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## PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

### Enhanced Surveillance for Carbapenem Resistant Organisms in Orange County

December 1, 2023

To: Orange County Hospital Laboratory Directors, Microbiology and Send-Out Staff; Infection Preventionists

From: Orange County Public Health

Antimicrobial resistance is a serious and growing public health problem. Infections caused by these organisms can be difficult, and in some cases impossible, to treat and are often associated with significant mortality rates. In order to better characterize the epidemiology of multidrug resistant organisms in Orange County, Orange County's [Health Officer](#) has mandated since 2016 that all positive laboratory results for CRE and extended-spectrum beta lactamase producers (ESBL) and all laboratory positive results for methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) from hospital-admitted patients be reported to the Health Care Agency.

In addition to reporting the positive result to the Communicable Disease Control Division (CDCD), OCHCA requests that the following isolates be submitted to the Orange County Public Health Laboratory (OCPHL):

All carbapenem resistant organisms including:

- Carbapenem resistant *Enterobacteriales* (CRE)
- Carbapenem resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii* (CRAB)
- *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* isolates resistant to at least one of the carbapenem drugs (CRPA) and resistant to cefepime, ceftazidime, or ceftolozane-tazobactam
- Carbapenem producing organisms (CPO's)

For patients who test repeat positive for any of the organisms listed above but whose isolate was previously submitted to OCPHL, please resubmit the organism if it has been  $\geq 12$  months since the previous collection date.

Labs are requested to submit actively growing pure culture isolates on a microbiological tubed media that supports the organism's growth. Accompanying each isolate should be an OCPHL requisition form indicating the following required demographic information (submitter name, patient name, birthdate, gender), date of collection, and specimen source. Please order as Bacterial Culture for Identification, Aerobic (B4) and include a copy of the Antimicrobial Resistance report conducted in your lab as well as the location of the Orange County hospital where the patient was treated, if not in the submitting hospital.

While these results will provide valuable epidemiologic data, they may not be reported to submitters as the tests may not be CLIA-validated and specimens may be sent to CDPH or CDC for further testing.

Thank you for your assistance in this enhanced surveillance project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Matt Zahn'.

Matt Zahn, MD  
Deputy Medical Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Megan Crumpler'.

Megan Crumpler, PhD, HCLD  
Laboratory Director, OCPHL