



STATE OF MAINE
DIRIGO HEALTH AGENCY
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December 14, 2009

To: Maine Hospital Infection Control Professionals:

The 124th Maine Legislature passed Public Law, Chapter 346, An Act Regarding Screening for methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA). The Law requires all hospitals licensed under Chapter 405 to perform targeted surveillance for MRSA on high risk populations as defined by the Maine Quality Forum, consistent with federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

The vehicle that established the process to define high risk is the Resolve that was also passed by the 124th Legislature (Resolve Chapter 82). Specifically, the resolve requires the Maine Quality Forum in consultation with the Maine Infection Prevention Collaborative, representatives of state nursing organizations, and a consumer representative to develop a definition of "high risk" which will inform subsequent reporting on screening of patient populations in whom the prevalence of methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is higher than normal.

Recognizing that higher risk populations may be different from one community or facility to another, and adhering to the federal CDC statement, *"Decisions about which populations should be targeted for active surveillance should be made in the context of local determinations of the incidence and prevalence of MDRO colonization with the intervention facility as well as other facilities with whom patients are frequently exchanged."*

The recommendation of the group is to perform a statewide prevalence survey, intended to identify high risk groups in each of Maine's acute care and rehabilitation hospitals. A copy of the protocol for this survey is enclosed. The survey is being sent to hospital infection control professionals and CEOs.

The survey will begin on January 4, 2010. The experience in the first six months will be analyzed by the Maine Quality Forum no later than December 1, 2010.

I am grateful to the many hours of work by members of the consumer, nursing, and hospital communities represented by this protocol, and I thank you in advance for your ongoing commitment to eradication of hospital acquired infections in Maine's hospitals. I look forward to sharing the results of the study and working with you and your teams as we enhance the safety of Maine's hospitals and the health of Maine's citizens.

Sincerely,

D. Joshua Cutler, M.D.
Director
Maine Quality Forum

Enc.

Cc: Joint Committee on Health and Human Services, Maine State Legislature
Representative Adam Goode
Kathy Day, R.N.
Sandra Parker, Esq., Maine Hospital Association
Maine State Nurses Association