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HEALTH ADVISORY

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Emergence of *Candida auris* in Healthcare Facilities in Northern California

TO: Healthcare Providers
FROM: Christine Wu, MD, Public Health Officer
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Summary:

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and local public health partners are alerting healthcare providers of the emergence of epidemiologically-linked *Candida auris* (*C. auris*) cases associated with acute care hospital (ACH), skilled nursing facility (SNF), and outpatient settings.

The development of cases has been identified in Sacramento and Stanislaus counties since September 2022. Additionally, at the end of January 2023, CDPH was alerted to a case in Contra Costa county associated with an ACH and long-term care setting. These were the first reported *C. auris* cases in each county, and the patients had no known exposures in healthcare facilities outside of Northern California. These findings suggest there is more transmission in the region than has been identified to date. We continue to see *C. auris* transmission in Southern California. Patients and residents who have had prolonged admission in healthcare settings, particularly high-acuity care settings including long-term acute care hospitals (LTACH), ventilator-equipped SNF (vSNF), high-acuity ACH units (e.g., intensive care units (ICU) and step-down units (SDU)), are at highest risk of *C. auris* and other multidrug-resistant organism (MDRO) colonization and infection.

To proactively prevent further spread of *C. auris* in California, the CDPH Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) Program recommends healthcare facilities implement the following updated infection prevention and control (IPC) and containment strategies. **A previous recommendation to screen patients from vSNF ventilator units in jurisdictions with known *C. auris* transmission has been expanded to include screening patients from vSNF ventilator units regardless of geographic location. Recommendations for proactive screening in high-risk facilities are also added.**

Actions Requested of Healthcare
Professionals:

- 1. REPORT within one working day** of any cases of *C. auris* and carbapenemase-producing organisms to **Napa County Public Health, 707-253-4231 during business hours 8:00 am- 5:00 pm.**
 - Submit a [Confidential Morbidity Report \(CMR\)](#), including consultation notes and laboratory test results to **Napa County Public Health via secure email at cdreports@countyofnapa.org or secure fax 707-299-4479.**
- 2. SCREEN** through colonization testing for persons at highest risk for *C. auris*, whose status is unknown. Consult with Napa County Public Health to assist and coordinate testing. Public Health will provide guidance on specimen collection and submission.
 - Screen patients transferring from:
 1. **any LTACH or vSNF ventilator unit regardless of geographic location;**
 2. any facility with known *C. auris* transmission; and
 3. any ACH (in addition to any LTACH or vSNF ventilator unit) in Nevada state.
 - **At LTACHs, screen patients on admission, and conduct routine point prevalence surveys (PPS) per public health guidance.***
 - **In vSNF ventilator units, conduct routine PPS per public health guidance.***

Assess *C. auris* status for all patients and residents upon admission, by reviewing medical records and following up with the transferring facility as necessary.
- 3. IMPLEMENT** [contact infection control precautions](#) for all patients screened on admission for *C. auris* while awaiting colonization testing results for *C. auris*.
 - In ACHs and LTACHs, place any patient with *C. auris* on Contact Precautions, and if possible, in a single room.
 - In LTACHs facility-wide, SNF ventilator units, and ACH high-acuity units (e.g., ICU and SDU), routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and shared medical equipment using an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered hospital-grade disinfectant effective against *C. auris* from List P (www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-p-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-againstcandida-auris).
- 4. COMMUNICATE**
 - Communicate a patient's *C. auris* and other MDRO status to any receiving healthcare facility prior to transfer; use an interfacility transfer form (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/InterfacilityCommunication.aspx).
 - Receiving facilities should proactively ask about the patient's status if not included in the accompanying medical records.

Additional Resources:

- Refer to full text [Health Advisory](#)
- [CDPH *C. auris* Quicksheet \(PDF\)](#)