American National Standard

ANSI/AAMI ST67:2011/(R)2017

Sterilization of health care products—Requirements and guidance for selecting a sterility assurance level (SAL) for products labeled 'sterile'

Objectives and uses of AAMI standards and recommended practices

It is most important that the objectives and potential uses of an AAMI product standard or recommended practice are clearly understood. The objectives of AAMI's technical development program derive from AAMI's overall mission: the advancement of medical instrumentation. Essential to such advancement are (1) a continued increase in the safe and effective application of current technologies to patient care, and (2) the encouragement of new technologies. It is AAMI's view that standards and recommended practices can contribute significantly to the advancement of medical instrumentation, provided that they are drafted with attention to these objectives and provided that arbitrary and restrictive uses are avoided.

A voluntary *standard* for a *medical device* recommends to the manufacturer the information that should be provided with or on the product, basic safety and performance criteria that should be considered in qualifying the device for clinical use, and the measurement techniques that can be used to determine whether the device conforms with the safety and performance criteria and/or to compare the performance characteristics of different products. Some standards emphasize the information that should be provided with the device, including performance characteristics, instructions for use, warnings and precautions, and other data considered important in ensuring the safe and effective use of the device in the clinical environment. Recommending the disclosure of performance characteristics often necessitates the development of specialized test methods to facilitate uniformity in reporting; reaching consensus on these tests can represent a considerable part of committee work. When a drafting committee determines that clinical concerns warrant the establishment of *minimum* safety and performance criteria, referee tests must be provided and the reasons for establishing the criteria must be documented in the rationale.

A *recommended practice* provides guidelines for the use, care, and/or processing of a medical device or system. A recommended practice does not address device performance *per se*, but rather procedures and practices that will help ensure that a device is used safely and effectively and that its performance will be maintained.

Although a device standard is primarily directed to the manufacturer, it may also be of value to the potential purchaser or user of the device as a frame of reference for device evaluation. Similarly, even though a recommended practice is usually oriented towards healthcare professionals, it may be useful to the manufacturer in better understanding the environment in which a medical device will be used. Also, some recommended practices, while not addressing device performance criteria, provide guidelines to industrial personnel on such subjects as sterilization processing, methods of collecting data to establish safety and efficacy, human engineering, and other processing or evaluation techniques; such guidelines may be useful to health care professionals in understanding industrial practices.

In determining whether an AAMI standard or recommended practice is relevant to the specific needs of a potential user of the document, several important concepts must be recognized:

All AAMI standards and recommended practices are *voluntary* (unless, of course, they are adopted by government regulatory or procurement authorities). The application of a standard or recommended practice is solely within the discretion and professional judgment of the user of the document.

Each AAMI standard or recommended practice reflects the collective expertise of a committee of health care professionals and industrial representatives, whose work has been reviewed nationally (and sometimes internationally). As such, the consensus recommendations embodied in a standard or recommended practice are intended to respond to clinical needs and, ultimately, to help ensure patient safety. A standard or recommended practice is limited, however, in the sense that it responds generally to perceived risks and conditions that may not always be relevant to specific situations. A standard or recommended practice is an important *reference* in responsible decision-making, but it should never *replace* responsible decision-making.

Despite periodic review and revision (at least once every five years), a standard or recommended practice is necessarily a static document applied to a dynamic technology. Therefore, a standards user must carefully review the reasons why the document was initially developed and the specific rationale for each of its provisions. This review will reveal whether the document remains relevant to the specific needs of the user.

Particular care should be taken in applying a product standard to existing devices and equipment, and in applying a recommended practice to current procedures and practices. While observed or potential risks with existing equipment typically form the basis for the safety and performance criteria defined in a standard, professional judgment must be used in applying these criteria to existing equipment. No single source of information will serve to identify a particular product as "unsafe". A voluntary standard can be used as one resource, but the ultimate decision as to product safety and efficacy must take into account the specifics of its utilization and, of course, cost-benefit considerations. Similarly, a recommended practice should be analyzed in the context of the specific needs and resources of the individual institution or firm. Again, the rationale accompanying each AAMI standard and recommended practice is an excellent guide to the reasoning and data underlying its provision.

In summary, a standard or recommended practice is truly useful only when it is used in conjunction with other sources of information and policy guidance and in the context of professional experience and judgment.

