



# Screening and Management of Multi-resistant Organisms in Healthcare Facilities Policy

## 1. Purpose

The *Screening and Management of Multi-resistant Organisms in Healthcare Facilities Policy* (the policy) outlines the mandatory requirements for the screening and subsequent management of patients identified with a multi-resistant organism (MRO). This incorporates routine screening of certain patient populations being admitted to Western Australian public hospitals and implementation of stringent infection prevention and control precautions for patients identified with an MRO.

This policy ensures early detection, isolation and appropriate antibiotic therapy where required. It ensures a standardised approach for the management of MROs across all public hospitals to reduce the risk of MRO transmission and minimise the risk of patients acquiring a healthcare associated infection with organisms highly resistant to antibiotic treatment.

The MROs covered by this policy include *Candida auris*, carbapenemase-producing *Enterobacterales*, carbapenemase-producing *Acinetobacter baumannii* complex, carbapenemase-producing *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* and vancomycin-resistant enterococci.

This policy is a mandatory requirement under the *Public Health Policy Framework* pursuant to section 26(2)(c) of the *Health Services Act 2016*.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with [MP 0134/20 National Safety and Quality Standards Accreditation Policy](#).

This policy aligns and supports recommendations for health organisations to implement systems to support antimicrobial stewardship including surveillance and management of MROs within the following documents:

- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care [National Safety and Quality Health Service \(NSQHS\) Standards](#)
- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) [Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare](#) (2019).

## 2. Applicability

This policy is applicable to Health Service Providers except Health Support Services, PathWest Laboratory Medicine WA, and Quadriplegic Centre.

The requirements contained within this policy are applicable to the services purchased from contracted health entities where it is explicitly stated in the contract between the contracted health entity and the State of Western Australia or Health Service Provider. The State of Western Australia or Health Service Provider contract manager is responsible for ensuring that any obligation to comply with this policy by the contracted health entity is accurately reflected in the relevant contract and managed accordingly.

## 3. Policy Requirements

HSPs must

- develop and implement local policy and procedures to address the following requirements as described in the [Screening and Management of Multi-resistant Organisms in Healthcare Facilities Standard](#) including:
  - surveillance screening
  - specimen collection
  - patient placement and cohorting
  - patient management
  - notification
  - use of micro-alerts
  - antimicrobial stewardship
  - outbreak management
  - clearance screening
  - consumer education and notification.
- undertake surveillance and reporting of MROs as described in [MP 0108/19 Healthcare Associated Infection Surveillance Policy](#) and the [Healthcare Infection Surveillance Western Australia \(HISWA\) – Surveillance Manual](#).

## 4. Compliance Monitoring

The Infection Prevention, Policy and Surveillance Unit (IPPSU), on behalf of the System Manager, will monitor compliance with this policy by reviewing Health Service Provider monthly HISWA reporting requirements for each MRO, at the end of each reporting period.

In addition, the IPPSU will conduct an annual retrospective audit from the web-based patient administration system (WebPAS) data fields that identify patient populations that require screening, assess healthcare facility compliance and report findings to the Western Australian Multi-resistant Organism Expert Advisory Group.

The System Manager may also request additional information from Health Service Providers which must be provided, on MROs to ensure alignment with policy requirements. In addition, the System Manager may undertake an assessment or audit should a non-compliance issue be identified.

## 5. Related Documents

The following documents are mandatory pursuant to this policy:

- [Screening and Management of Multi-resistant Organisms in Healthcare Facilities Standard](#)
- [Healthcare Infection Surveillance Western Australia \(HISWA\) – Surveillance Manual.](#)

## 6. Supporting Information

The following information is not mandatory but informs and/or supports the implementation of this policy:

- [Guidelines for the screening and management of MRSA in healthcare workers](#)
- [Guidelines for using the public hospital micro-alert system in Western Australia](#)

## 7. Definitions

The following definition(s) are relevant to this policy.

Term	Definition
<i>Candida auris</i>	A yeast that is resistant to many anti-fungal agents, is highly pathogenic and transmissible.
Carbapenemase-producing <i>Acinetobacter baumannii</i> complex (CPAB)	Gram-negative bacteria identified as belonging to the <i>Acinetobacter baumannii</i> species complex which has been shown to produce a carbapenemase enzyme.
Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacterales (CPE)	Enterobacterales that are non-susceptible to carbapenem via production of a carbapenemase enzyme.
Carbapenemase-producing <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> (CPPA)	Gram-negative bacteria identified as <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> which has been shown to produce a carbapenemase enzyme.
Healthcare facility (HCF)	Includes all hospitals, satellite dialysis centres, child and mental health services.
Health service provider (HSP)	As per section 6 of the <i>Health Services Act 2016</i> , a health service provider established by an order made under section 32(1)(b).
Methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (MRSA)	Those isolates of <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> that are resistant to methicillin and consequently all other beta-lactam antibiotics.
Micro-alert	A generic term used to refer to the flag applied to the patient medical record in the patient management system to indicate a carrier of a MRO or a previously unscreened contact of a person with a MRO.
Multi-resistant organism (MRO)	MROs include bacteria, fungi and viruses that have developed resistance to one or more classes of antimicrobial and antiviral agents.
Screening	A process to identify persons at risk of being colonised or infected with a particular microorganism and obtaining

	appropriate specimens.
Vancomycin-resistant Enterococci (VRE)	Enterococci are gram-positive cocci that are part of the normal human gut flora. VRE are those isolates of enterococci that are resistant glycopeptides (vancomycin or teicoplanin).

## 8. Policy Contact

Enquiries relating to this policy may be directed to:

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## 9. Document Control

Version	Published date	Review date	Amendment(s)
MP 0177/23	18 April 2023	April 2026	Original version
MP 0177/23 v.1.0	7 March 2024	April 2026	Amendments as listed below
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated definition for healthcare facility.</li> <li>Updated and refined related document: Guidelines Screening and Management of Multi-resistant Organisms in Healthcare Facilities</li> </ul>			
MP 0177/23 v.2.0	13 January 2026	January 2029	Policy review and amendments as listed below.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purpose section refined. Removal of referenced superseded Operational Directives.</li> <li>Policy requirements section: Removal of the requirement to screen staff members for MRSA if they have worked outside of Western Australia in the last 12 months.</li> <li>Compliance monitoring section updated with the inclusion of further reporting mechanisms.</li> <li>Related documents: updated and refined Screening and Management of Multi-resistant Organisms in Healthcare Facilities Standard. Inclusion of the HISWA manual.</li> <li>Supporting Information: MRSA Screening and Management of Healthcare Workers document updated. Removed as a related document and replaced as supporting document. Inclusion of Guidelines for using the public hospital micro-alert system in Western Australia.</li> <li>Definitions section: Removal of the following definitions - carbapenem, carbapenemase, Enterobacterales, healthcare associated infection, and staff member.</li> <li>Minor grammatical wording changes throughout the policy.</li> </ul>			

Note: Mandatory policies that exceed the scheduled review date will continue to remain in effect.

## 10. Approval

<b>Approval by</b>	Nicole O’Keefe, Assistant Director General, Strategy and Governance, Department of Health
<b>Approval date</b>	14 April 2023

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