

# Pennsylvania Project Firstline developed a web-based interactive Certified in Infection Control study group



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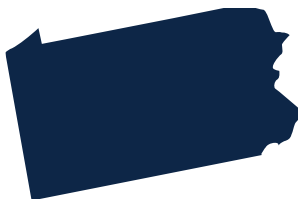
CATEGORY: **Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC)**

The Pennsylvania Department of Health's Project Firstline developed and delivered a 14-week infection prevention and control study session for public health staff working in areas related to infection prevention. The sessions increased the level of infection prevention expertise across the state in a way that met the needs of public health professionals.



## The “What”

In the wake of the pandemic, it became clear that the need for infection prevention and control (IPC) expertise within public health was greater than ever. The Pennsylvania Department of Health's Project Firstline (PA PFL), is a project designed to promote foundational knowledge on IPC for all types of frontline healthcare workers. PA PFL partnered with local health departments (LHDs) across the state to facilitate online, structured Certified in Infection Control (CIC) study sessions led by CIC-certified infection preventionists. These study groups served to train public health staff using a framework compatible with busy schedules and in-person meeting restrictions. PA PFL used Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for the Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) funding to provide recommended training materials to participants, pay for CIC exam fees, and provide access to the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) online text.



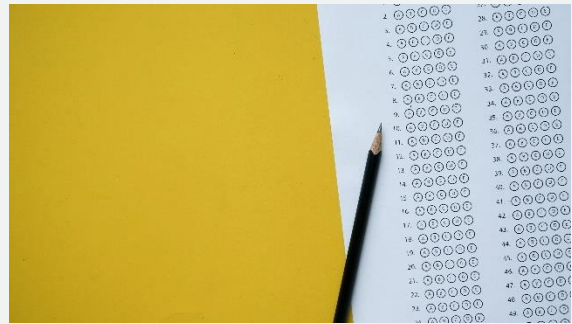
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Participants have gained valuable expertise on core concepts of infection prevention and control that are needed for public health professionals working in response and prevention roles.

## The “So What”

Upon completion of the 14-week study session developed and delivered by PA PFL, participants were prepared to take the CIC examination. Of the sixteen participants in the first session ending in September 2021, four have completed the CIC exam and all have passed.




## The “Now What”

PA PFL is receiving continued interest and requests for the CIC study group. As a result, two additional 14-week sessions have been scheduled to meet demand. Slides, content, and structure have been revamped based on participant feedback and adult learning principles. Updates include the addition of weekly office hours in which participants can log in and ask questions on concepts for which they need additional guidance, as well as the use of content experts for teaching technical sessions including epidemiologic methods and microbiology concepts.

The intent of this program was to increase the level of infection prevention expertise across the state in a way that met the needs of public health professionals in the midst of a pandemic. While the goal was to increase the number of individuals certified in infection prevention across the state, even those that chose to not complete the exam have gained valuable expertise on core concepts of infection prevention and control that are needed for public health professionals working in response and prevention roles.

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