# Guidelines for investigation of new patient carriers of Healthcare associated MRSA (HA-MRSA) on wards New positive patient detected (possible HA-MRSA OR Cipro R strains) -Index Case-Screen all room contacts of Index Case [Sites: nose, wounds/ulcers/ skin lesions]. Micro-Alert W (MRSA Contact) all discharged room contacts of Index Case. New positive patient? -2nd Case Screen all patients on the ward - 1st ward screen-All patients negative. Nil further screening required. New positive patient ~ -3rd Case-Screen all patients on the ward \* - 2nd ward screen-IF ward spread & EMRSA 15, commence staff screening . New positive patient ? All patients negative. -4th Case Screen all patients on the ward \* - 3rd ward screen-HA-MRSA strains, screen all staff on the ward New positive patient ? All patients negative. -5th Case-No further follow up after 2 negative ward screens. Further screening and other measures as decided by Positive If required, screen all patients on the ward When a new patient is identified, screen all room contacts that may have transferred to another ward, and Micro-Alert W Additional measures may be needed and as decided by the Infection Prevention & Management Unit! · Staff screening includes: all permanent medical, nursing, allied health & PCA's on the ward and regular casual staff nembers. Sites for screening: nose; throat; all broken skin areas.

Figure 1

Adoption of a Tertiary Hospital MRSA Outbreak Management Algorithm for Effective Containment of an EMRSA 15 (ST22-IV) Cluster in a Rehabilitation Ward. Lee, Rosie & Meyer-Henry, Simon

### Background:

In WA, for 2015-2016, Healthcare-associated MRSA (HA-MRSA) accounted for 23% of MRSA HAIs. Of these 92% were EMRSA 15 (ST22-IV), a significant strain in the hospital setting hence it is vital to prevent outbreaks.

## Methods:

In February 2017, 1 case of EMRSA 15 infection was detected from a patient in an aged care rehabilitation ward at Bentley Hospital (BH). BH Infection Prevention Unit was notified of a second case of EMRSA 15 colonisation detected in an inpatient screened whilst attending an outpatient appointment at another facility.

In 2016 RPH & BH were reconfigured, and infection control policies aligned. Consequently, the detection of 2 EMRSA 15 cases led to an epidemiological investigation using the RPH MRSA outbreak management algorithm to contain the cluster (Figure 1). The RPH control strategies include isolation of positive patients, screening of contact patient, staff, and environmental cleaning as appropriate.

A 2014 publication based on a retrospective review of hospital MRSA outbreaks at RPH supported the importance of introducing early screening and decolonisation of Healthcare Workers (HCW) to control outbreaks caused by EMRSA 15.

### Results:

Investigation identified the 2<sup>nd</sup> case had been admitted into a bed space previously occupied by the index case, transferred minutes earlier to another ward.

Patient screening identified an additional patient with an EMRSA 15 infection and subsequent screening of 72 HCWs detected 3 EMRSA 15 staff cases. The positive HCWs were treated with topical treatment for MRSA.

Genotyping of the 6 EMRSA-15 isolates using PFGE (3 patients and 3 HCW) confirmed linkage between the index case, a ward contact and 2 HCWs (Figure 2). There was no relationship between cases who had shared the common bedspace.

### Conclusion:

- In non-tertiary settings, cases of clinical infection with EMRSA 15 should be investigated and strategies employed to curb transmission.
- Early identification of HCWs and subsequent treatment enhances the strategies to swiftly contain EMRSA 15 cluster.
- The use of molecular technology to confirm the outbreak is recommended.

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