



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

Mandatory enhanced MRSA, MSSA and *Escherichia coli* bacteraemia, and *Clostridium difficile* infection surveillance Protocol version 4.0

This protocol supersedes version 3.0 dated April 2013

March 2016

About Public Health England

Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health.

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Hyperlinks

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1. Glossary

CCG Clinical Commissioning Group. The main commissioners of services funded by the NHS in England. CCGs replaced Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) in April 2013

CDI *Clostridium difficile* infection

CDRN *Clostridium difficile* ribotyping network service. A network of nine participating laboratories that uses ribotype analysis to investigate clustering of CDI cases.

CEO Chief Executive Officer. In the context of the HCAI DCS this is the individual responsible for confirming that their Trust's MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemias and CDI figures are correct by signing off the data each month

CMO Chief Medical Officer

CQC Care Quality Commission. The CQCs role is to regulate, inspect and review all adult social care services in the public, private and voluntary sectors in England

DBS Demographics Batch Service. The service used to trace data

DH The Department of Health. The government department responsible for public health issues. PHE collects the surveillance data described in this protocol on behalf of the DH

DPH Director of Public Health. DPHs carry out public health duties of their local authority. All MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI reports are mapped to a DPH from January 2009 onwards based on the patient's mapped CCG

DoB Date of Birth

EIA Enzyme immunoassay

GDH Glutamate dehydrogenase. An antigen produced by *C. difficile* which can be used as a diagnostic indicator in conjunction with other tests

GRE Glycopeptide resistant enterococci (sometimes referred to as VRE)

HCAI Healthcare associated infections

HCAI DCS Healthcare associated infections data capture system. The web-based system where patient-level mandatory surveillance data on MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and *C. difficile* infection are collected. Aggregate-level quarterly mandatory laboratory returns (see **QMLR** below) are also entered on this site

HES Hospital Episode Statistics. Maintained by **HSCIC** and contains details of all admissions, outpatient appointments and A&E attendances at NHS hospitals in England. The HCAI DCS has used the same definitions for many fields as those found on HES

HSCIC Health and Social Care Information Centre. The national provider of information, data, and IT systems for health and social care. Reports are traced against the NHS Spine via HSCIC and the Demographics Batch Service. HSCIC also holds most of the administrative codes required for unambiguous identification of NHS and Independent Sector organisations

IS Independent Sector. Privately run healthcare facilities which may, or may not, treat NHS patients. This term is used in this protocol to refer to the sector as a whole, rather than a specific hospital or group. The term IS facility is used to refer to specific hospital or group of hospitals. See section 3 for a definition

ISP Independent Sector Provider. A non-NHS organisation providing secondary healthcare through hospital sites.

ISS Independent Sector Site. A hospital site operated by an Independent Sector Provider.

KH03 A quarterly return managed by NHS England, which provides data on the average occupied overnight beds for all NHS Trusts in England; providing an indication of how busy NHS Trusts were for a specific period in time. As there is no population data for NHS Trusts, as their services are not geographically restricted, KH03 data are used as a proxy for the denominator in the calculation of NHS acute Trust rates

MRSA Meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*

MSSA Meticillin susceptible *Staphylococcus aureus*

NAAT Nucleic acid amplification techniques. A family of molecular diagnostic techniques that rely on the amplification of genetic material.

NHS National Health Service

NHS Improvement A body to be formed by the merger of Monitor and Trust Development Agency from 1 April 2016. This body will be responsible for regulating NHS Trusts.

NHS Patient Safety A group within the NHS Commissioning Board Special Health Authority which receives confidential reports of patient safety incidents. <http://www.nrls.npsa.nhs.uk/>
From 1 April 2016, NHS Patient Safety will form part of the to-be-formed body NHS Improvement

ODS Organisation Data Service. Provided by HSCIC and is responsible for the publication of all organisation and practitioner codes. These codes form part of the NHS data standards.

PII Patient Identifiable Information. This refers to any data that allows an individual to be unambiguously identified

PIR Post Infection Review. A review process applied to all MRSA bacteraemia reports made to the mandatory surveillance scheme since 1st April 2013. The aim of the PIR is determine lessons learned from each MRSA bacteraemia report

PHE Public Health England

PHEC Public Health England Centre. Local PHE teams responsible for supporting local areas to deliver health and wellbeing strategies and co-ordinating local PHE activities.

QMLR Quarterly Mandatory Laboratory Returns. The monthly aggregate totals of various laboratory results which are entered onto the DCS

2. List of definitions and useful terms

Acute renal failure

Where kidney failure develops suddenly rather than after long term kidney disease

Apportionment

The process whereby reports from NHS acute Trusts of MSSA bacteraemia and *Clostridium difficile* infection (CDI) are separated into 'Trust apportioned' and 'non-Trust apportioned' reports. Trust apportioned reports represent reports that are thought to be the responsibility of the acute Trust which reported the infection episode, whilst 'non-Trust apportioned' refers to those reports are not 'Trust apportioned'. The sum of the number of Trust apportioned reports and non-Trust apportioned reports adds up to the total number of reports made by the NHS to PHE for a given time period. Only NHS MSSA bacteraemia and CDI cases are subject to apportionment. The algorithm for apportionment is given in section 13.7 Appendix 7. Algorithms for apportioning cases

Assignment

The process of assigning MRSA bacteraemia reports only to an acute Trust, CCG, or 'third party' as part of the PIR process. Reports are provisionally assigned based on the apportionment algorithm (13.7 Appendix 7. Algorithms for apportioning cases) and finally assigned to the reporting Trust, attributed CCG or a 'third party', once the PIR process has been finalised. Trust assigned reports are always assigned to the Trust reporting the specimen, CCG assigned reports are always assigned to the CCG to which the report is attributed. 'Third party' reports are not assigned to any specific organisation and may include cases in patients resident in England but have received care from a third party organisation (i.e. neither the reporting organisation nor the commissioning CCG), cases in patients resident outside England or intractable cases. Further details of assignment for MRSA bacteraemia can be found in the [MRSA PIR toolkit](#)

CCG attribution

All MRSA, MSSA, and *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI reports are attributed to a CCG. This is regardless of whether the report has been Trust apportioned or not, or is assigned to a Trust, CCG or third party via the PIR process. Reports are attributed to a CCG by a tracing algorithm which matches the patient to a record on the NHS Spine and then attributing to a CCG based on information (or lack thereof) on the NHS Spine. Further information on CCG attribution can be found in section [13.6 Appendix 6. CCG Attribution Process](#)

Commissioning Pathway

Refers to a way of mapping reports on the system that reflects which organisations were involved in the commissioning of the patient's care. The primary organisations that are part of this pathway are: CCGs; NHS Area Teams, DPHs and NHS Commissioning Regions. The Commissioning Pathway for each report is determined by the CCG to which the report is attributed. Based on the CCG, the report is mapped up to a DPH, NHS Area Team and Commissioning Region. Note that PHECs and PHE Regions are entitled to view reports mapped to CCGs within their geographic boundary although PHE organisations are not strictly part of the Commissioning Pathway. Note that PHECs and PHE Regions are able to view Reporting and Commissioning Pathways

Commissioning Region

The NHS England region (London, Midlands and East of England, North of England, South of England) within which the CCG that each MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI report is mapped to, based on the CCG attribution process. Each MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI report has a Commissioning Region associated with it, however QMLR records cannot have a Commissioning Region associated with them as they are an aggregate-level data collection and do not undergo the CCG attribution process. For any given report of MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI the Commissioning Regions (**above**) and Reporting (**below**) may be the same or may be different; please refer to the example below under 'Reporting Region'

Day case

A patient receiving care in an acute Trust and care is expected to last at least half a day, but the patient will not stay overnight.

Established renal failure

A loss of kidney function to a point where it becomes life threatening. Haemodialysis is one of the treatments for this condition. In contrast to acute renal failure, established renal failure usually develops slowly

Emergency assessment

A patient in an Emergency Assessment Unit (EAU) for assessment of symptoms prior to admission.

Inpatient

A patient admitted to an acute Trust for care and is expected to stay overnight

IS provider

A generic term relating to an Independent Sector healthcare provider. The provider may be a single hospital/site or a large group with many hospitals/sites

IS group

A collection of two or more IS hospitals owned by the same provider

IS provider site

A single location from which an IS provider operates. A site may be a hospital or a site within a hospital

Line listings

Patient-level data downloaded from the DCS that can be opened in spreadsheet software. Only specific users have access to line listings. The line listing may or may not include PII

Lockdown

When the QMLR dataset is automatically locked by the DCS. After this happens the dataset is locked and cannot be amended by users without first contacting PHE. The QMLR dataset is automatically locked down 6 weeks after the end of the reporting quarter

Locked dataset

A dataset that has been signed off and is locked. Such datasets cannot be amended by users without first contacting PHE. See the **DCS user guide** for method for requesting unlocks

NHS Spine

An information system that connects essential national services including summary care records and patient demographic information. **NHS Spine** is provided by HSCIC.

Outpatient

A patient receiving care at an acute Trust that is not admitted and care is not expected to last more than 6 hours.

PHE National Infections Service (NIS)

The directorate within PHE that is responsible for microbiology and epidemiology of infectious diseases. It aims to protect the population in England from infectious disease and reduce the burden of infectious disease.

