Candida auris in New Jersey
Guidance Update

Date: February 19, 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:
• Candida auris (or C. auris) is a fungus that is causing serious infections in patients in the United States, including New Jersey. C. auris is primarily found in healthcare settings, particularly in long-term acute care hospitals and skilled nursing facilities that take care of patients on ventilators.
• The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) responds to all reports of C. auris. As of February 13, 2020, 158 clinical confirmed cases of C. auris have been reported in New Jersey. The oldest known case in New Jersey was retrospectively identified from a culture collected in June 2015.

Updates:
(1) Cleaning Products
  • The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the availability of products that can be used to disinfect surfaces against C. auris. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the use of these EPA-registered hospital-grade disinfectants, as well as products that have been identified to be effective against C. auris per testing at CDC. A list of appropriate products can be found at https://www.cdc.gov/fungal/candida-auris/c-auris-infection-control.html#disinfection.

(2) Enhanced Barrier Precautions
  • The CDC released interim guidance on the use of personal protective equipment and room restrictions in nursing homes to address management of residents colonized with novel and emerging antimicrobial pathogens, including C. auris. This guidance introduces the concept of Enhanced Barrier Precautions, which recommends use of gown and gloves for certain residents during specific high-contact resident care activities. Detailed guidance can be found at https://www.cdc.gov/hai/containment/PPE-Nursing-Homes.html.
Action Items:

- If *C. auris* is suspected or identified, contact your local health department (localhealth.nj.gov) or the NJDOH Communicable Disease Service at (609) 826-5964.
- Healthcare facilities, clinicians, and laboratorians should review CDC recommendations for *C. auris* to ensure they are prepared to identify, report, and respond to *C. auris*. Guidance is available at https://www.cdc.gov/fungal/candida-auris/health-professionals.html.
- Healthcare facilities that care for or receive patients who have been identified with *C. auris* should follow all CDC recommendations to prevent spread of the organism.
- Ensure that the patient’s *C. auris* status is communicated to all receiving healthcare facilities. Facilities that care for patients with *C. auris* should include the attached *C. auris* case transfer form in the patient’s transfer paperwork.
- Facilities that have not received or identified patients with *C. auris* should still review CDC guidance and ensure basic infection prevention infrastructure is in place.

Contact Information:

- Tara Fulton, Healthcare Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance Epidemiologist, at Tara.Fulton@doh.nj.gov or (609) 826-5964, or
- Contact your local health department (localhealth.nj.gov)

References and Resources:

- NJDOH Resources available at: https://nj.gov/health/cd/topics/cauris.shtml
  - *Candida auris* Case Transfer Information Sheet
  - Infection prevention and control recommendations for *Candida auris* in skilled nursing and subacute rehabilitation facilities
  - *Candida auris* in New Jersey: Considerations for New Jersey Healthcare Facilities
