possible to avoid using "he, she," or "he/she." We recommend avoiding the use of descriptors that refer to personal attributes such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability or health condition unless they are relevant and valid. These guidelines are meant as a point of reference to help identify appropriate language but are by no means exhaustive or definitive.

This policy concerns the addition, deletion, or rearrangement of author names in the authorship of accepted manuscripts:

**Before the accepted manuscript is published in an online issue:** Requests to add or remove an author, or to rearrange the author names, must be sent to the Managing Editor from the corresponding author of the accepted manuscript and must include: (a) the reason the name should be added or removed, or the author names rearranged and (b) written confirmation (e-mail, fax, letter) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal or rearrangement. In the case of addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed. Requests that are not sent by the corresponding author will be forwarded by the Managing Editor to the corresponding author, who must follow the procedure as described above. Note that: (1) the Managing Editor will inform the Journal Editor of any such requests and (2) publication of the accepted manuscript in an online issue is suspended until authorship has been agreed.

**After the accepted manuscript is published in an online issue:** Any requests to add, delete, or rearrange author names in an article published in an online issue will follow the same policies as noted above and result in an erratum.

**Photographs**

Photographs of identifiable persons must be accompanied by signed releases showing informed consent.

**Copyright**

Upon acceptance of an article, authors will be asked to complete a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' (see more information on this). An e-mail will be sent to the corresponding author confirming receipt of the manuscript together with a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' form or a link to the online version of this agreement.

Subscribers may reproduce tables of contents or prepare lists of articles including abstracts for internal circulation within their institutions. Permission of the Publisher is required for resale or distribution outside the institution and for all other derivative works, including compilations and translations. If excerpts from other copyrighted works are included, the author(s) must obtain written permission from the copyright owners and credit the source(s) in the article. Elsevier has preprinted forms for use by authors in these cases.

**Author rights**

As an author you (or your employer or institution) have certain rights to reuse your work. More information.

**Reporting guidelines**

Certain research designs should be reported in AJIC articles according to the following reporting guidelines: CONSORT and its extensions for randomized controlled trials; STROBE and its extensions for observational studies; PRISMA for systematic reviews and meta-analysis; and ORION for outbreak reports and interventional, non-randomized studies of nosocomial infections. The appropriate checklist should be submitted at the time of the article submission. Reporting guidelines for other types of study can be found at the EQUATOR network site: http://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines

Elsevier supports responsible sharing
Find out how you can share your research published in Elsevier journals.

**Role of the Funding Source**

You are requested to identify any source(s) of financial support for the conduct of the research and/or preparation of the article and to briefly describe the role of the sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the article for publication. If the funding source(s) had no such involvement then this should be stated. Please see https://www.elsevier.com/funding.
Authors who have received financial support from a funding agency or manufacturer or been given a product free of charge to use in a study must acknowledge this support at the time of submission. At the time of submission, EM will prompt the corresponding author to disclose this information. If a submission is accepted for publication, the editors will ask the authors to detail this information in their final manuscript for publication in the Journal.

**Funding Body Agreements and Policies**
Elsevier has established agreements and developed policies to allow authors whose articles appear in journals published by Elsevier to comply with potential manuscript archiving requirements as specified as conditions of their grant awards. To learn more about existing agreements and policies please visit https://www.elsevier.com/fundingbodies.

**Open access**
Please visit our Open Access page for more information.

**Language Services**
Please write your text in standard American English. Authors who feel their English language manuscript may require editing to eliminate possible grammatical or spelling errors and to conform to correct scientific English may wish to use the English Language Editing service available from Elsevier's WebShop, https://webshop.elsevier.com/language-editing-services/language-editing/, or visit our customer support site, https://service.elsevier.com, for more information. AJIC does not provide grammatical editing services and will return papers that do not meet minimum language requirements for additional editing prior to consideration.

**Submission**
Submission to this Journal proceeds totally online and you will be guided stepwise through the creation and uploading of your files. The system automatically converts your files to a single PDF file of the article, which is used in the peer-review process. Please note that even though manuscript source files are converted to PDF files at submission for the review process, these source files are needed for further processing after acceptance. All correspondence, including notification of the Editor’s decision and requests for revision, takes place by e-mail.