PHE Regions

Provide local support and guidance to NHS organisations within their region

Record Owner

A term used to refer to users who enter and save records onto the HCAI DCS. These are NHS acute Trust users or IS provider/IS site users

Reporting Pathway

Refers to a way of mapping reports on the system to the organisations associated with the reporting organisation, i.e. the NHS acute Trust or IS Provider making the report. Organisations involved in this pathway are the reporting Trust or IS Provider, PHEC and PHE Region. Reports are mapped to a PHEC and PHE Region based on the reporting Trust or IS Provider. Note that PHECs and PHE Regions are able to view Reporting and Commissioning Pathways

Reporting Region

The PHE Region (London, Midlands and East of England, North of England, South of England) within which the Reporting Organisation (NHS acute Trust or IS Provider Site) is located. Each MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI report, and each QMLR record has a Reporting Region associated with it. For any given report of MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI the Reporting and Commissioning Regions may be the same or may be different. For example a report of MRSA could be made by a Trust in London for a patient presenting at a London Reporting Organisation. If the patient was also traced to a CCG in the London Commissioning Region then the Reporting and Commissioning Regions would be the same. However, if the patient was traced to a CCG in another Commissioning Region (e.g. if the patient lived in Manchester and was visiting London when presenting to a London Reporting Organisation) then the Reporting and Commissioning Regions would differ.

Reporting Organisation

The organisation reporting the case of MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia or CDI or QMLR data. The Reporting Organisation is associated with each of the records entered onto the system based on the user's login details, thus by default each record on the HCAI DCS has a Reporting Organisation associated with it. All cases are currently reported by NHS acute Trusts or IS Provider sites.

Sign-off

When the Reporting Organisation's CEO/Sign-off authority declares that the data submitted on the DCS is correct by using the sign-off feature on the HCAI DCS. After data is signed-off it is 'locked' and cannot be amended by users without first contacting PHE, as per the [Unlock Request User Guide](#)

Soundex

Encrypted version of a surname. A soundex takes the form of a letter followed by 3 numbers. In the context of the HCAI DCS, when a patient's surname is entered onto the system it is automatically converted into a soundex

Unlock request

A request made by a record owner (Reporting Organisation) to unlock records which have been signed-off in order to make amendments, or add or delete records. See [CEO sign-off](#) and unlock requests

3. Introduction

Public Health England (PHE) maintains an enhanced reporting system for Meticillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bacteraemia, Meticillin Susceptible *Staphylococcus aureus* (MSSA) bacteraemia, *Escherichia coli* bacteraemia and *Clostridium difficile* infection (CDI).

A series of letters from the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) introduced the mandatory requirements for National Health Service (NHS) acute Trusts to report each case of MRSA bacteraemia (effective from 1st of October 2005), MSSA bacteraemia (effective from 1st January 2011), *E. coli* bacteraemia (effective from 1st June 2011) and CDI (effective from 1st April 2007) that fulfil the case definitions (see Inclusion criteria for reporting to the surveillance system) to this system.¹⁻⁵ The Health and Social Care Act 2008 and the Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance provided a requirement for NHS Trust Chief Executives to report all cases of MRSA, MSSA, CDI and *E. coli* to PHE.^{6,7}

From April 2010 Independent Healthcare Sector (IS) Providers treating NHS patients were mandated to report cases of MRSA bacteraemia and CDI fulfilling the same case definitions. MSSA bacteraemia (effective from 1st January 2011) and *E. coli* bacteraemia (effective from 1st June 2011) surveillance was added later. From October 2010 all IS Providers required to register with the Care Quality Commission were obliged to undertake surveillance of Health Care Associated Infections (HCAI). These requirements were reinforced in the Competition and Markets Authority Order 2014 which reiterated the requirement to provide patient-level information on facility-acquired infection rates.⁸ These Providers can report cases to PHE.

4. The HCAI Data Capture System

The enhanced surveillance system, hereafter HCAI Data Capture System (HCAI DCS), captures information on each MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia, and CDI case in order to give Trusts and IS Providers a more accurate picture of their situation allowing targeted intervention in problem areas and to contribute to building a better evidence base regarding risk factors for infection.

The HCAI DCS allows the following:

- Reports to be entered in 'real time' as they occur;
- Authorised Trust/IS Provider users to download patient level data for cases they have entered;
- All users to download tables of aggregated data on the system;
- MSSA bacteraemia and CDI cases to be separated into 'Trust apportioned' (i.e. cases that are considered to have been acquired in that Trust during that admission) and 'non-Trust apportioned' (i.e. cases that are not thought to have been acquired in that Trust during that admission). See 13.7 Appendix 7. Algorithms for apportioning cases for more information. NB data on *E. coli* bacteraemia is not currently subject to apportionment. Data reported by the IS are presently not apportioned;
- MRSA bacteraemia to be separated according to the organisation best placed to learn from any lessons identified during the review process. The final assignments are: 'Trust assigned', 'CCG assigned' (i.e. cases that are considered to be the responsibility of that Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) during that admission) or 'Third party assigned' (including, but not limited to, cases that are considered to have been acquired in a Third party organisation during that admission, cases among patients not resident in England or intractable cases). This is in line with the Post Infection Review (PIR) process. Assignment through the PIR process has been in place for MRSA bacteraemia since April 2013, the 'Third party' assignment option was added on 1 April 2014 when NHS England acknowledged the increasingly complex nature of MRSA bacteraemia being reported. Assignment to a 'Third party' can now be made through the arbitration process for cases with a specimen date post 1st April 2014. More details about the PIR process can be found in 13.8 Appendix 8. The Post Infection Review process (PIR) ;
- All cases to be attributed to a CCG via the tracing process. The HCAI DCS does not currently require patient CCG details to be recorded for any MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia or CDI cases. To obtain these data, patient name, sex, NHS number and date of birth are submitted to the Health and Social Care Information Centre on a daily basis to identify patient GP details and patient residential postcode, and patients are attributed to a CCG based on this process. More details about CCG attribution can be found in [13.6 Appendix 6. CCG Attribution Process](#);
- Enhanced data (e.g. data on risk factors and causes) on these HCAs to be collected. This enables better understanding of the epidemiology behind these infections and helps

to develop and monitor interventions to reduce their incidence. More details on the risk factor data collected can be found in [13.2 Appendix 2: Risk factor data to be collected](#)

Please note that the quarterly mandatory laboratory return (QMLR) surveillance scheme, collecting aggregate information, continues to operate independently of this enhanced scheme and as such this information must also be completed using the facility within the HCAI DCS. Details of the QMLR surveillance scheme are provided in [13.9 Appendix 9. Quarterly mandatory laboratory returns \(QMLRs\)](#).

Figure 1: The front page of the HCAI DCS

The screenshot shows the front page of the HCAI DCS system. At the top left is the Public Health England logo. A dark red navigation bar contains the text 'HCAI DCS System' and three buttons: 'Home', 'About Us', and 'Contact Us'. In the top right corner, there are links for 'Help' and 'AAA'.

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- About the HCAI Data Capture System:** This section features a micrograph of yellow, spherical bacteria (Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) and a dead human neutrophil. Below the image is a caption: 'Micrograph of Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and a dead human neutrophil (Credit: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID))'. To the right of the image, the text reads: 'PHE & HCAI Public Health England's Data Capture System provides an integrated data reporting and analysis system for the mandatory surveillance of *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli* bacteraemia and *Clostridium difficile* infections.'
- Log in:** This section contains a login form with fields for 'User Name*' and 'Password*'. Below the fields are buttons for 'Forgot Password?' and 'Login'. At the bottom of the section is a 'Register' button.
- Links:** This section has a sub-header 'About the Organisms' and two links: 'Epidemiology' (with a description: '>>PHE runs national surveillance programmes to collect data on HCAI. Surveillance programmes cover:') and 'Management of healthcare associated infections' (with a description: '>>Management of healthcare associated infections (HCAI) Preventing and reducing rates of HCAI i...').
- Reports:** This section has a sub-header 'Routine Outputs' and two items: '1. Monthly' (with a description: '>>PHE runs national surveillance programmes to collect data on HCAI, and reports *Clostridium difficile*...') and '2. Quarterly' (with a description: '>>PHE runs national surveillance programmes to collect data on HCAI, and produces a quarterly epidemio...').
- Help & Support:** This section has a sub-header 'User Help' and a link for 'User Guides' (with a description: '>>Help is provided for the HCAI Data Capture System in the form of online documentation.'). At the bottom of this section is a link: 'See FAQs and Content for more info'.

At the bottom of the page, a dark red footer bar contains links for 'Terms of Use', 'About Us', 'Contact Us', 'Website', and 'Accessibility'. On the right side of the footer, it says 'Ver 1.0.1.0.D Powered by CGI'.

5. Inclusion criteria for reporting to the surveillance system

This reporting guidance applies to English NHS acute Trusts and the Independent Sector.

5.1 MRSA bacteraemia

The following MRSA positive blood cultures must be reported to PHE:

- All cases of MRSA bacteraemia caused by *S. aureus* resistant to meticillin, oxacillin, ceftazidime or flucloxacillin

Exclusions

- Cases identified post-mortem are excluded

5.2 MSSA bacteraemia

The following MSSA positive blood cultures must be reported to PHE:

- All cases of MSSA bacteraemia caused by *S. aureus* which are not resistant to meticillin, oxacillin, ceftazidime, or flucloxacillin i.e. not subject to MRSA reporting

Exclusions

- Cases identified post-mortem are excluded

5.3 *E. coli* bacteraemia

The following *E. coli* positive blood cultures must be reported to PHE:

- All laboratory confirmed cases of *E. coli* bacteraemia

Exclusions

- Cases identified post-mortem are excluded

5.4 *C. difficile* infection

Any of the following defines a *C. difficile* infection in patients aged 2 years and above and must be reported to PHE:

- Diarrhoeal stools (Bristol Stool types 5-7) where the specimen is *C. difficile* toxin positive*
- Toxic megacolon or ileostomy where the specimen is *C. difficile* toxin positive*
- Pseudomembranous colitis revealed by lower gastro-intestinal endoscopy or Computed Tomography

- Colonic histopathology characteristic of *C. difficile* infection (with or without diarrhoea or toxin detection) on a specimen obtained during endoscopy or colectomy
- Faecal specimens collected post-mortem where the specimen is *C. difficile* toxin positive or tissue specimens collected post-mortem where pseudomembranous colitis is revealed or colonic histopathology is characteristic of *C. difficile* infection

Please note: In contrast to other collections, *C. difficile* infections identified post-mortem are included

Current guidelines* recommend a combination of two tests (first; toxin gene detection by NAAT or GDH EIA, second; a sensitive toxin EIA test) for the diagnosis of CDI.