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Requests for interpretations of AAMI standards and recommended practices must be made in writing, to the AAMI Vice President, Standards Policy and Programs. An official interpretation must be approved by letter ballot of the originating committee and subsequently reviewed and approved by the AAMI Standards Board. The interpretation will become official and representation of the Association only upon exhaustion of any appeals and upon publication of notice of interpretation in the "Standards Monitor" section of the *AAMI News*. The Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation disclaims responsibility for any characterization or explanation of a standard or recommended practice which has not been developed and communicated in accordance with this procedure and which is not published, by appropriate notice, as an *official interpretation* in the *AAMI News*.

American National Standard

ANSI/AAMI ST67:2011/(R)2017
(Revision of ANSI/AAMI ST67:2003/(R)2008)

Sterilization of health care products—Requirements and guidance for selecting a sterility assurance level (SAL) for products labeled “sterile”

Developed by
AAMI

Approved 11 April 2011 and reaffirmed 18 July 2017 by
American National Standards Institute, Inc.

Abstract: This standard establishes requirements and guidance for selection of an appropriate sterility assurance level for terminally sterilized health care products.

Keywords: sterility assurance level (SAL), terminal sterilization

AAMI Standard

This Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI) standard implies a consensus of those substantially concerned with its scope and provisions. The existence of an AAMI standard does not in any respect preclude anyone, whether they have approved the standard or not, from manufacturing, marketing, purchasing, or using products, processes, or procedures not conforming to the standard. AAMI standards are subject to periodic review, and users are cautioned to obtain the latest editions.

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All AAMI standards, recommended practices, technical information reports, and other types of technical documents developed by AAMI are *voluntary*, and their application is solely within the discretion and professional judgment of the user of the document. Occasionally, voluntary technical documents are adopted by government regulatory agencies or procurement authorities, in which case the adopting agency is responsible for enforcement of its rules and regulations.

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Glossary of equivalent standards

International Standards adopted in the United States may include normative references to other International Standards. For each International Standard that has been adopted by AAMI (and ANSI), the table below gives the corresponding U.S. designation and level of equivalency to the International Standard. NOTE: Documents are sorted by international designation. The code in the US column, "(R)20xx" indicates the year the document was officially reaffirmed by AAMI. E.g., ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-4:2002/(R)2009 indicates that 10993-4, originally approved and published in 2002, was reaffirmed without change in 2009.

Other normatively referenced International Standards may be under consideration for U.S. adoption by AAMI; therefore, this list should not be considered exhaustive.

International designation	U.S. designation	Equivalency
IEC 60601-1:2005 Technical Corrigendum 1 and 2	ANSI/AAMI ES60601-1:2005 and ANSI/AAMI ES60601-1:2005/A2:2010 ANSI/AAMI ES60601-1:2005/C1:2009 (amdt)	Major technical variations C1 Identical to Corrigendum 1 & 2
IEC 60601-1-2:2007	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-1-2:2007	Identical
IEC 60601-2-2:2009	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-2-2:2009	Identical
IEC 60601-2-4:2010	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-2-4:2010	Identical
IEC 60601-2-16:2008	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-2-16:2008	Identical
IEC 60601-2-19:2009	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-2-19:2009	Identical
IEC 60601-2-20:2009	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-2-20:2009	Identical
IEC 60601-2-21:2009	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-2-21:2009	Identical
IEC 60601-2-24:1998	ANSI/AAMI ID26:2004/(R)2009	Major technical variations
IEC 60601-2-27:2011	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-2-27:2011	Identical
IEC 60601-2-47:2001	ANSI/AAMI EC38:2007	Major technical variations
IEC 60601-2-50:2009	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601-2-50:2009	Identical
IEC 80001-1:2010	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 80001-1:2010	Identical
IEC 80601-2-30:2009 and Technical Corrigendum 1	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 80601-2-30:2009 and ANSI/AAMI/IEC 80601-2-30:2009/ C1:2009 (amdt) – consolidated text	Identical (with inclusion) C1 Identical to Corrigendum 1
IEC 80601-2-58:2008	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 80601-2-58:2008	Identical
IEC/TR 60878:2009	ANSI/AAMI/IEC TIR60878:2003	Identical
IEC/TR 62296:2009	ANSI/AAMI/IEC TIR62296:2009	Identical
IEC 62304:2006	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 62304:2006	Identical
IEC/TR 62348:2006	ANSI/AAMI/IEC TIR62348:2006	Identical
IEC/TR 62354:2009	ANSI/AAMI/IEC TIR62354:2009	Identical
IEC 62366:2007	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 62366:2007	Identical
IEC/TR 80002-1:2009	ANSI/IEC/TR 80002-1:2009	Identical
ISO 5840:2005	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 5840:2005/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 7198:1998	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 7198:1998/2001/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 7199:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 7199:2009	Identical
ISO 8637:2010	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 8637:2010	Identical
ISO 8638:2010	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 8638:2010	Identical
ISO 10993-1:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-1:2009	Identical
ISO 10993-2:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-2:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 10993-3:2003	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-3:2003/(R)2009	Identical
ISO 10993-4:2002 and Amendment 1:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-4:2002/(R)2009 and Amendment 1:2006/(R)2009	Identical
ISO 10993-5:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-5:2009	Identical
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ISO 10993-7:2008	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-7:2008	Identical
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ISO 10993-10:2010	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-10:2010	Identical
ISO 10993-11:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-11:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 10993-12:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-12:2007	Identical
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ISO 10993-18:2005	ANSI/AAMI BE83:2006	Major technical variations
ISO/TS 10993-19:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR10993-19:2006	Identical
ISO/TS 10993-20:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR10993-20:2006	Identical
ISO 11135-1:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11135-1:2007	Identical