**Troubleshooting.** If you are trying to upload a PDF and receive an error message, please check to make sure no files are locked and that there are no periods (",") in the title of any document, as these will result in a PDF build error.

AJIC uses a Web-based online manuscript submission and review system-Editorial Manager (EM). The Web site guides authors stepwise through the creation and uploading of the various files. Note that original source files (not PDF files) are required. Authors may send queries concerning the submission process or Journal procedures to the Editorial Office at ajic@columbia.edu. Once the submission files are uploaded, EM automatically generates a PDF proof, which is then used for reviewing. All correspondence, including the Editor’s decision and request for revisions, will be by e-mail via EM.

The American Journal of Infection Control adheres to COPE international standards for editors and authors.

**Submit your article**

**PREPARATION**
The following guidelines for submission of manuscripts will expedite the review process and ensure that publication is not delayed.

**New Submissions**
Submission to this journal proceeds totally online and you will be guided stepwise through the creation and uploading of your files. The system automatically converts your files to a single PDF file, which is used in the peer-review process. This must be submitted as a Word document, in any format or lay-out that can be used by referees to evaluate your manuscript. It should contain high enough quality figures for refereeing. If you prefer to do so, you may still provide all or some of the source files at the initial submission. Please note that individual figure files larger than 10 MB must be uploaded separately.
References
There are no strict requirements on reference formatting at submission. References can be in any style or format as long as the style is consistent. Where applicable, author(s) name(s), journal title/book title, chapter title/article title, year of publication, volume number/book chapter and the article number or pagination must be present. Use of DOI is highly encouraged. The reference style used by the journal will be applied to the accepted article by Elsevier at the proof stage. Note that missing data will be highlighted at proof stage for the author to correct.

Figures and tables embedded in text
Please ensure the figures and the tables included in the single file are placed next to the relevant text in the manuscript, rather than at the bottom or the top of the file. The corresponding caption should be placed directly below the figure or table.

REVISED SUBMISSIONS
Regardless of the file format of the original submission, at revision you must provide us with an editable file of the entire article. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Please remove all track changes from final revision before uploading to the EM system. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the Guide to Publishing with Elsevier: https://www.elsevier.com/guidepublication). See also the section on Electronic artwork.
To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

EXAMPLE Response to Reviewer Comments
When responding to reviewer comments in your revised manuscript, please format your changes using the following as an example. You must respond to each comments point-by-point.

Reviewer #1:
Strengths: new material, large sample size of observations, next step in attacking the problem of non adherence to stethoscope hygiene, specific barriers and their relative perceived importance given. Honest conclusion (no impact on adherence), realistic setting and participants.

Thank you!

Weaknesses: no comparison among methods used for convenience, preference by percentage, or other factors. Few comments on any teaching done, but maybe this was because they were isolating the effect of the visuals on behavior.

We agree. While we did survey the providers as to which method they found more effective in terms of bioluminescence vs seeing cultures, in hind sight we could have been more rigorous about trying to compare the two methods. Despite using both bioluminescence and showing providers images of their cultures, we did not see objective impact on adherence therefore I suspect if we had done either in isolation, we would not have seen an objective impact on adherence. We agree that while our prior QI project had focused on education and failed to change behavior, this project focused on whether the visual impact of seeing what?s growing on one?s own stethoscope and seeing the large drop in bioluminescence scores could change behavior. If successful, our hope was actually to create a visual tool which could be disseminated to other VA hospitals.

Reviewer #2:
This was a nice follow up to the initial study. The data and stats support your conclusions. Thank you.

There are still important questions either to answer in this or future articles. It appears that visual proof for the participants was not enough to increase adherence to stethoscope hygiene, as they had stated. Did you collect data regarding WHICH method of cleaning was preferred, and if this choice impacted compliance for both hand and stethoscope hygiene? It would seem that conducting BOTH hand and stethoscope hygiene with ABHR would have advantages over barriers stated in the conclusion, namely: forgetfulness, time constraints, and limited access to supplies. It would be interesting to see why participants preferred a given method.