* DH/ARHA guidance which incorporates *C. difficile* testing recommendations

For additional information, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions ([13.10 Appendix 10. Frequently Asked Questions](#)).

5.5 Episode categories

The DCS allows for three different episode types; new infection, continuing infection, a repeat infection or relapsing infection.

- **New infection** – Infection in patient with no known history of disease caused by organism of interest
- **Continuing infection** – New episode of infection (> 14 for bacteraemia or 28 days for CDI since first positive specimen) without negative tests in between samples.
- **Repeat/relapsing infection** – New episode of infection (> 14 for bacteraemia or 28 days for CDI since first positive specimen) with negative tests between first positive sample and most recent positive sample.

5.6 Quarterly Mandatory Laboratory Returns

The following must be reported to PHE:

- Total number of blood culture sets
- Total number of positive blood culture sets
- Total number of *S. aureus*-positive blood culture sets
- Total number of Glycopeptide-Resistant Enterococci (GRE) positive blood culture episodes
- Total number of stool specimens examined
- Total number of *C. difficile* toxin tests carried out
- Total number of *C. difficile* toxin positive reports in people ≥ 65 years old

- Total number of *C. difficile* toxin positive reports in people between 2 and 64 years old

Table 5.1: Definitions of data items for Quarterly Mandatory Laboratory Returns

Laboratory finding	Definition
Total number of blood culture sets	A sample arising from a single venipuncture, irrespective of number of bottles tested
Total number of positive blood culture sets	All samples positive for bacterial growth, including repeat specimens and contaminants
Total number of <i>S. aureus</i> -positive blood culture sets	Excludes repeat specimens within a 14-day episode
Total number of Glycopeptide-Resistant Enterococci (GRE) positive blood culture episodes	Excludes repeat specimens within a 14-day episode. GRE episodes should be reported at a genus level and concurrent reports of different species within the Enterococcus genus do not constitute separate episodes
Total number of stool specimens examined	All stools, not limited to those that can be classified according to Bristol Stool Chart. Also includes those stool samples used for <i>C. difficile</i> toxin testing.
Total number of <i>C. difficile</i> toxin tests carried out	All <i>C. difficile</i> tests performed, positive and negative. Includes duplicates
Total number of <i>C. difficile</i> toxin positive reports in people ≥ 65 years old	Total number of <i>C. difficile</i> episodes in people ≥ 65 years old. Excludes multiple samples within same 28-day episodes
Total number of <i>C. difficile</i> toxin positive reports in people between 2 and 64 years old	Total number of <i>C. difficile</i> episodes in people 2 to 64 years old. Excludes multiple samples within same 28-day episodes

5.7 Method of reporting data on the HCAI DCS

The HCAI DCS is a web portal designed by PHE to facilitate the collection of the enhanced data set.

The HCAI DCS can be accessed at the following URL:

<https://hcaidcs.phe.org.uk/WebPages/GeneralHomePage.aspx>

For complete guidance on the HCAI DCS please refer to the User Manuals which are available using the link above under the section 'Help & Support'. A password to the HCAI DCS is not required to view the documentation.

Access to the HCAI DCS is regulated by a system of differing user roles which grant different levels of access, as described in the user roles and permissions user guide. Access to the HCAI DCS can be requested by following the 'Request' link on the front page of the HCAI DCS. Local administrators will approve account requests for all users in their organisation. User

accounts will be requested based on different roles which will give the user different permissions on the system. User roles are detailed in Table 4.2 below:

Table 5.2: User roles and permissions on the HCAI DCS

Role	Permissions
System Administrator	Full access to the system. Able to authorise requests for local administrator accounts. National team responsible for mandatory surveillance only.
Local Administrator	Able to authorise local accounts. Unable to perform data entry or export line listing reports
Sign Off Authority	Able to sign off monthly data collections. Unable to perform data entry.
Data Entry	Creates new cases on system. Can edit saved cases. Only role that can view 'Find duplicates' report.
Read Only (PII)	Read access only, PII not visible.
Read Only (No PII)	Read access only, PII visible.
Renal Data Entry	Able to edit data on cases shared with renal unit
Renal Read Only (No PII)	Able to view data on cases shared with renal unit. PII not visible.
Renal Read Only (PII)	Able to view data, including PII on cases shared with renal unit.
PIR Data Entry User	Can edit PIR tabs on existing cases. Unable to view PIR case summary.
PIR Assignment	Able to perform assignment of PIR case. Unable to enter or edit PIR data. Can view PIR case summary.
PIR Arbitrator	Able to perform arbitration of PIR case. Unable to enter or edit PIR data. Can view PIR case summary.
PIR View Only	Can view PIR case summary. Unable to enter or edit PIR data.

DPH and Local Authority roles do not have PII privileges and are unable to view PII on the HCAI DCS.

Trusts using the website have access to all the data they have entered, which enables them to assess their burden of these HCAIs. This allows Trust-to-Trust comparisons. CCGs, Local Authorities, Directors of Public Health (DPH), NHS Area Teams, Field Epidemiology, PHE Region and PHE Centres are also able to have accounts and will be able to view cases mapped to their organisations.

6. Data collection question layout

The HCAI DCS separates common questions/fields into groups on separate tabs within a record i.e. questions about the source of bacteraemia can be found on the riskfactors tab (see Figure 2). Fields and tabs vary between organism collections; e.g. E. coli and CDI have different fields in the Risk Factors tab.

Fields regarding the infection episode itself are grouped together on the Episode Details tab, which is common across all organism collections. Within this tab there are fields that are mandatory for completion and optional for completion. Mandatory fields are further subdivided into mandatory for sign-off and mandatory for saving. Fields that are mandatory for saving must be completed in order for a record to be saved. Fields that are mandatory for sign-off must be completed in order for the CEO/sign-off authority to complete the sign-off. Further details about data items can be found in [13.1 Appendix 1. Episode details to be collected](#) and [13.2 Appendix 2: Risk factor data to be collected](#) and also in the [Case Capture User Guide](#).

Figure 2: HCAI DCS showing tabs for MRSA data collection.

The screenshot shows the HCAI DCS System - TestDev interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'About Us', and 'Contact Us' links. Below this is a 'New Infection Episode' section with a dropdown menu for 'Data Collection' (set to MRSA), an 'ID' input field, a 'Created Date' input field, and a 'Print' button. The main content area features a tabbed interface with 'Episode Details' selected. Other tabs include 'Source of Bacteraemia & Associated Infections', 'Risk Factors & Treatment', 'Healthcare Interactions (1)', and 'Renal'. A blue information box contains the text: 'Mandatory fields are marked with red asterisk (*)' and 'Mandatory for Sign Off fields are marked with red hash (#)'. Below this, a section titled 'Organisation Details *#' is visible.

7. Renal records

The HCAI DCS is designed to allow capture of data on patients with established renal failure and receiving dialysis. The data model provides for two modes of access to data. A record is 'owned' by the reporting organisation, and then 'shared' with the renal unit responsible for providing renal care. Renal units can enter data on the 'Renal' tab within a case screen but will not be able to add or edit data on any of the other tabs.

Once a record has been shared with a renal unit, registered users within the unit will receive an email notification that the record has been shared with the unit.

Details about the data items collected under the renal tab are described in 13.5 Appendix 5: Renal data items . Instructions on sharing and entering renal data can be found in the [Case Capture Renal User Guide](#).

8. Deadline for entering and signing-off data

The deadline for entering and signing-off data is the same for both the NHS and Independent Sector. All cases with specimen dates during a specific month must be entered onto the website by the 15th of the following month. The month's data must then be signed-off by an individual who has sufficient authority and the correct user role (usually a Trust's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or senior individual other than the CEO for Independent Sector organisations) by the 15th of every month. For example, data concerning specimens collected in October must be entered and signed-off by the 15th of November.

QMLR data for each 3 month period must be submitted within 6 weeks of the end of the data collection period (up to and including 14th). After this point the dataset is automatically locked and it is not possible to enter further data.

Once a period has been signed-off, it will not be possible to edit the episode details and renal tabs of a record, or to add or remove cases from the system. It is possible to request that a period or record is unlocked. The process for requesting an unlock is described in the [Unlock Request User Guide](#).

9. CEO sign-off and unlock requests

9.1 CEO sign-off

The mandatory surveillance data for healthcare associated infections must be signed-off on a monthly basis. This is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of an NHS acute Trust or the ‘authorised person’ for Independent Sector Healthcare Providers (where the ‘authorised person’ is defined as a senior manager within the organisation who has been given the responsibility to sign off the data).

This process was introduced in order to make sure the data has been verified and is accurate. It is the personal responsibility of the CEO or ‘authorised person’ to make sure that the data returns are accurate, complete and that they are submitted on time, as mandated by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and the Department of Health.

This process provides reassurance that data that are included in a period which has been signed-off by an NHS acute Trust’s CEO or an Independent Sector Healthcare Provider’s ‘authorised person’ are valid. Features within the new HCAI DCS allow you to differentiate between signed-off and unsigned-off periods of data, by filtering data returned in various reports and in the Summary dashboard ‘Summary’ and ‘Trends’ graphical elements.

Figure 3: Sign-off history in the Summary dashboard of the DCS

The screenshot shows the 'Summary' dashboard with a navigation bar containing 'Home', 'Summary', 'Benchmarking', and 'Data Quality'. Below the navigation bar is a table titled 'Data Collection Completeness (Shared Cases) - Current Period' and a 'Sign-Off History' table.

