

Public Notice:

Friday, March 25, 2011

- **VRE and C. Diff cases on A4**
- **No restrictions for hospital visitors**

Four (4) cases of *Clostridium difficile* Infection (CDI) have been linked to one medical unit (A4).

Nine (9) confirmed cases of Vancomycin Resistant *Enterococcus* (VRE) have been linked to the same medical unit (A4). These VRE cases have been identified through admission screening and our routine contact tracing of new cases. Currently, all cases related to this VRE outbreak are colonized and are not considered to have a PRHC hospital-acquired infection (e.g.: bacteraemia).

Control measures are in place:

- **Hand Hygiene** – this remains one of the most important infection prevention & control practices to stop transmission of VRE, CDI and many other infectious diseases
- All identified cases are placed on **Contact Precautions** (isolation). All patients on Contact Precautions are to remain in their room unless where medically indicated
- Enhanced **environmental cleaning** of the entire unit is underway
- Continued **case finding** – another prevalence screen for VRE will be conducted Tuesday March 29th
- Strict attention to screening for antibiotic resistant organisms (ARO – MRSA & VRE) of all admitted patients is critical to ensure early identification and isolation

PRHC remains fully operational, with programs and services across the hospital unaffected. Visitors are still welcome and visiting hours are unchanged.

As always, visitors are asked to fully comply with appropriate hand hygiene and infection prevention and control practices when visiting the hospital; it is mandatory and vital to reducing health care associated infections.

The VRE outbreak can be declared over if no new cases are identified on subsequent prevalence screens conducted a week apart.

Declaring the CDI outbreak over will be a consideration in four weeks' time.

Another update will be provided in a week's time.

Background:

What is VRE?

Enterococci are germs that live in the gastrointestinal tract (bowels) of most individuals. Vancomycin-resistant *Enterococci* (VRE) are strains of *Enterococci* that are resistant to the antibiotic vancomycin. VRE bacteremia (bloodstream infections only) is reported on a quarterly basis. *Note that PRHC's VRE cases on A4 are not bacteremia.*

Clostridium difficile Infection (CDI):

C. diff is one of the many germs (bacteria) that can be found in stool (a bowel movement). CDI occurs when antibiotics kill your good bowel bacteria and allow the C. diff to grow. When C. diff grows, it produces a toxin that can damage the bowel and may cause diarrhea. CDI is usually mild but sometimes can be severe. CDI is reported publicly to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and on the hospital web site every month.

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