



Potential Multi-drug Resistant Organisms (MDROs) increase during COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) Pandemic

Date: June 10, 2020

Public Health Message Type: Alert Advisory Update Information

Intended Audience: All public health partners Healthcare providers Infection preventionists
 Local health departments Schools/child care centers ACOs
 Animal health professionals Other:

Key Points or Updates:

- 1) With SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) currently circulating in New Jersey and the surrounding areas, facilities have reported shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) and have been operating at contingency and/or crisis capacity to optimize PPE. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html>)
- 2) The COVID-19 pandemic may lead to a rise in antimicrobial prescriptions and consequently antimicrobial resistance development and infections. (<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/05/covid-19-presents-antibiotic-stewardship-challenges-opportunities>)
- 3) Facilities may see resurgence of MDROs in healthcare facilities and communities due to both PPE shortages and conservation strategies that were used to preserve PPE in addition to the increased use of antimicrobial agents.

Action Items:

- 1) Facilities returning to conventional PPE capacity (normal levels of PPE) are reminded to adhere to all infection prevention and control guidance to prevent transmission of MDROs in healthcare settings. This includes the use of all recommended PPE for care of patients with MDROs. (<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html>)
- 2) Resume and continue all current MDRO surveillance activities that may have been suspended or relaxed during the height of the COVID-19 surge in New Jersey.
- 3) Report all suspect increases in incidence of Carbapenem resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE), *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA), and *Acinetobacter baumannii* (CRAB) infections and colonizations.
 - a. Reminder that all outbreaks or suspect outbreaks of any etiology are immediately reportable to local public health.
 - i. Contact information for all local health departments (LHDs) in New Jersey is available at: www.localhealth.nj.gov.
 - ii. If LHD personnel are unavailable, healthcare providers should report to the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), Communicable Disease Service at 609-826-5964. If an individual does not live in New Jersey, report the case to NJDOH at the phone number provider within.
- 4) Continue to report any individual cases of pan-non-susceptible organisms and *Candida auris* (infections and colonizations).

- 5) The NJDOH Communicable Disease Services, in partnership with the New Jersey Public Health and Environmental Laboratory (PHEL) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Antibiotic Resistance Laboratory Network (CDC ALRN), offers **free services to collect, confirm, and characterize** CRE, CRPA and CRAB isolates.

Contact Information:

- Gabriel Innes, Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Coordinator, NJDOH; Email: Gabriel.innes@doh.nj.gov
- Jason Mehr, Healthcare-associated Infections Coordinator, NJDOH; Email: Jason.Mehr@doh.nj.gov
- Rebecca Greeley, Infectious Disease Team Lead, NJDOH; Email: Rebecca.Greeley@doh.nj.gov
- NJDOH Communicable Disease Service, (609) 826-5964 during business hours