Data Collection	Sharing Unit	Total Shared Cases	Mandatory	Optional
C. difficile	Renal Unit			
E. coli	Renal Unit			
MRSA	Renal Unit			
MSSA	Renal Unit			

Date	Sign-Off	Data Collection	Org Code	Organisation Name	Total Reported Cases	Earliest Sign-Off Date	Sign-Off Deadline	Date Signed-Off	Sign-Off Status
01/01/2016 - 31/01/2016		C. difficile			12	01/02/2016	15/02/2016	18/02/2016	●
01/01/2016 - 31/01/2016		E. coli			23	01/02/2016	15/02/2016	17/02/2016	●
01/01/2016 - 31/01/2016		MRSA			0	01/02/2016	15/02/2016	17/02/2016	●
01/01/2016 - 31/01/2016		MSSA			4	01/02/2016	15/02/2016	17/02/2016	●
01/02/2016 - 29/02/2016		C. difficile			11	01/03/2016	15/03/2016	09/03/2016	●
01/12/2015 - 31/12/2015		C. difficile			4	01/01/2016	15/01/2016	14/01/2016	●
01/02/2016 - 29/02/2016		E. coli			21	01/03/2016	15/03/2016	09/03/2016	●

9.2 Identification of duplicate records

Prior to sign-off records should be checked to ensure duplicate entries have not been made. The 'Find duplicates' report will identify duplicated records based on a configurable selection of criteria including NHS number, date of birth, surname soundex, specimen date, specimen number and hospital number. Identified duplicates should be double checked and deleted prior to sign-off if the records are confirmed as true duplicates. Note, for users using manual data entry the system will also flag possible duplicate entries for cases reported by their organisation on attempting to save a record.

9.3 Sign-off process

In order to be able to sign-off a data period, all of the records within that period need to be complete. This means that every record for a data collection that you wish to sign-off needs to have every mandatory field completed. Mandatory fields are denoted in the DCS with a red * or # symbol.

Once all of the records for the data collection(s) to be signed-off have had all of their mandatory fields completed, users will be able to sign-off the data for the period. The CEO or sign-off authority should then log in to the DCS and use the 'Sign-Off Episodes' functionality to approve the data for the month. The sign-off process is detailed in the [Sign-off User Guide](#). Once a reporting period has been signed-off for an organisation it will become locked, i.e. signing off a month will lock it no additional cases will then be able to be added to that month nor will cases be able to be removed without requesting an unlock.

9.4 Unlock requests

Unlock requests serve two purposes:

- To allow the modification of a record, such as to add data to or amend mandatory fields in the record, and
- To allow the reporting of additional cases or deletion of incorrectly reported cases.

Unlock requests should be sent by email to mandatory-surveillance@phe.gov.uk. Requests should come from the reporting organisation and should copy in the CEO for amendment requests, or come from the CEO for deletion/addition requests. The email should detail the organism, month, type of change and reason for unlock and the case id generated by the HCAI DCS.

Unlock requests should not include any PII such as patient name, date of birth or NHS number in unlock requests.

Unlock requests for QMLR data do not need to come from the CEO/sign-off authority and do not need to copy in the CEO/sign-off authority.

Detailed guidance on the unlock process, can be found in the [Unlock Requests User Guide](#).

10. Denominator data

10.1 NHS

NHS acute Trust-level population data does not currently exist in England as NHS acute Trusts do not treat patients within defined geographical boundaries. Therefore, a suitable proxy for population is required in order to calculate Trust apportioned/assigned rates. The occupied overnight beds (from the national KH03 dataset) provides the daily average overnight bed occupation for a specific time period; full financial years for 2007/08 to 2009/10 and by quarter for financial years 2010/11 to 2014/15. This dataset is an open access return published by NHS England and provides a measure of clinical activity in each trust. Data for the most recently published quarter may be used to substitute values for the current surveillance quarter in instances where later data is yet to be released/published (e.g. substituting data from 2014/15 for 2015/16).

If any KH03 data for an individual Trust is more than 20% higher or lower than both the previous quarter and the same quarter in the previous year, then NHS Patient Safety will be informed.

If any KH03 data are missing, the same quarter in the previous year are used.

In the Official Statistics published from the surveillance the specific quarter is used to get the most accurate results. In contrast, the DCS needs to be able to calculate rates over any time period and the denominator data is therefore slightly different. For definitive rates and counts always refer to the official statistics not DCS reports.

KH03 data is downloaded from the NHS England website, as it is for the Official Statistics reports; however, data is then scaled up to the total number of occupied overnight beds for a given financial year. This is then uploaded to the HCAI DCS. Then, in order for the system to calculate a rate for a specific time period, the total occupied overnight beds for the financial year is divided by the number of days in the financial year and then multiplied by the number of days in the time period in question. For example, in order to calculate the number of occupied overnight beds for January 2014 you would follow equations (1) and (2):

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Number of occupied overnight beds for January 2014} = & \\ & \left(\frac{\text{Total occupied overnight beds in financial year 2013/14}}{\text{Total number of days in financial year 2013/14}} \right) \\ & \times \text{Total number of days in January 2014} \quad (1) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Number of occupied overnight beds for January 2014} = & \\ & \frac{34327781}{365} \times 31 \text{days} = 2915510 \quad (2) \end{aligned}$$

As the data starts off as a financial year as opposed to a quarter, any seasonal differences in bed day values are removed and so the rates will be slightly different.

NB. The rates produced by the HCAI DCS should be used as an estimate only, please see the official outputs on the PHE gov.uk pages for the actual infection rates. In addition, if you wish to use rates from the DCS for organisations other than your own please contact us at mandatory-surveillance@phe.gov.uk for confirmation that the rates are accurate and suitable to be used for more than an estimate.

10.2 Independent Sector

The denominator used for IS providers is a combination of bed days per year plus the number of discharges per year. This denominator is more appropriate for short-stay facilities with higher numbers of day patients. Further information on IS denominator calculation can be found in [13.11 Appendix 11](#).

Data on bed days and discharges are directly supplied by IS providers to PHE on an annual basis for the most recent financial year. Currently the IS site-based denominators are not collected.

10.3 Geographic population denominators

Various organisations (CCGs, Area Team, NHS regional teams) have defined geographical boundaries. As a result, patient populations can be estimated for each of the geographical organisations. The Office for National Statistics provides mid-year population estimates and so rates can be calculated per 100,000 population for these organisations.

11. Analysis of data

11.1 NHS Official Statistics

Different reports can be obtained from the HCAI DCS on demand, depending on the users role. Please note PHE publish data tables on a regular basis. These outputs are classed as 'Official Statistics' and as such constitute the final monthly/annual position. These reports should be used as the benchmark against which individual numbers can be compared.

11.1.1 Monthly report outputs

The following NHS data are produced by PHE each month:

MRSA bacteraemia:

- Monthly MRSA PIR assigned counts by acute Trust
- Monthly MRSA PIR assigned counts by CCG
- Monthly MRSA counts by Clinical Commissioning Group

MSSA bacteraemia:

- Monthly MSSA counts by acute Trust; Trust apportioned cases only
- Monthly MSSA counts by Clinical Commissioning Group

E. coli bacteraemia (data are not apportioned):

- Total monthly counts of *E. coli* bacteraemia by Trust
- Monthly counts of *E. coli* bacteraemia by Clinical Commissioning Group

CDI:

- Monthly CDI counts by acute Trust in patients aged 2 years and over; Trust apportioned cases only
- Monthly CDI counts by Clinical Commissioning Group in patients aged 2 years and over

11.1.2 Quarterly report outputs

The following data are produced by PHE each quarter:

- Epidemiological commentaries on MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI for the preceding 14 quarters. The exact content of these commentaries will differ each quarter; however the following standard analyses will be produced:
 - Count and rate of total cases over time for MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI
 - Count and rate of 'Trust apportioned' cases over time for MSSA bacteraemia and CDI
 - Count and rate of 'PIR assigned' and total MRSA cases over time since April 2013

11.1.3 Annual report outputs

The following outputs using NHS data are produced by PHE annually:

- Annual epidemiological commentary on MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia and *C. difficile* infection.
- Annual counts and rates by financial year for MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI. Data are presented at both Trust and CCG level.

11.2 Independent Sector report outputs

The following IS data are produced by PHE every six months:

- Counts of MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI by IS organisation

The following IS data are produced by PHE every year:

- Counts and rates of MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI by IS organisation

12. Contact us

If there are any outstanding queries after reading this protocol or the user guides please contact us:

For queries regarding the surveillance or its' outputs from PHE and NHS organisations please email: mandatory-surveillance@phe.gov.uk

For questions regarding the use of the DCS, please email support.hcaidcs@phe.gov.uk

For questions regarding the PIR process, please email pir.hcai@phe.gov.uk

For queries from the Independent Sector please email: independentsector@phe.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8327 7000 – ask to be put through to the HCAI department

Please note that automatic emails generated by the HCAI DCS come from the hcai.dcs@phe.gov.uk email address. Emails to this address are not monitored and will not be replied to.

13. Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1. Episode details to be collected

The following table provides detailed information about the data items to be collected regarding the details of the infection episode, including whether the data are mandatory and the rationale for including the data collection on the system. Details about the risk factor data collected are in the next section (13.2 Appendix 2: Risk factor data to be collected).

Table 13.1: Properties of data items included in core data set.