Unfortunately, we did not collect data regarding which cleaning method was preferred. We did give providers a choice of what disinfection method to use before reculturing their stethoscope or doing the post-disinfection bioluminescence swabs. Anecdotally some providers said ?well I usually use
method therefore let's do the ___ method? but we did not formally track this and we did not link any survey responses or objective measurements to disinfection method. However, we agree this would be an interesting thing to explore in the future. We agree that the perceived barriers of forgetfulness, time constraints and limited access to supplies should be much less of a factor if at all with ABHR which is why we wanted to visually demonstrate that it works as well as the other methods, and that all 3 methods work—take your pick—just do something!

It would also be interesting to see if those who used a stethoscope on a patient cleaned their scopes, and what percentage this represents. Could the group be polled after a patient encounter and "observation" of hygiene to see how many used their stethoscopes and then recalculate compliance?

This is one of our limitations. We are unable to retrospectively ascertain who did or did not use their stethoscopes during an encounter as our observations were anonymous and did not record providers' names. Our methodology relied on secret observers outside the room so that providers were unaware that they were being observed. Anecdotally we have noticed that how team rounds are done is very attending dependent, where sometimes only one or two providers on a team entering the room used their stethoscope but it is very variable depending on the attending. For our work, we mentioned it as a limitation but I think it would require an imbedded observer in the room itself in future work.

This comment is off the record, but it seems there may be more cultural influences at work than suspected. Is it possible to give the attendings and other leaders the task of DEMONSTRATING the technique and monitor them confidentially on rounds and let them know their compliance? They may believe this is the "flavor of the month" and give lip service. It is also a new concept compared to hand hygiene. I think too if one sees the combination of hand and stethoscope hygiene with ABHR, their may clear advantages (no need to find wipes, throw them away, then find ABHR for hands... etc).

I fully agree. We intentionally did not track compliance by attending or level or training so that we wouldn't have identifiers however anecdotally if I consistently demonstrate the technique when I am on the rounds, I do think that the team does a better job with it. I agree that this could be a strategy to pursue in the future. Thank you for the suggestion.

Article structure

Manuscripts must conform to acceptable English usage. For current usage, consult the AMA Manual of Style, A Guide for Authors and Editors, Tenth Edition, ISBN 0-978-0-19-517633-9 (see http://www.amamanualofstyle.com). Generic drug and product names should be used; however, proprietary names may be inserted in parentheses after the generic name in the Methods section only. If equipment must be identified by proprietary name, provide the manufacturer name and city/state in the Methods section while referring to it generically elsewhere in the paper. Weights and measures should be expressed in metric units. Temperatures should be expressed in degrees centigrade.

Manuscript pages. The abstract should follow the title page. Authors should double-space all text, maintain one-inch page margins and use a basic font such as New Times Roman. The references should be included in the same file as the manuscript.

Double-blind Review

This journal uses double-blind review, which means that both the reviewer and author name(s) are not revealed to one another for a manuscript under review. The identities of the authors are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. For more information please refer to https://www.elsevier.com.reviewers/peer-review. To facilitate this, please include the following separately:

Title page (with author details): This should include the title, authors' names and affiliations, and a complete address for the corresponding author including telephone and e-mail address.

Abstract (when applicable): This should be a formatted version of the paper's abstract, submitted separately.

Blinded manuscript (no author details): The main body of the paper (including acknowledgments, references, tables, and figures) should not include any identifying information, such as the authors' names or affiliations.
Background
State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.

Material and methods
Provide sufficient details to allow the work to be reproduced by an independent researcher. Methods that are already published should be summarized, and indicated by a reference. If quoting directly from a previously published method, use quotation marks and also cite the source. Any modifications to existing methods should also be described.

Results
Results should be clear and concise.

Discussion
This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. A combined Results and Discussion section may sometimes be appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.

Conclusions
The main conclusions of the study may be presented in a short Conclusions section, which may stand alone or form a subsection of a Discussion section.

