

Date: Friday, June 04, 2021

To: Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre Unit 23 Physicians and Staff

Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre:

**Surgical Services Director; Site Medical Director; Senior Operating Officer;
Pharmacy; Lab; Dr. Michael Mulholland**

Central Zone:

**Senior Operating Officer; Medical Director; Medical Affairs; Workplace
Health and Safety (WHS); Lab; Communications; Environmental Public
Health (EPH); Infection Prevention Control (IPC)**

From: Dr. Digby Horne, on behalf of Infection Prevention Control

Please be advised that a patient on Unit 23 with a post-surgical infection has cultured positive for a CPO; the extent to which the CPO is contributing to the infection is being assessed.

CPOs are important bacteria because they are resistant to carbapenem antibiotics such as meropenem and imipenem, as well as most other antibiotics. The genetic antibiotic resistance can be transferred from one type of bacteria to another (e.g. *Pseudomonas* to *E. coli*). Bacteria can cause colonization (treatment not required) or infection, which is difficult to treat.

Transmission can occur from the hands of health care workers, equipment shared between patients, common-touch environmental surfaces, and presence of indwelling devices such as urinary and central venous catheters and endotracheal tubes.

Control measures include handwashing, contact precautions, cleaning of equipment shared by patients, single patient rooms and bathrooms, and surveillance screening. Screening is done on patients on the same unit using cultures of rectal swabs/stool and draining wounds.

A first round of screening cultures has been done on Unit 23, with no positive results. Another round is recommended this week and will be accompanied by provision of patient information. If a positive result occurs, physicians should please determine if colonization or infection is present and inform the patient. Online patient information is available at <https://myhealth.alberta.ca>; see [Carbapenemase-producing organisms \(CPO\): Learning about CPO in the hospital](#).

Patients who were not cultured prior to discharge from a unit where transmission has been documented will either be requested to be cultured or have their charts flagged for culture at the time of readmission.

Your assistance with surveillance and efforts to prevent spread of these organisms is greatly appreciated.