Field	Completion	Rationale for inclusion
Organisation Details		
Reporting organisation	Automatic	Identifies the organisation (Trust) reporting the case. Cases will be apportioned against this organisation
Attributed Organisation	Automatic	CCG responsible for commissioning the patient's care
Specimen Details		
Specimen Date	Mandatory	When the specimen was taken or was received in the laboratory. Useful when assessing timing of detection. Date specimen taken is preferred over date received in laboratory.
Type of Specimen Date	Mandatory	Specifies whether the specimen date refers to when the sample was take or received in the laboratory .
Specimen No	Optional	A unique identifier for the specimen.
Laboratory where specimen processed	Optional	Laboratory providing diagnostics on specimen.Provides a useful identifier.
Patient Details		
NHS Number	Mandatory	Unique identifier for each individual patient. Allows tracing and attribution to a CCG. Can be used to identifying duplicate records for the same individual.
Forename	Mandatory	Useful Patient Identifiable Information. Allows tracing. Can be used to identifying duplicate records for the same individual.
Surname	Mandatory	Useful Patient Identifiable Information. Allows tracing. Used to

Field	Completion	Rationale for inclusion
		create soundex. Can be used to identifying duplicate records for the same individual.
Date of Birth	Mandatory	Useful Patient Identifiable Information. Allows tracing. Allows age calculation and associated age related analyses. Where date of birth is not available the date 01/01/1900 should be entered. Can be used to identifying duplicate records for the same individual.
Sex	Mandatory	Important for epidemiologic analysis
Hospital Number	Optional	Unique local hospital identifier specific for patient and particular admission useful in identifying duplicate records for the same individual where other information is missing.
Episode Category	Optional	Information on whether a particular record is a new infectious episode, a continuing infection or a repeat infection/relapse. Useful for epidemiological categorisation
Admission Details		
Patient Location	Mandatory	Where the patient was when the specimen was taken. Used in the apportioning algorithm for MSSA bacteraemia and CDI. Also used in the algorithm for establishing which organisation should lead on a PIR for a MRSA.
Trust/Provider	Mandatory where triggered	Organisation providing care at time of specimen collection. Only triggered if patient location is NHS Acute Trust, Non-Acute NHS Provider, Independent Sector Provider, Mental Health Provider.
Hospital Site	Mandatory where triggered	Allows stratification of cases by site. Triggered if Patient Location is any of NHS Acute Trust, Non-acute NHS Provider, Independent Sector Provider, Mental Health Provider,

Field	Completion	Rationale for inclusion
Patient Category	Mandatory where triggered	Admission status of patient at time of specimen. Used in apportioning algorithm. Only triggered if patient location is NHS Acute Trust, Non-Acute NHS Provider, Independent Sector Provider or Mental Health Provider.
Other Patient Category	Mandatory where triggered	Allows completion of detail in other patient categories. Triggered only when Patient Category is Other. Free text field
Admission Method	Mandatory where triggered	Allows stratification of rates by method of admission. Only triggered where Patient Category is inpatient, day patient, emergency assessment or other.
Provenance	Optional	Where the patient was prior to arriving at the healthcare facility. Useful for data analysis involving patient history.
Trust/Provider admitted from	Optional	Allows epidemiological analysis of risk of infection by originating organisation. Only triggered when provenance is Hospital (UK or abroad), Non-Acute NHS Provider, Independent Sector Provider, Mental Health Provider, .
Non-UK Country	Optional	Allows epidemiological analysis of risk of infection by originating country. Only triggered when provenance is Non-UK resident
Treatment details		
Admitted any time during episode	Optional	Provides information on if the patient was admitted at any point during the episode. Useful for data analysis.
On dialysis	Mandatory	Provides information on whether the patient was on dialysis. Allows record to be shared with renal units.
Main Specialty	Mandatory where triggered	Allows stratification of counts and rates by Main Specialty. Triggered when Patient Location is

Field	Completion	Rationale for inclusion
		NHS Acute Trust, Non-Acute NHS Provider, Independent Sector Provider or Mental Health Provider.
Treatment Specialty	Mandatory where triggered	Allows stratification of counts and rates by Treatment Specialty. Triggered when Patient Location is NHS Acute Trust, Non-Acute NHS Provider, Independent Sector Provider or Mental Health Provider.
Augmented Care	Mandatory where triggered	Allows stratification of counts and rates by type of augmented care unit. Triggered when Patient Location is NHS Acute Trust, Non-Acute NHS Provider, Independent Sector Provider or Mental Health Provider.
Additional comments		
Comments	Optional	Free text field for comments regarding case, please refrain from putting patient identifiable information in this field.

13.2 Appendix 2: Risk factor data to be collected

The following table provides detailed information about the risk factor data to be collected using the HCAI DCS, including whether the data are mandatory and the rationale for including the data collection on the system. Details about the episode details data collected are in the preceding section (13.1 Appendix 1. Episode details to be collected).

Table 13.2: Risk factor fields for CDI

Field	Completion	Rationale for inclusion
Best estimate of date of onset of diarrhoea	Optional	Allows analysis of time between onset of diarrhoea, admission, date sample taken etc.
Was patient on antimicrobials when specimen was taken?	Optional	Antibiotic therapy is an important risk factor for <i>C. difficile</i> infection.
Select antimicrobials when specimen was taken	Mandatory if triggered	Allows analysis of which antimicrobials result in increased risk of <i>C. difficile</i> infection.
Was patient on any other antimicrobials in the preceding 7 days	Optional	Antibiotic therapy is an important risk factor for <i>C. difficile</i> infection.
Select antimicrobials in the preceding 7 days	Mandatory if triggered	Allows analysis of which antimicrobials result in increased risk of <i>C. difficile</i> infection.
Was the specimen sent for typing?	Optional	Allows linkage with Clostridium difficile ribotyping network (CDRN) data.
Specimen category	Mandatory if triggered	Allows linkage with Clostridium difficile ribotyping network (CDRN) data.

Table 13.3: Risk factor fields for *E. coli*

Field	Completion	Rationale for inclusion
Do you know of a primary focus of bacteraemia	Optional	Triggers appearance of 'Most likely primary focus' field
Most likely primary focus	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic investigation of trends in sources of <i>E. coli</i> bacteraemia.
Factors predisposing to this episode	Optional	Triggers appearance of further fields
Further triggered risk factor fields*	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic investigation of trends in sources of bacteraemia.
Is this episode likely to be an HCAI	Optional	Triggers appearance of 'Where was the infection likely to have been acquired' field.
Where was this infection likely to have been acquired?	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic investigation of trends in sources of bacteraemia. Also triggers appearance of 'Other' field.
Other	Mandatory if triggered	Provides free text field for description of other sources of infection.

* Urinary catheterisation, Vascular device, Other invasive/indwelling device, Surgical or other invasive procedure, Neutropaenia, Wound/Ulcer.

Table 13.4: Risk factor and treatment fields for MRSA and MSSA

Field	Completion	Rationale for inclusion
Were there any pre-disposing risk factors for the bacteraemia	Optional	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Peripheral IV device	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Central IV device	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Surgical wound	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Assisted ventilation (Current)	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Assisted ventilation (Past 7 days)	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Urinary catheter	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Liver disease	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Prosthesis	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Person who injects drugs	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Immunosuppressed	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Diabetic	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Other	Mandatory if triggered	Allows epidemiologic analysis of trends behind infection risk factors
Prior <i>S. aureus</i> history	Optional	Allows assessment of risk posed by prior history of <i>S. aureus</i> infection
When	Mandatory if triggered	Allows classification of prior <i>S. aureus</i> infection
Treatment of bacteraemia	Optional	Allows assessment of trends in <i>S. aureus</i> bacteraemia treatments. Includes an 'Other' option, which will trigger a free-text field.
If Other treatment	Mandatory if triggered	Provides opportunity to identify other risk factors for bacteraemia

13.2.1 Definitions of risk factors

Urinary catheterisation: Urinary catheter inserted, removed or manipulated in the 14 days prior to the onset of infection.

Vascular device: Any device inserted into peripheral or central vascular sites, up to 14 days prior to infection, with the intention of being left in situ for > 1 hour. Excludes intravenous injections or venepuncture for blood samples.

Other invasive/indwelling device: Prosthesis or implant intended to be left in for >1 day, inserted or removed within 1 year of onset of infection. e.g. pacemaker, surgical mesh or patch, aortic valve replacement, surgical drain.

Surgery: A procedure where an intentional incision is made, breaching mucosa or skin, with either a diagnostic purpose or having the aim of providing a therapeutic outcome. A procedure does not need to have been performed in an operating theatre to qualify.

Neutropaenia: absolute neutrophil count < 1500 per microliter.

Wound/ulcer: A break in the skin or mucous membrane of sufficient depth to have caused bleeding. Ulcers are wounds that have failed to heal with necrosis of involved tissues.

Urinary catheterisation: Urinary catheter inserted and left in for any duration up to 14 days prior to the date of onset of infection.

Vascular device: Any device inserted into peripheral or central vascular sites, up to 14 days prior to infection, with the intention of being left in situ for > 1 hour. Excludes intravenous injections or venepuncture for blood samples.

Other invasive/indwelling device: Prosthesis or implant intended to be left in for >1 day, inserted within 1 year of onset of infection. e.g. pacemaker, surgical mesh or patch, aortic valve replacement, surgical drain.

Assisted ventilation: Any mechanical ventilation through a tracheostomy or by endotracheal intubation.

Note: Lung expansion devices such as intermittent positive-pressure breathing (IPPB); nasal positive end-expiratory pressure (PEEP); and continuous nasal positive airway pressure (CPAP, hypoCPAP) are not considered ventilators unless delivered via tracheostomy or endotracheal intubation (e.g., ET-CPAP).

Person who injects drugs: Patient injects non-medically sanctioned psychoactive, including but not limited to, opioids, amphetamines and cocaine. Injection may be through intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous or other routes. Does not include injectors of non-psychoactive drugs such as steroids for body shaping or improving athletic performance.

Immunosuppressed: The patient has received therapy that suppresses resistance to infection, e.g. immunosuppression, chemotherapy, radiation, long-term or recent high dose steroids, or

has a disease that is sufficiently advanced to suppress resistance to infection, e.g. leukaemia, lymphoma, AIDS.

Diabetic : Patient has ever had a diagnosis of type I or type II diabetes.

13.3 Appendix 3: Source of bacteraemia & Associated Infections

Data items on this tab are limited to MRSA and MSSA only.