Appendices
If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig A.1, etc. Generally, however, appendices are not recommended but may be made available by request from the authors for reviewers, or for readers if the manuscript is accepted for publication.

Essential Title Page Information
- **Title.** Concise and informative; brief and not laden with too much detail. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.
- **Title page.** The first title page should include the title; name(s) and academic degree(s) of the author(s); name(s) of the department(s) and institution(s) in which the work was done; and name, address, business and home telephone numbers, and e-mail address of the author to whom correspondence and reprint requests should be addressed.
- **Author names and affiliations.** Where the family name may be ambiguous (e.g., a double name), please indicate this clearly. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and, if available, the e-mail address of each author.
- **Corresponding author.** Clearly indicate who will handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication, also post-publication. **Ensure that phone numbers (with country and area code) are provided in addition to the e-mail address and the complete postal address.** Contact details must be kept up to date by the corresponding author.
- **Present/permanent address.** If an author has moved since the work described in the article was done, or was visiting at the time, a 'Present address' (or 'Permanent address') may be indicated as a footnote to that author's name. The address at which the author actually did the work must be retained as the main affiliation address.

Save this title page as a separate file for your submission via EM. A second title page without any author information should begin the full manuscript file. This page will be used for double-blind peer review.

Highlights
Highlights are mandatory for this journal as they help increase the discoverability of your article via search engines. They consist of a short collection of bullet points that capture the novel results of your research as well as new methods that were used during the study (if any). Please have a look at the examples here: example Highlights.

Highlights should be submitted in a separate editable file in the online submission system. Please use 'Highlights' in the file name and include 3 to 5 bullet points (maximum 85 characters, including spaces, per bullet point).
Structured abstract
A structured abstract, by means of appropriate headings, should provide the context or background for the research and should state its purpose, basic procedures (selection of study subjects or laboratory animals, observational and analytical methods), main findings (giving specific effect sizes and their statistical significance, if possible), and principal conclusions. It should emphasize new and important aspects of the study or observations.

Unstructured abstracts
Unstructured abstracts are used for Brief Reports.

Graphical abstract
Although a graphical abstract is optional, its use is encouraged as it draws more attention to the online article. The graphical abstract should summarize the contents of the article in a concise, pictorial form designed to capture the attention of a wide readership. Graphical abstracts should be submitted as a separate file in the online submission system. Image size: Please provide an image with a minimum of 531 × 1328 pixels (h × w) or proportionally more. The image should be readable at a size of 5 × 13 cm using a regular screen resolution of 96 dpi. Preferred file types: TIFF, EPS, PDF or MS Office files. You can view Example Graphical Abstracts on our information site. Authors can make use of Elsevier's Illustration Services to ensure the best presentation of their images and in accordance with all technical requirements.

Keywords
Immediately after the abstract, provide a maximum of 6 keywords, using American spelling and avoiding general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for example, 'and', 'of'). Be sparing with abbreviations: only abbreviations firmly established in the field may be eligible. These keywords will be used for indexing purposes.

Abbreviations
Standard abbreviations should be used consistently throughout the article. Unusual or coined abbreviations should be spelled out the first time they appear in text, with abbreviation in parentheses. Ensure consistency of abbreviations throughout the article.

Acknowledgments
Collate acknowledgements in a separate section at the end of the article before the references and do not, therefore, include them on the title page, as a footnote to the title or otherwise. List those individuals who provided help during the research (e.g., providing language help, writing assistance or proof reading the article, collecting data, etc).

Math formulae
Please submit math equations as editable text and not as images. Present simple formulae in line with normal text where possible and use the solidus (/) instead of a horizontal line for small fractional terms, e.g., X/Y. In principle, variables are to be presented in italics. Powers of e are often more conveniently denoted by exp. Number consecutively any equations that have to be displayed separately from the text (if referred to explicitly in the text).

Table footnotes
Indicate each footnote in a table by using the symbols hierarchy (i.e., *, †, ‡, §, etc).

Footnotes
Footnotes should be used sparingly. Number them consecutively throughout the article. Many word processors build footnotes into the text, and this feature may be used. Should this not be the case, indicate the position of footnotes in the text and present the footnotes themselves separately at the end of the article.

