

## Infection Prevention and Control Department

# CPE (Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae)

### Information for patients

#### What is CPE?

Enterobacteriaceae are bacteria that usually live harmlessly in the gut of humans. This is called 'colonisation' (a person is said to be a 'carrier'). However, if the bacteria get into the wrong place, such as the bladder or bloodstream they can cause infection. Carbapenemases are enzymes (chemicals), made by some strains of these bacteria, which allow them to destroy carbapenem antibiotics and so the bacteria are said to be resistant to the antibiotics.

#### Why does Carbapenem resistance matter?

Carbapenems are one of the most powerful types of antibiotics used for serious infections. It is important we control the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria because resistance means these antibiotics they cannot be used to treat you. If we know you are a carrier, we can make the right antibiotic choices for you should they be needed.

#### How will I know if I am at risk of being a carrier?

We will ask some questions which help us decide if you are at risk of carrying CPE. Risks include if you have stayed or had multiple treatments in a hospital abroad or in a UK in the past 12 months, if you have been in contact with someone with CPE or if you are admitted to our ICU or oncology/haematology ward. If any of these reasons apply to you, screening will be arranged, and you may be provided with a single room with your own toilet facilities until the results are known.

#### How will I be screened for CPE?

Screening usually entails taking a rectal swab by inserting it just inside your rectum (bottom). Alternatively, you may be asked to provide a sample of faeces. A few samples may be required and all samples need to be negative before we can consider the result of screening negative. How many swabs are needed depends on your own situation. The screening process will not delay your care.

#### What happens if the result is positive?

If the result is positive, your doctor can explain this to you in more detail. You will continue to be accommodated in a single room whilst in hospital. If you have an infection, you will need to have antibiotics. However, no treatment is required if there are no signs of infection and you are simply 'carrying' the bacteria.

## How can the spread of CPE be prevented?

Accommodating you in a single room, if the result is positive, helps to prevent spread of the bacteria. Healthcare workers should wash their hands regularly. They will use gloves and aprons when caring for you. The most important measure for you to take is to wash your hands well with soap and water, especially after going to the toilet. You should avoid touching medical devices (if you have any) such as your urinary catheter tube and your intravenous drip, particularly at the point where it is inserted into the body or skin. Visitors will be asked to wash their hands on entering and leaving the room and may be asked to wear an apron.

## What happens when I go home?

Being found to have CPE does not stop you going home; any infection will have been treated prior to your discharge. No special measures or treatment are required other than basic hygiene. If you have any concerns, you may wish to contact your GP for advice.

Before you leave hospital, a letter or card will be given to you advising that you have had an infection or been colonised with CPE. Should you or a member of your household be admitted to hospital, you should let the staff know that you are, or have been, a carrier. The letter or card may help.

## Where can I find more information?

Infection Prevention & Control Team at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary 01484 342447

or Calderdale Royal Hospital 01422 222376

## If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Infection Prevention & Control Team  
Huddersfield Royal Infirmary 01484 342447 or  
Calderdale Royal Hospital 01422 222376

[www.cht.nhs.uk](http://www.cht.nhs.uk)

## If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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