Table 13.5: Data items for the Source of bacteraemia & Associated Infections tab

Field	Mandatory?	Rationale for inclusion
Source of bacteraemia		
Do you know the source of bacteraemia	No	If 'Yes' triggers appearance of field 'Source of bacteraemia'
Source of bacteraemia	Mandatory if triggered	Provides options for recording source of bacteraemia. Allows epidemiological analyses of sources of bacteraemia
Certainty	Mandatory if triggered	Clinical judgement on degree of certainty. Only triggered by certain responses to 'Source of bacteraemia' question
Associated Clinical Infections		
Associated clinical infection	No	Provides information on infection site, when patient has co-infection with the same organism
Certainty	Mandatory if triggered	Clinical judgement on degree of certainty
Inpatient details		
For inpatients, what specialty was the infection thought to have been acquired in (Augmented Care)?	No	Allows specification of an augmented care unit in which the infection is believed to have been acquired Only for records where patient was inpatient at time of specimen
Date from	No	Date admitted to ward. Allows cross-checking with date of sample
Date to	No	Date discharged or transferred from ward. Allows cross-checking with date of sample

13.4 Appendix 4: Healthcare Interactions

For MRSA, MSSA and CDI, users have the option to provide information on prior healthcare interactions, which might provide information on sources of infection and risk factors. Four health care interactions can be provided per Healthcare Interaction tab. Further Healthcare Interaction tabs can be added by selecting 'Yes' for the final 'Do you want to add another interaction', up to a maximum of nine tabs for MRSA and MSSA, and five for CDI.

Table 13.6: Details of prior healthcare interaction data items.

Field	Mandatory?	Comment
When	Yes	Allows specification of when prior healthcare interaction occurred
Type of interaction	Yes	Type of patient care provided (i.e. inpatient, outpatient, A&E only, Emergency assessment, Regular attender, Primary care, Day patient or Other)
Where	Yes	Specification of type of organisation providing care
Date from	Yes	First day of prior healthcare interaction
Date to	Yes	Last day of prior healthcare interaction
Reason for interaction	Yes	Choice of medical specialty of prior healthcare interaction
Admission method	Yes	Admission method for prior healthcare interaction

13.5 Appendix 5: Renal data items

Table 13.7: Definitions of renal data items

Field	Description
Renal provider	
Usual provider of renal care (Mother Unit)	The renal unit that normally provides care
Usual provider of renal care (Satellite Unit)	
Other (incl. non-UK) mother &/or satellite unit	Any other unit that provides care. Free text field
Dialysis	
Dialysis details (Modality)	The method by which dialysis was delivered.
Type of access being used	Access to bloodstream through which dialysis is delivered.
Other type of access being used	Only triggered if 'Type of access being used' is 'Other'. Free text field.
Catheter last 28/7	Whether an intravenous catheter was used in seven days prior to blood culture or 28 days prior to positive stool specimen.
What type of catheter	Triggered if 'Catheter last 28/7' was 'Yes'. Drop-down options for type of venous catheter.

13.6 Appendix 6. CCG Attribution Process

All cases of MRSA MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and CDI are attributed to a CCG. Cases are attributed to a CCG by tracing patient identifiers (name, NHS number, sex and date of birth) via the Demographics Batch Service (DBS). To obtain these data, identifiers are automatically passed from the DCS to NHS Spine provided by HSCIC, via DBS, to identify patient GP registration details and patient residential postcode. As such, it is important for data providers to ensure they enter correct patient identifiers for all cases entered onto the HCAI DCS.

13.6.1 Overview of CCG attribution

If the patient is successfully traced (e.g. a record is returned with the patient's GP practice code or patient postcode) patients are attributed to a 'Responsible' CCG. A responsible CCG is the CCG with which the patient's GP practice is listed, or, in cases where an English patient has no registered GP listed in the Spine, the CCG based on patient residency. The responsible CCG is identifiable by querying the Organisation Data Service (ODS) database which holds a list of all English listed GP practice codes and all English postcodes by CCG boundary.

If neither the patient's GP practice nor patient's postcode is populated in the Spine, then the patient is attributed to the lead CCG. The lead CCG is the main commissioning vehicle for the acute Trust at which the patient's specimen was processed. It is possible a single CCG is lead to one or more acute Trusts but another CCG is not lead to any acute Trust.

13.6.2 CCG attribution algorithm

Attribution to a CCG relies on a patient being traced through the NHS spine. Spine tracing is a two stage process using the following rules:

1. If the NHS Number is present, a cross-check is performed. This checks that the NHS Number and all elements of the date of birth provided match a record on the Spine. If they do, the patient's demographics are returned. Optionally, surname and forename can be included in the match by including them in the input file. If the cross-check fails, the system moves to the next step.
2. If the NHS Number is not present or the cross-check fails, an alphanumeric trace is performed. At a minimum, surname, given name, gender and date of birth must be provided. This searches both current and historical information held on the Spine. Wildcard searching is not performed in this case.

The algorithm, below attributes infection cases to a CCG in the following order:

1. If the GP code where a patient is registered is identified through DBS tracing and is based in England, the case will be attributed to the CCG at which the patient's GP is listed;
2. If the patient GP code is not identified through DBS tracing, but the patient is known to reside in England and a residential postcode has been obtained, the patient case will be attributed to the Residence CCG based on the patient's residential postcode;
3. If any of the above are not available or valid, then then patient is attributed to a CCG based on the postcode of the Trust headquarters (Trust HQ) address. For example, patients registered to GPs outside England who have had specimens processed by laboratories based in English trusts are attributed to English lead CCGs. Similarly, any foreign patients who have no NHS number are attributed to lead CCGs.

Please see Figure A1 for a detailed schematic regarding the attribution of cases to CCGs.

13.6.3 Overview of timescales

Acute trusts must ensure they enter all their infection cases on to the HCAI DCS. New or amended cases are traced twice daily via DBS and are usually loaded on to the DCS the following day.

Timely input of data is encouraged, as this will ensure accurate linkage of data through the batch tracing. The tracing procedure used to gain GP code and/or residential postcode relies on linking patient information from the Spine to our HCAI DCS. In the unfortunate incident of a deceased patient the Spine information for that patient would be moved to a historical section which is inaccessible to us. In such cases a C-code of 127 is returned and the postcode of the Trust HQ is used to identify the attributed CCG.

Organisations may request a re-trace by providing updated patient information. However, retraces will only be performed up to 45 days after the initial trace as data may change on the NHS Spine, resulting in an incorrect CCG attribution.

13.6.4 Attribution of IS cases

Cases reported by the IS are traced in the same batch as those reported by the NHS. As per the NHS, the tracing results are available on the DCS. However, as not all patients treated within the IS will have an NHS number it is possible that more IS cases will have a C code of zero, compared to the NHS.

'C codes'

Once patients have been traced, details of the tracing (including CCG type, CCG code, and C Code) are loaded onto the DCS. If a patient has been successfully traced, their record will have a C code of 20, 30, 122, 123 or 125 (see [Table 13.8](#) for C Code definitions).

If a case has NOT been successfully traced, then the Trust should verify records with a C code of 0 or 1 to ensure patient NHS number and other identifiers such as date of birth, forename, surname and gender are correct.

Please note that with the exception of code 30, these codes do NOT correspond with either the former NSTS tracing codes, or with the current DBS tracing codes.

Table 13.8: Definitions of 'C-Code' field in DCS

CCG attribution	C Code	Clarification
GP CCG	30	Cases with a valid NHS Number and date of birth are successfully traced via DBS to an English GP
Residential CCG	122	Cases which are traced via patient postcode (only when GP code is not available)
Trust CCG	0*	Cases with an invalid NHS number and patient details
Trust CCG	1*	Cases with a valid NHS number and patient details, but are not listed in Spine
Trust CCG	124	Cases with valid NHS number and date of birth are traced to a GP or postcode outside England
Trust CCG	126	Cases which have been successfully traced against Spine, but patient details (i.e. residential postcode or registered GP code) are not available
Trust CCG	127	Cases which have been successfully traced against Spine, but patient details (i.e. residential postcode or registered GP code) are not available and the patient is indicated as being deceased
Trust CCG	333	Cases with valid NHS number and date of birth are traced to a GP which has since closed
GP CCG	20	Cases with valid patient details (first name, surname, DoB and gender) and are successfully traced to a GP in England
Residential CCG	123	Cases which are traced through Step 2 of DBS tracing (i.e. first name, surname, DOB, gender), via patient postcode (only when GP code is not available and postcode is in England)
Trust CCG	125	Cases with invalid NHS number however traced through Step 2 of DBS tracing (i.e. first name, surname, DOB, gender) are traced to a GP or postcode outside of England

* **Note:** Patients with C code 0 or 1 may potentially be traced if either NHS number and/or date of birth, forename, surname and gender are added/corrected.

13.3.5 Figure A1. Summary of the CCG attribution process



13.6.6 Appeals against attribution

Cases may only be appealed within 45 days of tracing and only if the patient's postcode or GP practice code listed in the Spine was incorrect at time of tracing. Cases will only be retraced once PHE has been informed by the acute Trust or CCG that the discrepant details have been amended in the Spine and the amendments are made within the 45 day window of the initial trace.

13.6.7 Contacts/information

Any queries regarding case allocation should in the first instance be directed to mandatory-surveillance@phe.gov.uk

13.7 Appendix 7. Algorithms for apportioning cases

Please note that the algorithm applied to MSSA bacteraemia differs to that used for CDI in terms of the number of days between specimen collection and admission used to apportion cases. The underlying principle is, however, the same. The algorithm used to apportion cases is outlined below (see also [Figure A2.](#)).

Please note MRSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia cases are not apportioned. MRSA bacteraemia cases are however subject to the Post Infection Review (PIR) process (outlined below). IS data is also not subject to apportionment.

It is not possible for PHE to change the apportionment of a case as apportionment is based on the data entered by the acute Trust and the algorithm is applied to the entire dataset not on a case by case basis; a case may only change from one category to another if the relevant case details are incorrect and require amendment by the Trust.