Artwork
Electronic artwork
General points
• Make sure you use uniform lettering and sizing of your original artwork.
• Preferred fonts: Arial (or Helvetica), Times New Roman (or Times), Symbol, Courier.
• Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text.
• Use a logical naming convention for your artwork files.
• Indicate per figure if it is a single, 1.5 or 2-column fitting image.
• For Word submissions only, you may still provide figures and their captions, and tables within a single file at the revision stage.
Please note that individual figure files larger than 10 MB must be provided in separate source files.

A detailed guide on electronic artwork is available.

You are urged to visit this site; some excerpts from the detailed information are given here.

Formats
Regardless of the application used, when your electronic artwork is finalized, please 'save as' or convert the images to one of the following formats (note the resolution requirements for line drawings, halftones, and line/halftone combinations given below):
EPS (or PDF): Vector drawings. Embed the font or save the text as 'graphics'.
TIFF (or JPG): Color or grayscale photographs (halftones): always use a minimum of 300 dpi.
TIFF (or JPG): Bitmapped line drawings: use a minimum of 1000 dpi.
TIFF (or JPG): Combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale): a minimum of 500 dpi is required.

Please do not:
• Supply files that are optimized for screen use (e.g., GIF, BMP, PICT, WPG); the resolution is too low.
• Supply files that are too low in resolution.
• Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.

Color Artwork
Please make sure that artwork files are in an acceptable format (TIFF (or JPEG), EPS (or PDF), or MS Office files) and with the correct resolution. If, together with your accepted article, you submit usable color figures then Elsevier will ensure, at no additional charge, that these figures will appear in color both on the Web (e.g., ScienceDirect and other sites) and in print at no additional fee to the author. For further information on the preparation of electronic artwork, please see https://www.elsevier.com/artworkinstructions.

Illustration services
Elsevier's Author Services offers Illustration Services to authors preparing to submit a manuscript but concerned about the quality of the images accompanying their article. Elsevier's expert illustrators can produce scientific, technical and medical-style images, as well as a full range of charts, tables and graphs. Image 'polishing' is also available, where our illustrators take your image(s) and improve them to a professional standard. Please visit the website to find out more.

Figure captions
Ensure that each illustration has a caption. A caption should comprise a brief title (not on the figure itself) and a description of the illustration. Keep text in the illustrations themselves to a minimum but explain all symbols and abbreviations used.

Tables
Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text. Place footnotes to tables below the table body and indicate them with superscript symbols (following symbol hierarchy of asterisk, dagger, double dagger, sectional symbol, etc.) Avoid vertical rules. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in tables do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the article.

References
Place the reference list in the file after the main text. Number references consecutively in order of their mention in the text; all references must be cited in the text. Personal communications and unpublished data should be cited in the text in parentheses; they should not appear in the reference list.

Citation in text
Please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). Any references cited in the abstract must be given in full. Unpublished results and personal communications are not recommended in the reference list, but may be mentioned in the text. If these references are included in the reference list they should follow the standard reference style of the journal and should include a substitution of the publication date with either 'Unpublished results' or 'Personal communication'. Citation of a reference as 'in press' implies that the item has been accepted for publication.

Reference links
Increased discoverability of research and high quality peer review are ensured by online links to the sources cited. In order to allow us to create links to abstracting and indexing services, such as Scopus, CrossRef and PubMed, please ensure that data provided in the references are correct. Please note that
incorrect surnames, journal/book titles, publication year and pagination may prevent link creation. When copying references, please be careful as they may already contain errors. Use of the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) is encouraged.

Web references
As a minimum, the full URL should be given and the date when the reference was last accessed. Any further information, if known (DOI, author names, dates, reference to a source publication, etc.), should also be given. Web references can be listed separately (e.g., after the reference list) under a different heading if desired, or can be included in the reference list.

Data references
This journal encourages you to cite underlying or relevant datasets in your manuscript by citing them in your text and including a data reference in your Reference List. Data references should include the following elements: author name(s), dataset title, data repository, version (where available), year, and global persistent identifier. Add [dataset] immediately before the reference so we can properly identify it as a data reference. The [dataset] identifier will not appear in your published article.