International designation	U.S. designation	Equivalency
ISO/TS 11135-2:2008	ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR11135-2:2008	Identical
ISO 11137-1:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11137-1:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 11137-2:2006 (2006-08-01 corrected)	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11137-2:2006	Identical
ISO 11137-3:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11137-3:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 11138-1:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11138-1:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 11138-2:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11138-2:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 11138-3:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11138-3:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 11138-4:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11138-4:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 11138-5:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11138-5:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO/TS 11139:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11139:2006	Identical
ISO 11140-1:2005	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11140-1:2005/(R)2010	Identical
ISO 11140-3:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11140-3:2007	Identical
ISO 11140-4:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11140-4:2007	Identical
ISO 11140-5:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11140-5:2007	Identical
ISO 11607-1:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11607-1:2006/(R)2010	Identical
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ISO 11737-1:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11737-1:2006	Identical
ISO 11737-2:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11737-2:2009	Identical
ISO/TS 12417:2011	ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR12417:2011	Identical
ISO 13408-1:2008	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408-1:2008	Identical
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ISO 13408-3:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408-3:2006	Identical
ISO 13408-4:2005	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408-4:2005	Identical
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ISO 13408-6:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408-6:2006	Identical
ISO 13485:2003	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13485:2003/(R)2009	Identical
ISO 13958:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13958:2009	Identical
ISO 13959:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13959:2009	Identical
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ISO 14937:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14937:2009	Identical
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ISO 14971:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14971:2007/(R)2010	Identical
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ISO 15674:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 15674:2009	Identical
ISO 15675:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 15675:2009	Identical
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ISO 17664:2004	ANSI/AAMI ST81:2004	Major technical variations
ISO 17665-1:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 17665-1:2006	Identical (with inclusions)
ISO/TS 17665-2:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR17665-2:2009	Identical
ISO 18472:2006	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 18472:2006/(R)2010	Identical
ISO/TS 19218:2005	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 19218:2005	Identical
ISO 20857:2010	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 20857:2010	Identical
ISO 22442-1:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 22442-1:2007	Identical
ISO 22442-2:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 22442-2:2007	Identical
ISO 22442-3:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 22442-3:2007	Identical
ISO 23500:2011	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 23500:2011	Identical
ISO 25539-1:2003 and A1:2005	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 25539-1:2003/(R)2009 and A1:2005/(R)2009	Identical
ISO 25539-2:2008	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 25539-2:2008	Identical
ISO 26722:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 26722:2009	Identical
ISO 27186:2010	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 27186:2010	Identical
ISO 80369-1:2010	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 80369-1:2010	Identical
ISO 81060-1:2007	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 81060-1:2007	Identical
ISO 81060-2:2009	ANSI/AAMI/ISO 81060-2:2009	Identical

Committee representation

Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation

AAMI Sterility Assurance Level (SAL) Working Group

This standard was developed by the AAMI Sterility Assurance Level (SAL) Working Group under the auspices of the AAMI Sterilization Standards Committee. Approval of this standard does not necessarily mean that all working group members voted for its approval.