In addition to apportioning, all cases are also attributed to a CCG (see [Appendix 3](#)). All cases regardless of whether Trust apportioned and non-Trust apportioned cases are attributed to a CCG.

In the development of the new DCS, some of the data values used in apportionment changed. Previously, users could leave the patient location blank and the patient location would be recorded as null. This is no longer possible, and has been replaced with the data value 'Unknown'. Similarly, it was possible for users to leave patient category blank and the patient category would be recorded as null. This has also been replaced with 'Unknown'. Records entered prior to the launch of the new DCS (26/10/2015) were apportioned with the old algorithm. Records entered after this date are apportioned with the new algorithm.

13.7.1 MSSA bacteraemia

Trust apportioned:

Any NHS patient specimens taken on the third day of admission onwards (e.g. day 3 when day 1 equals day of admission) at an acute Trust (including cases with unspecified specimen location) for In-patients, Day-patients, Emergency Assessment, or unspecified patient category.

Records with an unknown admission date (where the specimen location is acute Trust or unknown and the patient category is In-patient, Day-patient, Emergency Assessment, or unspecified) are also included.

Non-Trust apportioned:

Any NHS patient specimens not apportioned to the above. This will typically include the following groups:

- Any acute Trust specimens taken on either the day of admission or the subsequent day (e.g. days 1 or 2, where day 1 equals day of admission)
- Any specimens from patients attending an acute Trust who are not Inpatients, Day patients or under Emergency Assessment (i.e. non admitted patients)
- Any specimens from patients attending an identifiable healthcare location **except** an acute Trust. This includes GP, nursing home, non-acute NHS provider, Independent Sector Provider, Mental Health Provider, residential home, penal establishment, unknown or other.

A summary of how MSSA cases are apportioned is illustrated in Figure A2. below.

13.7.2 Clostridium difficile infection

Trust apportioned:

Any NHS patient specimens taken on the fourth day of admission onwards (e.g. day 4 when day 1 equals day of admission) at an acute Trust (including cases with unspecified specimen location) for In-patients, Day-patients, Emergency Assessment, or unspecified patient category.

Records with an unknown admission date (where the specimen location is acute Trust or missing and the patient category is In-patient, Day-patient, Emergency Assessment, or unspecified) are also included.

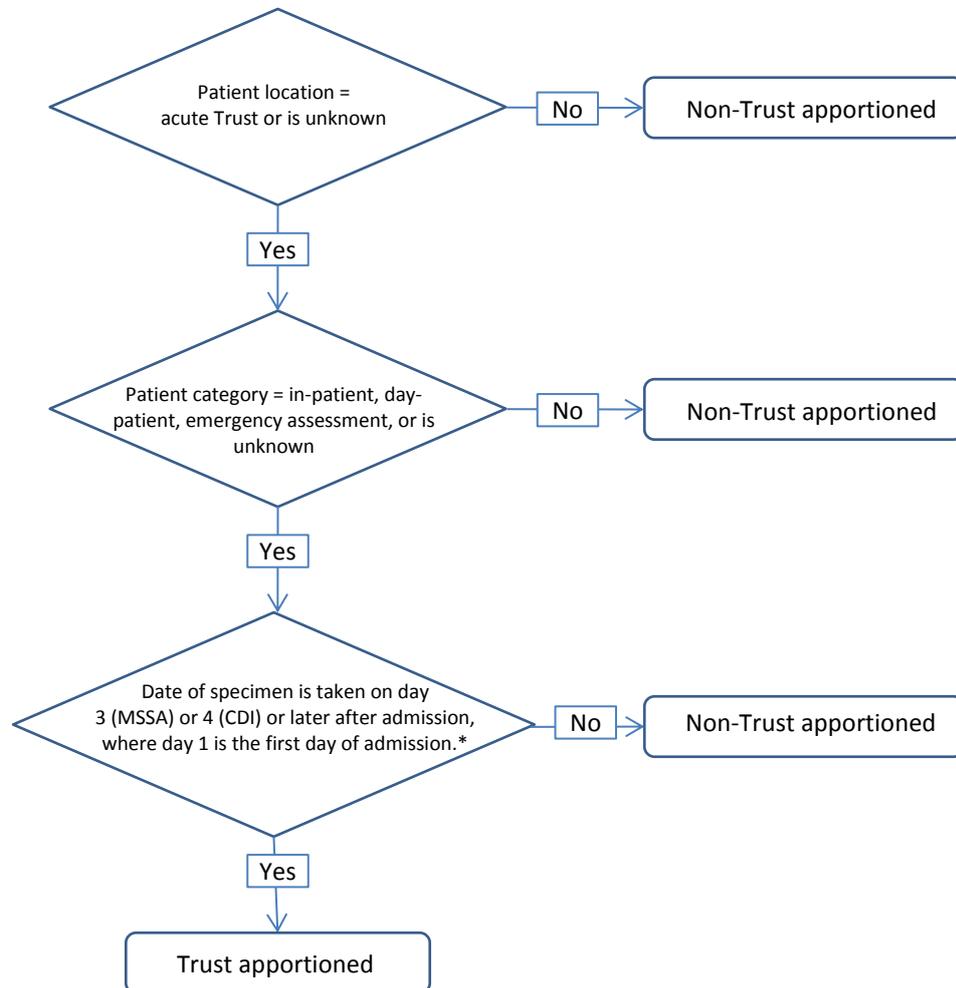
Non-Trust apportioned:

Any NHS patient specimens not apportioned to the above. This will typically include the following groups:

- Any acute Trust specimens taken on either the day of admission or the two subsequent days (e.g. days 1, 2, 3 where day 1 equals day of admission)
- Any specimens from patients attending an acute Trust who are not In-patient, Day-patient or under Emergency Assessment (e.g. non admitted patients)
- Any specimens from patients attending an identifiable healthcare location **except** an acute Trust. This will typically include GP, nursing home, CCG hospital and private patients

A summary of how CDI cases are apportioned is illustrated in Figure A2., below.

13.7.3 Figure A2. Summary of the apportionment process for MSSA and CDI



*Additionally include records where admission date is missing and the specimen location is acute Trust or unknown and the patient category is in-patient, day-patient, emergency assessment or is null

13.8 Appendix 8. The Post Infection Review process (PIR)

13.8.1 The purpose of the Post Infection Review

The NHS Commissioning Board's NHS planning guidance '*Everyone counts: Planning for Patients 2013/14*' set out a zero tolerance approach to MRSA bacteraemia. As such a requirement was initiated on 1 April 2013 to institute a Post Infection Review in all cases of MRSA bacteraemia in order to identify any possible failings in care and the organisation best placed to ensure improvements are made. As of 1 April 2014, cases could be assigned to a third party if the outcomes suggested that there have been no possible failings in care and that neither the acute Trust or the CCG are best placed to ensure improvements are made.

13.8.2 Aim of the PIR process:

The PIR process will:

- help identify factors that may have contributed to a MRSA bacteraemia;
- help to identify any parts of the patient's care pathway which may have contributed to the infection, in order to prevent a similar occurrence;
- help providers of healthcare and CCGs to identify any areas of non-optimal practice that may have contributed to the MRSA bacteraemia;
- help to promptly identify the lessons learned from the case, thereby improving practice for the future;
- identify the organisation best placed to ensure that any lessons learnt are acted on.

When an MRSA bacteraemia is entered onto the HCAI DCS, the system will automatically provisionally assign an organisation with the responsibility for leading the PIR process. This does not necessarily assume that the provisionally assigned organisation was responsible for the bacteraemia, but considers that they are best placed to lead and coordinate the PIR process. Provisional assignment is based on the following;

Provisionally Trust assigned

Any patients who were in-patients, day-patients or emergency assessment in an acute Trust and the MRSA bacteraemia sample was taken from the patient on or after the third day of admission (where the day of admission is Day 1).

Provisionally CCG assigned

Patients not assigned as above. in particular, any patients not admitted at the time the specimen was taken, for example those in Accident and Emergency or outpatients.

13.8.3 Assigning MRSA bacteraemia cases

The lead organisation is responsible for completing the PIR within fourteen working days of being notified that a PIR is required. This involves making a decision (an assignment) of the organisation best placed to learn from the occurrence (acute Trust or CCG) or Third Party if

there were no learning outcomes identified for either the reporting acute Trust or attributed CCG.

If the duly assigned organisation is the same as the organisation leading the PIR this will end the process. If the duly assigned organisation is different from the organisation leading the PIR, a notification will be sent to the assisting organisation who will be provided a further two working days, plus any days left from stage 1, to indicate whether they agree or disagree with the outcome of the PIR.

If the PIR outcomes suggest that there have been no possible failings in care and that neither the acute Trust or the CCG are best placed to ensure improvements are made then Third Party assignment may be considered and finalised as such by the arbitrator.

If the lead provisional organisation and the assisting organisation are unable to come to an agreement over the final assignment or if a Third party case has been indicated, a notification will be sent to the arbitrating NHS England Regional Medical Director or Regional Director of Nursing who will be provided a further 28 working days to define the outcome of the PIR and establish the organisation to which the MRSA bacteraemia should be finally assigned (either acute Trust, CCG or Third party).

If an organisation fails to respond within the set time period at either stage one or stage two, the final assignment of the case will remain with that organisation, unless:

1. The organisation is a third party, in which case the PIR will go to arbitration
2. The case is a contaminant case (non-third party) where the case is automatically assigned to the organisation responsible for taking the sample (i.e. the acute Trust if the sample was taken in an acute Trust, or CCG if the sample was taken elsewhere)

Contaminated blood cultures should continue to be reported as part of mandatory reporting and the PIR should be completed indicating any agreed contaminants. In these circumstances the organisation at which the blood culture specimen was taken will be assigned the case as they are best placed to ensure that any lessons learned are acted upon.

13.9 Appendix 9. Quarterly mandatory laboratory returns (QMLRs)

NOTE: The mandatory reporting scheme described below is distinct from the enhanced surveillance system described above.

