

MRSA BACTERAEMIA INFECTION RATE REPORTING

Public reporting of new Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteraemia infection rates in Ontario hospitals will begin on December 30, 2008. Hospitals will post their rates and case counts of new MRSA bacteraemia acquired in their facility on their website every three months (quarterly), and will also report their data to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care through an online template captured by a central database. The ministry will post this information on its public website on December 30, 2008.

What is Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*?

Staphylococcus aureus is a germ that lives on the skin and mucous membranes of healthy people. Occasionally, *S. aureus* can cause an infection. When *S. aureus* develops resistance to certain antibiotics, it is called methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA.

What is bacteraemia?

Bacteraemia is the presence of bacteria in the bloodstream and is referred to as a bloodstream infection.

What is a case of MRSA bacteraemia?

A case is a patient identified with laboratory confirmed bloodstream infection with methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). A blood stream infection is a single positive blood culture for MRSA.

What will be publicly reported?

Each hospital will post its quarterly rate and case count of new MRSA bacteraemia acquired in their facility on their website.

At the end of each quarter, the ministry will report the previous quarter's data on its website by hospital site including:

- (i) the number of new hospital acquired MRSA bacteraemia cases that is zero (0) or totalling five (5) or more associated with that hospital site, or if this is less than 5 cases (i.e. 1 to 4 cases), text reading "< 5 cases", and
- (ii) the hospital acquired MRSA bacteraemia rate

What determines the rate?

The total number of new cases of MRSA bacteraemia acquired in the hospital in a quarter is divided by the total number of patient days for that quarter. Patient days are the number of days spent in a hospital for all patients. The results are multiplied by 1000. This represents the rate of hospital acquired associated MRSA bacteraemia associated with the reporting facility per 1000

patient days for that quarter. (e.g. 2 cases for that quarter ÷ 30,000 patient days for that quarter = 0.00006 x 1000 = 0.06 per 1000 patient days). The rates of infection will be calculated by quarter.

What will the healthcare system do with the rate information?

Hospital acquired infection rates provide one measure of patient safety and quality of care. The rate of hospital acquired MRSA bacteraemia can be used to analyze any trends of infection, sources of infection and general surveillance of MRSA bacteraemia. It can also assist hospitals to evaluate the effectiveness of infection prevention and control interventions and make further improvements based on this information.

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