At the time this document was published, the **AAMI Sterility Assurance Level (SAL) Working Group** had the following members:

Cochairs:
Trabue D. Bryans, WuXi AppTec Inc.
Victoria M. Hitchins, PhD, FDA/CDRH

Members:
Christopher Anderson, Boston Scientific Corporation
Thomas J. Berger, PhD, Hospira Worldwide Inc.
David J. Brodersen, Covidien
Trabue D. Bryans, WuXi AppTec Inc.
Brian R. Drumheller, CR Bard
Sylvie Dufresne, PhD, TSO3 Inc.
Niki Fidopiastis, Sterigenics International
Naomi Gamm, St Jude Medical Inc.
Zory R. Glaser, PhD MPH CSPDM
Joyce M. Hansen, JM Hansen & Associates
Victoria M. Hitchins, PhD, FDA/CDRH
Robert Dennis Houlsby, Abbott Laboratories
Jim Kaiser, Bausch & Lomb Inc.
Carolyn L. Kinsley, LexaMed
Roland C. Kippenhan, Minntech Corporation
David Liu, Johnson & Johnson
Ronald G. Lulich, 3M Healthcare
Lisa N. Macdonald, Becton Dickinson & Company
Gerald E. McDonnell, PhD, Steris Corporation
Joseph M. Mello, Ethicide Laboratories Inc.
Gerry A. O'Dell, MS, Gerry O'Dell Consulting
Dave Parente, NAMSA
Manuel Saavedra, Jr., Kimberly-Clark Corporation
Mark Seybold, Baxter Healthcare Corporation
Ian Shorr, CareFusion
Sopheak Sriv, MPH, Quality Tech Services Inc.
Donald Tumminelli, SPS Medical Supply Corp
Jason Voisinet, Moog Medical Devices
Martell Kress Winters, BS SM, Nelson Laboratories Inc.

Alternates:
Diane Battisti, Johnson & Johnson
Nancy Blaszko, Sterigenics International
Kimbrell Darnell, CR Bard
April J. Doering, St Jude Medical Inc.
Steven J. Elliott, WuXi AppTec Inc.
Joel R. Gorski, PhD, NAMSA
John Grillo, PhD, Hospira Worldwide Inc.
Sean Hanley, Boston Scientific Corporation
Katherine E. Hill, 3M Healthcare
John T. Ice, Covidien
Maggie Ladd, BA BS, Kimberly-Clark Corporation
Sharon K. Lappalainen, FDA/CDRH
Chris Lau, LexaMed
Antonio F Lopez, CareFusion
John Masefield, Steris Corporation
Jonathan Karl Olson, MA, Minntech Corporation
Leslie A. Phillips, Bausch & Lomb Inc.
Nancy Rakiewicz, Moog Medical Devices

Mike Sadowski, Baxter Healthcare Corporation
Michael G. Sprague, Ethide Laboratories Inc.
Wendy Wangsgard, PhD, Nelson Laboratories Inc.
Cheryl Work, Becton Dickinson & Company
Christine H. Yunker, Abbott Laboratories

NOTE—Participation by federal agency representatives in the development of this technical information report does not constitute endorsement by the federal government or any of its agencies.

AAMI Sterilization Standards Committee

At the time this document was published, the **AAMI Sterilization Standards Committee** had the following members:

Cochairs:
Victoria M. Hitchins, PhD, FDA/CDRH
Michael H. Scholla, Dupont Protection Technologies

