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**SUBJECT: ISOLATION GUIDELINES: METHICILLIN-  
RESISTANT *STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS*  
(MRSA)**

**Policy No.: IC103F  
Revision Date: 10/2021  
Reviewed: 11/2021  
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**POLICY:**

All patients admitted to Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center will be screened for MRSA as described in Administrative Policy B853, which is in compliance with Senate Bill 1058. Once the patient is identified to have MRSA, the patient will be informed by the primary physician, provided with educational materials, and the patient will be placed in the appropriate isolation precautions according to the patient's condition(s).

**GUIDELINES FOR EPIDEMIOLOGIC CONTROL MEASURES**

1. All patients admitted to Rancho will receive MRSA screening cultures of the bilateral nares within 24 hours of admission. Patients transferred from another hospital who are diagnosed with MRSA, will be re-screened upon admission. *See details in Administrative Policy B853.*
2. Active surveillance of all reported isolates of MRSA will be conducted by the Infection Preventionist(s). Once identified, patients will be evaluated by the Infection Preventionist(s) and recommendations for the use of isolation will be made in the patient's chart.
3. Wound culture only for infected or draining wounds and urine culture for patients admitted with indwelling catheter. If a patient is found to have MRSA colonization ONLY as a result of a nasal culture(s) then the patient does NOT need to be placed into Contact Precautions on admission or re-admission.
4. All other patient with MRSA found on any culture for ANY other reason must be placed on Contact Precautions.
5. Patients who are not treated for their carrier state will remain on the appropriate isolation precautions throughout the length of their hospital stay. At the discretion of the Physician, Infectious Disease Specialist and/or Infection Prevention and Control personnel, clearance cultures may be ordered as follows:
  - If a patient is on antibiotic therapy or completed antibiotics in last 48hrs, collect one culture from positive site beginning 48 hours after the completion of antibiotic therapy.
  - If a patient is *not* on antibiotic therapy in the last 48hrs, -collect one culture from positive site t can be initiated at any time,
    - **For MRSA:** Bilateral nares, and other previous positive site(s)
6. All infected patients will be isolated in single rooms or cohort with another patient with the same organism, if at all possible. Special units may be formed to house these patients if clusters of cases occur. Isolation procedures will be practiced as outlined in the hospital isolation policy.
7. Strict handwashing procedures using Alcohol-based handrub or antimicrobial soap and water is required by all personnel having contact with the patient.
8. Isolation patients may go to Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy and diagnostic areas when necessary. The personnel in these areas must be notified so that isolation precautions can be properly maintained.
9. Dedicate use of noncritical patient care equipment to a single patient. If use of common equipment or items is unavoidable, equipment or items coming in contact

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- with patient will be disinfected with a hospital-approved disinfectant or placed in the designated bin located in the dirty utility room and sent to Central Service for contamination.
10. Equipment (e.g., physical therapy apparatus, exercise mats) handled by infected patients will be disinfected with a hospital-approved disinfectant before use by another patient.
  11. In the event of a cluster of cases in any single area of the hospital:
    - Workforce members may need to be evaluated to determine if they are carriers. Workforce members identified as carriers will be made aware of their status. They will be educated as to any special precautions that need to be taken. These persons will be followed by Employee Health Services. Nasal carriers may be offered a decolonization protocol.
    - Cultures of patient environment or air are not routinely done as they do not provide useful information. Infection prevention team will evaluate outbreaks on a case-by-case basis to determine the need for additional environmental sampling.
    - Environmental cleaning procedures and policies will be reviewed and monitored to assure appropriate measures are taken to prevent further spread
    - Education of the workforce members and other persons having close contact with the patients in affected areas will be provided by the Infection Preventionist(s).
    - Infection Preventionist(s) will provide regular updates to the workforce members of the magnitude of the problem and acquaint them with the preventive measures presently being exercised.
    - Patients with infections during outbreaks (i.e., pneumonia, UTI, wound infections) will be managed accordingly and appropriate antibiotics will be prescribed by the provider or Infectious Disease specialist as indicated. Clinical and bacteriological follow-up of these cases will be done.
  12. The Hospital Infection Prevention and Control Committee will review this policy a regular intervals, and adjust recommendations based on best practices and new data should they become available.
  13. Patients with known MRSA colonization or infection transferred to another hospital or nursing homes must have the facility notified so appropriate isolation can be instituted. Patient carriers may be discharged home. Patient charts will be marked as MRSA carriers to identify them as patients requiring isolation.
  14. Patients with known MRSA colonization or infection from other institutions may be accepted for rehabilitation or medical treatment and only isolated when necessary. A private room when available should be used so that isolation can be maintained. Alternatively, patients with MRSA colonization or infection maybe cohorted together.
  15. Patients with a history of previous MRSA colonization or infection should be referred to the Infection Preventionist(s) for evaluation.
  16. Centralized Admitting and Referral Office (CARO) will add or verify via the Health Information System (HIS) whether the patient is documented as having MRSA.

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The HIS system (face sheet) denotes, in the "Isolation Type" section, if the patient has been identified as having MRSA.