Reference management software
Most Elsevier journals have their reference template available in many of the most popular reference management software products. These include all products that support Citation Style Language styles, such as Mendeley. Using citation plug-ins from these products, authors only need to select the appropriate journal template when preparing their article, after which citations and bibliographies will be automatically formatted in the journal’s style. If no template is yet available for this journal, please follow the format of the sample references and citations as shown in this Guide. If you use reference management software, please ensure that you remove all field codes before submitting the electronic manuscript. More information on how to remove field codes from different reference management software.

Users of Mendeley Desktop can easily install the reference style for this journal by clicking the following link:
http://open.mendeley.com/use-citation-style/american-journal-of-infection-control
When preparing your manuscript, you will then be able to select this style using the Mendeley plug-ins for Microsoft Word or LibreOffice.

Reference formatting
There are no strict requirements on reference formatting at submission. References can be in any style or format as long as the style is consistent. Where applicable, author(s) name(s), journal title/book title, chapter title/article title, year of publication, volume number/book chapter and the article number or pagination must be present. Use of DOI is highly encouraged. The reference style used by the journal will be applied to the accepted article by Elsevier at the proof stage. Note that missing data will be highlighted at proof stage for the author to correct. If you do wish to format the references yourself they should be arranged according to the following examples:

Reference style
Follow the format of the "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals" (Ann Intern Med 1997;126:36-47). Use journal abbreviations as listed in the Cumulated Index Medicus.

Text: Indicate references by (consecutive) superscript Arabic numerals in the order in which they appear in the text. The numerals are to be used outside periods and commas, inside colons and semicolons.

List: Number the references in the list in the order in which they appear in the text.

Examples of References (if 6 or fewer authors, list all; if 7 or more, list first 6 and et al):

Format for Journal Articles:

Format for Books:

Format for Chapters:

Dataset

Journal abbreviations source
Journal names should be abbreviated according to the list of title word abbreviations: http://www.issn.org/2-22661-LTWA-online.php.

Visual Abstracts
The American Journal of Infection Control has adopted visual abstracts as a dissemination method to spread the scientific research published in our journal. A visual abstract is a visual summary of the information usually found within the abstract portion of an article. Similar to the actual text abstract of a research article, it is meant to convey key findings in a shorter format.

To help you in your efforts, our Infographics editors will send you materials to help you get started: An AJIC PowerPoint template for you to enter your text and icons. Examples of previous AJIC visual abstracts for inspiration. The Visual Abstract Primer by Andrew M. Ibrahim (the creator of visual abstracts) @AndrewMIbrahim.

Below are the steps you will work through:
Put together a draft of the visual abstract including key findings. You will select black and white icons to represent your study background, methods, and results. You will then send the draft to the  Infographics editors, who will select similar icons from ImageBank. AJIC has a membership with this icon platform and will purchase all icons for your visual abstract. We will make suggestions and send the abstract back to you for further revisions. Once you are pleased with the version, we will prepare the visual abstract for dissemination via social media platforms. If you're not on twitter please sign-up and send us your hashtag so you can be part of the dissemination efforts. - https://help.twitter.com/en/create-twitter-account.

For further information, please contact Jeanne Brandt, Managing Editor at: jb3948@columbia.edu.

Supplementary material
Supplementary material such as applications, images and sound clips, can be published with your article to enhance it. Submitted supplementary items are published exactly as they are received (Excel or PowerPoint files will appear as such online). Please submit your material together with the article and supply a concise, descriptive caption for each supplementary file. If you wish to make changes to supplementary material during any stage of the process, please make sure to provide an updated file. Do not annotate any corrections on a previous version. Please switch off the 'Track Changes' option in Microsoft Office files as these will appear in the published version.

Research data
This journal encourages and enables you to share data that supports your research publication where appropriate, and enables you to interlink the data with your published articles. Research data refers to the results of observations or experimentation that validate research findings. To facilitate reproducibility and data reuse, this journal also encourages you to share your software, code, models, algorithms, protocols, methods and other useful materials related to the project.