Members:
Christopher Anderson, Boston Scientific Corporation
Trabue D. Bryans, WuXi AppTec Inc.
Peter A. Burke, PhD, Steris Corporation
Nancy Chobin, RN CSPDM, St Barnabas Healthcare System
Ramona Conner, RN MSN CNOR, Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses
Jacqueline Daley, Association for Professionals in Infection Control
Kimbrell Darnell, CR Bar
Dave Dion, Cardinal Health (MP&S)
Lisa Foster, Sterigenics Internationa
Joel R. Gorski, PhD, NAMSA
Deborah A. Havlik, Hospira Worldwide Inc.
Victoria M. Hitchins, PhD, FDA/CDRH
Lois Atkinson Jones, MS
Susan G. Klacik, CCSMC FCS ACE, IAHCSMM
Byron J. Lambert, PhD, Abbott Laboratories
Colleen Patricia Landers, RN, Canadian Standards Association
Lisa N. Macdonald, Becton Dickinson & Company
Jeff Martin, Alcon Laboratories Inc.
Patrick J. McCormick, PhD, Bausch & Lomb Inc.
Rainer Newman, Johnson & Johnson
Janet M. Prust, 3M Healthcare
Nancy Rakiewicz, Moog Medical Devices
Michael H. Scholla, Dupont Protection Technologies
Mark Seybold, Baxter Healthcare Corporation
Andrew Sharavara, PhD, Propper Manufacturing Co Inc.
Mark N. Smith, Getinge USA
William N. Thompson, Covidien
Martell Kress Winters, BS SM, Nelson Laboratories Inc.
William E. Young, (Independent Expert)

Alternates:
Lloyd Brown, Covidien
Glenn W. Calvert, Becton Dickinson & Company
Steven J. Elliott, WuXi AppTec Inc.
Thomas J. Frazar, Johnson & Johnson
Kathy Hoffman, Sterigenics International
Jim Kaiser, Bausch & Lomb Inc.
Natalie Lind, IAHCSMM
Reynaldo Lopez, Cardinal Health (MP&S)
Ralph Makinen, Boston Scientific Corporation
Mary S. Mayo, CR Bard
David Ford McGoldrick, BS, Abbott Laboratories
James B. Neher, MS RAC, NAMSA
Jerry R. Nelson, PhD, Nelson Laboratories Inc.
Karen Polkinghorne, Dupont Protection Technologies
Wallace E. Puckett, PhD, Steris Corporation

Mike Sadowski, Baxter Healthcare Corporation
Jason Voisinet, Moog Medical Devices
Craig A. Wallace, 3M Healthcare
Valerie Welter, Hospira Worldwide Inc.

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Foreword

This standard was developed by the AAMI Sterility Assurance Level (SAL) Working Group (formerly the Microbiological Quality [SALs] of Processed Medical Devices Working Group) under the auspices of the AAMI Sterilization Standards Committee.

The purpose of this standard is to codify current North American sterilization practices and provide a standardized framework for determining appropriate SALs.

While the 2003 edition of ANSI/AAMI ST67 was very restrictive in what was required for supporting the use of SALs other than 10^{-6}, this updated version allows manufacturers to select an alternate SAL, such as 10^{-5} or 10^{-4}, for those types of products that are sensitive to 10^{-6} sterilization processes. The revised standard requires the use of the most rigorous SAL that the product can withstand, as well as a risk assessment in order to select an alternate SAL. This focus on risk assessment aligns with other regulatory documents.

As used within the context of this standard, “shall” indicates requirements strictly to be followed in order to conform to the standard; “should” indicates that among several possibilities one is recommended as particularly suitable, without mentioning or excluding others, or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required, or that (in the negative form) a certain possibility or course of action should be avoided but is not prohibited; “may” is used to indicate that a course of action is permissible within the limits of the standard; and “can” is used as a statement of possibility and capability. “Must” is used only to describe “unavoidable” situations, including those mandated by government regulation.

AAMI and ANSI procedures require that standards be reviewed every five years and, if necessary, revised to reflect technological advances that may have occurred since publication.

The concepts incorporated in this standard should be considered flexible and dynamic. AAMI policies and procedures require that AAMI standards and recommended practices be reviewed and, if necessary, revised at least once every five years. To remain relevant, it must be modified as technological advances are made and as new data comes to light.

Suggestions for improving this standard are invited. Comments and suggested revisions should be sent to Technical Programs, AAMI, 4301 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 301, Arlington, VA 22203-1633.

NOTE—This foreword does not contain provisions of the AAMI standard *Sterilization of medical devices—Requirements for products labeled “sterile”* (ANSI/AAMI ST67:2011), but it does provide important information about the development and intended use of the document.