



Christine is a certified Infection Control Professional at London Health Sciences Centre in London, Ontario. She has worked in the infection prevention and control field for over 17 years in a variety of settings including public health, acute care, and Public Health Ontario. In her current role she focuses on healthcare design, construction, renovation, and maintenance. She is the secretary for IPAC Canada's Healthcare Design and Construction Interest Group and is the IPAC Canada representative for the CSA's HVAC Technical Sub-Committee. She has been a mentor for the IPAC Canada Mentorship Program since 2017.

1. What inspired you to become a mentor?

*I have always found that no matter what I read in IPAC guidelines, I gain the most knowledge when I talk to others. Networking is such a valuable skill for an infection control professional and what better way to network with others than through the mentorship program. Not only is the program a way to connect me with others in the IPAC field and across the country, but it also provides me an opportunity to stretch myself professionally, enabling me to practice mentor skills such as being an active listener, valuing others perspectives and situations, sharing honest and direct feedback, and translating my knowledge and experiences to others.*

2. How would you rate the mentorship program overall?

*I would rate the IPAC Canada Mentorship Program as excellent overall. It has provided me opportunities to connect with ICPs across the country, across sectors, and across backgrounds and experience levels. The program is well described and well supported in its resources. What I find the most beneficial about the program's structure is its flexibility. While the handbook includes guidance related to the ideal length of the mentorship relationship, frequency of meetings, and typical roles and responsibilities, the program also identifies that each relationship is unique, and can be developed in a collaborative way between mentor and mentee.*

3. Did you get the support to be successful in the program?

*I have always found the Mentorship Program Development Committee easy to reach and quick to respond. I know the Program's chair is always a phone call or email away, and never hesitate to reach out if I have questions or concerns.*

4. Would you volunteer to serve as a mentor again next year or in the future?

*I have been a mentor for the program since January 2017, just shortly after the program began in the spring of 2016. Over my four years I have had the pleasure of being a mentor to three individuals and yes! I do plan to continue to be a mentor in the program for years to come.*

5. Were your mentor responsibilities clearly defined?

*The handbook is a great resource, and clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of both the mentor and the mentee.*

6. Was the IPAC Canada Mentor Coordinator accessible and easy to talk to and seek advice from when necessary?

*Yes, always a phone call or email away!*

7. How would you describe your relationship with your mentee?

*I have had three rewarding mentor/mentee relationships. Each began with unique goals ranging from applying IPAC principles in the LTC setting, to improving case finding strategies for surgical site infections, to providing advice about entering the IPAC workforce and getting involved in IPAC Canada. All three relationships stretched me professionally and gave me an opportunity to explore my own knowledge and understanding of IPAC principles, resources, and skills.*

8. Did you gain personally from this relationship?

*I value my experience in the IPAC Canada Mentorship Program very much. The program gives me an opportunity to share my knowledge and experiences with others and in return, I gain a new perspective from an ICP outside of my own organization, community, and sector. Being a part of this program has also allowed me to develop my coaching and communication skills. I always feel the IPAC community is a little bit more connected each time I am able to interact with a different ICP across Canada in a meaningful way.*

9. Would you recommend the mentorship program to others?

*Absolutely! Whether you are a new ICP looking for support and IPAC connections or you are an experienced ICP with knowledge and stories to share, this Program is a great way to connect the ICP community across the country. We all have so much to share!*

10. Was the application process easy to follow?

*It has been some time since I completed the application process, so I did take this opportunity to look back at my original paperwork. The application form was concise and easy to complete. I submitted it, along with my CV, and do not recall having any difficulties doing so.*

11. What was most satisfying about the mentorship program?

*While satisfying might not quite describe it, I find it most exciting to be paired with a new mentor. Carving out a new relationship with an individual that is beginning his or her IPAC journey is invigorating and gives me renewed enthusiasm for the work that I do.*

12. What advice do you have for others who are considering becoming a mentor?

*Try it! Joining the program is straightforward and easy. These times are busy and stressful, to be sure, and certainly it is easy to put your head down and charge ahead with the tasks at hand, but there are many new ICPs entering our field at a time of uncertainty and under an immense amount of pressure. We were all novice ICPs once and I trust each one of us remembers the individuals we called on regularly with questions. It is quite a rewarding experience to be on the receiving end of those calls now. Let's help each other stay the course!*

13. Do you have any additional comments?

*I was nervous when I was paired with my first ICP mentee. I had been working in a large acute care facility for some time and found myself partnered with a new IPAC professional across the country in a long-term care facility. While my CV reflected some LTC experience, it had been some time since I had worked within the sector. I did touch base with the Program chair about my apprehension, to which I received reassurance and the offer to make a change if, after giving it a go, the arrangement didn't seem a good fit. What I came to find with this first mentorship experience is that a strong foundation of IPAC principles can cross sectors and that being a mentor isn't just about the technical aspects of infection prevention and control. We worked together to learn about applying IPAC principles in healthcare design and construction within the LTC setting and in turn, both learned a great deal about each other's experience and unique work settings. I would conclude by saying that I strongly encourage other ICPs to consider getting involved in this program. It is well worth it!*