Below are a number of ways in which you can associate data with your article or make a statement about the availability of your data when submitting your manuscript. If you are sharing data in one of these ways, you are encouraged to cite the data in your manuscript and reference list. Please refer to the "References" section for more information about data citation. For more information on depositing, sharing and using research data and other relevant research materials, visit the research data page.

Data linking
If you have made your research data available in a data repository, you can link your article directly to the dataset. Elsevier collaborates with a number of repositories to link articles on ScienceDirect with relevant repositories, giving readers access to underlying data that gives them a better understanding of the research described.
There are different ways to link your datasets to your article. When available, you can directly link your dataset to your article by providing the relevant information in the submission system. For more information, visit the database linking page.

For supported data repositories a repository banner will automatically appear next to your published article on ScienceDirect.

In addition, you can link to relevant data or entities through identifiers within the text of your manuscript, using the following format: Database: xxxx (e.g., TAIR: AT1G01020; CCDC: 734053; PDB: 1XFN).

Mendeley Data
This journal supports Mendeley Data, enabling you to deposit any research data (including raw and processed data, video, code, software, algorithms, protocols, and methods) associated with your manuscript in a free-to-use, open access repository. During the submission process, after uploading your manuscript, you will have the opportunity to upload your relevant datasets directly to Mendeley Data. The datasets will be listed and directly accessible to readers next to your published article online.

For more information, visit the Mendeley Data for journals page.

Data statement
To foster transparency, we encourage you to state the availability of your data in your submission. This may be a requirement of your funding body or institution. If your data is unavailable to access or unsuitable to post, you will have the opportunity to indicate why during the submission process, for example by stating that the research data is confidential. The statement will appear with your published article on ScienceDirect. For more information, visit the Data Statement page.

AFTER ACCEPTANCE

Proofs
One set of page proofs (as PDF files) will be sent by e-mail to the corresponding author or a link will be provided in the e-mail so that authors can download the files themselves. Elsevier now provides authors with PDF proofs which can be annotated; for this you will need to download Adobe Reader version 7 (or higher) available free from http://get.adobe.com/reader. Instructions on how to annotate PDF files will accompany the proofs (also given online). The exact system requirements are given at the Adobe site: http://www.adobe.com/products/reader/tech-specs.html.

If you do not wish to use the PDF annotations function, you may list the corrections (including replies to the Query Form) and return them to Elsevier in an e-mail. Please list your corrections quoting line number. If, for any reason, this is not possible, then mark the corrections and any other comments (including replies to the Query Form) on a printout of your proof and return by fax, or scan the pages and e-mail, or by post. Please use this proof only for checking the typesetting, editing, completeness and correctness of the text, tables and figures. Significant changes to the article as accepted for publication will only be considered at this stage with permission from the Editor. We will do everything possible to get your article published quickly and accurately – please let us have all your corrections within 48 hours. It is important to ensure that all corrections are sent back to us in one communication: please check carefully before replying, as inclusion of any subsequent corrections cannot be guaranteed. Proofreading is solely your responsibility. Note that Elsevier may proceed with the publication of your article if no response is received.

Offprints
Paper offprints can be ordered via the offprint order form which is sent once the article is accepted for publication. Both corresponding and co-authors may order offprints at any time via Elsevier’s WebShop.

Online Databases
Elsevier will automatically publish all AJIC papers to online scientific databases such as PubMed and Science Direct at the time of print publication.

AUTHOR INQUIRIES
Visit the Elsevier Support Center to find the answers you need. Here you will find everything from Frequently Asked Questions to ways to get in touch.
You can also check the status of your submitted article or find out when your accepted article will be published.

**Editorial Contacts**

Editor-in-Chief
Patricia Stone, PhD, RN, FAAN, CIC
Columbia University School of Nursing
530 West 168th Street 6th Floor
New York, NY 10032
E-mail: ajic@columbia.edu

Managing Editor
Jeanne Brandt, MPA
E-mail: ajic@columbia.edu