On a quarterly basis NHS acute Trusts are mandated to report the following data, aggregated for a three-month period (definitions below):

- Total number of blood culture sets examined
- Total number of these that were positive
- Total number of *S.aureus* positive blood culture episodes
- Total number of glycopeptide resistant enterococci (GRE) blood culture episodes¹
- Total number of stool specimens examined
- Total number of *Clostridium difficile* toxin tests carried out
- Total number of *Clostridium difficile* toxin positive reports in people aged > 65 years
- Total number of *Clostridium difficile* toxin positive reports in people aged 2 - 64 years

Data for each 3 month period must be submitted within 6 weeks of the end of the data collection period (up to and including 14th). After this point the dataset is automatically locked and it is not possible to enter further data. Organisations must contact the PHE mandatory surveillance team if data needs to be entered after this point in time.

Table 13.9: Data collection periods and system lockdown dates for QMLR data

Data collection period	System lockdown
October – December	23.59 on 14 February
January – March	23.59 on 14 May
April – June	23.59 on 14 August
July – September	23.59 on 14 November

These data are also entered via the HCAI DCS. Please see Table 13.10 below for a list of fields required for the QMLR.

¹ Voluntary as of 2013.

Table 13.10: Details of fields included in QMLR

Field	Mandatory?	Rationale
Total number of blood culture sets examined	Yes	This is referring to a sample arising from a single venepuncture, irrespective of the number of bottles tested
Total number of positive blood culture sets	Yes	This is referring to all positive results for bacterial growth, including repeat specimens and contaminants
Total number of <i>S. aureus</i> positive blood culture episodes	Yes	This does not include duplicate episodes*; i.e. when the same patient has more than one sample taken which are less than 14 days apart
Total number of GRE positive blood cultures	No	This does not include duplicate episodes*; i.e. when the same patient has more than one sample taken which are less than 14 days apart
Total number of stool specimens examined	Yes	This is referring to 'all stools' not just the ones that fit the Bristol Stool Scale; it also includes the number of stool specimens used for <i>C. difficile</i> toxin testing
Total number of <i>C. difficile</i> toxin tests done	Yes	This is referring to all <i>C. difficile</i> toxin tests done that have been found positive and negative and it will include duplicate records. However, two-stage testing on a single sample should be counted as a single test.
Total of <i>C. difficile</i> toxin positive results for ≥65 years	Yes	This is referring to the total number of <i>C. difficile</i> toxin-positive stool samples in patients aged 65 years and above; it should not include duplicates i.e. when the same patient has more than one sample taken which are less than 28 days apart
		If single-stage testing is employed, this will include all positive samples. However, if two-stage testing is employed, only samples that are positive for both tests should be included.

Field	Mandatory?	Rationale
Total No. of <i>C. difficile</i> toxin positive results for 2-64 year olds	Yes	<p>This is referring to the total number of <i>C. difficile</i> toxin-positive stool samples in patients aged 2-64 years; it should not include duplicates i.e. when the same patient has more than one sample taken which are less than 28 days apart</p> <p>If single-stage testing is employed, this will include all positive samples. However, if two-stage testing is employed, only samples that are positive for both tests should be included.</p>

* For calculating duplicates, episode duration is 14 days from preceding sample for bacteraemias and 28 days from preceding sample for CDI.

13.10 Appendix 10. Frequently Asked Questions

13.10.1 MRSA bacteraemia reporting: Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long is an episode?

A. *The episode length of MRSA bacteraemia is 14 days with day 1 being the date of specimen collection.*

Q. Do all positive blood samples need to be reported, even if the patient wasn't treated?

A. *Yes, all positive blood samples must be reported, whether clinically significant or not and whether the patient was treated or not.*

Q. Do I need to report MecA-negative isolates?

A. *No, MecA-negative isolates are not regarded as MRSA in this instance, and need not be reported as MRSA bacteraemia cases, irrespective of their level of meticillin resistance. Such cases should, however, be reported as MSSA bacteraemia. Please note, that this distinction is only with respect to the submission of isolates to the surveillance scheme and should not affect patient treatment decisions. NB Isolates that are highly resistant to meticillin but are MecA-negative are an anomaly and should be investigated with possible referral to the national reference laboratory.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens from deceased patients?

A. *No, positive specimens from deceased patients should not be reported*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens that come from patients not located within a hospital at the time of testing, or taken on admission?

A. *Yes, all cases of MRSA bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported, regardless of where or when the specimen was collected.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens from Welsh patients diagnosed in English laboratories?

A. *Yes, all cases of MRSA bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported even if they are from Welsh patients tested/diagnosed in an English laboratory*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens sent from the Independent Sector (private hospital)?

A. *Yes, all cases of MRSA bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported, regardless of where the specimen originated from.*

Q. Should positive specimens from the same patient and the same episode be reported?

A. *No, only report a second positive from the same patient if it is defined as a new episode.*

13.10.2 MSSA bacteraemia reporting: Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long is an episode?

A. *The episode length of MSSA bacteraemia is 14 days with day 1 being the date of specimen collection.*

Q. Do all positive blood samples need to be reported, even if the patient wasn't treated?

A. *Yes, all positive blood samples must be reported, whether clinically significant or not and whether the patient was treated or not.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens from deceased patients?

A. *No, positive specimens from deceased patients should not be reported*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens that come from patients not located within a hospital at the time of testing, or taken on admission?

A. *Yes, all cases of MSSA bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported, regardless of where or when the specimen was collected.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens from Welsh patients diagnosed in English laboratories?

A. *Yes, all cases of MSSA bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported even if they are from Welsh patients tested/diagnosed in an English laboratory*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens sent from the Independent Sector (private hospital)?

A. *Yes, all cases of MSSA bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported, regardless of where the specimen originated from.*

Q. Should positive specimens from the same patient and the same episode be reported?

A. *No, only report a second positive from the same patient if it is defined as a new episode.*

13.10.3 *E. coli* bacteraemia reporting: Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long is an episode?

A. *The episode length of E. coli bacteraemia is 14 days with day 1 being the date of specimen collection.*

Q. Do all positive blood samples need to be reported, even if the patient wasn't treated?

A. *Yes, all positive blood samples must be reported, whether clinically significant or not and whether the patient was treated or not.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens from deceased patients?

A. *No, positive specimens from deceased patients should not be reported*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens that come from patients not located within a hospital at the time of testing, or taken on admission?

A. *Yes, all cases of E. coli bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported, regardless of where or when the specimen was collected.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens from Welsh patients diagnosed in English laboratories?

A. *Yes, all cases of E. coli bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported even if they are from Welsh patients tested/diagnosed in an English laboratory*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens sent from the Independent Sector (private hospital)?

A. *Yes, all cases of E. coli bacteraemia that conform to the case definition must be reported, regardless of where the specimen originated from.*

Q. Should positive specimens from the same patient and the same episode be reported?

A. *No, only report a second positive from the same patient if it is defined as a new episode*

13.10.4 *C. difficile* Infection Reporting: Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long is an episode?

A. *An episode of CDI is 28 days, with day 1 being the date of specimen collection.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens from deceased patients?

A. *Yes, unlike other collections positive specimens from deceased patients should be reported. Unlike bacteraemias, CDI testing is less likely to be affected by contamination during sample collection.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens that come from patients not located within a hospital at the time of testing, or taken on admission?

A. *Yes, all cases of CDI that conform to the case definition must be reported, regardless of where or when the specimen was collected.*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens from Welsh patients diagnosed in English laboratories?

A. *Yes, all cases of CDI that conform to the case definition must be reported even if they are from Welsh patients tested/diagnosed in an English laboratory*

Q. Do I need to report positive specimens sent from the Independent Sector (private hospital)?

A. *Yes, all cases of CDI that conform to the case definition must be reported, regardless of where the specimen originated from.*

Q. Should positive specimens from the same patient and the same episode be reported?

A. *No, only report a second positive from the same patient if it is defined as a new episode.*

Q. What stools should be tested for CDI?

A. *If a patient has diarrhoea (Bristol Stool Chart types 5-7) that is not clearly attributable to an underlying condition (e.g. inflammatory colitis, overflow) or therapy (e.g. laxatives, enteral feeding) then it is necessary to determine if this is due to *C. difficile*. The stool sample must take on the shape of the container and ideally be at least ¼ filled (to indicate the patient has diarrhoea) before it is sent to the laboratory for testing. If in doubt please seek advice for example from your microbiologist, Director of Infection Prevention and Control or your Infection Prevention and Control Team. All diarrhoeal samples from hospital patients aged ≥2 years and, as a minimum, all diarrhoeal samples from those aged ≥65 years in the community where clinically indicated. Ideally, samples from community patients ≤ 65 years old should also be collected.*

In suspected cases of 'silent CDI' such as ileus, toxic megacolon or pseudomembranous colitis without diarrhoea, other diagnostic procedures, such as colonoscopy, white cell count (WCC), serum creatinine and abdominal computerised tomography (CT) scanning, may be required, potentially with referral to a gastroenterologist or gastrointestinal surgeon.

Q. Do I need to report cases in patients aged under 2 years?

A. *Cases in patients aged under 2 years need not be reported; however Trusts may use the system to record these cases if they so wish. These will be excluded from data for publication.*

Q. The current primary care PHE advice on definition of diarrhoea is: **3 or more episodes a day, <14 days apart** (NB this should not be confused with the definition of an episode of CDI for the

purposes of mandatory reporting to the PHE which is 28 days) and the sample takes the shape of the container. Can you have a 'diarrhoeal illness' after just one episode?

A. The frequency of diarrhoea varies in definitions of CDI. Usually, definitions cite the need for at least 3 episodes of diarrhoea, for at least 2 consecutive days. Such a stringent definition is appropriate for clinical trials, but less so in a setting where transmission of infection is a concern. In primary care (excluding institutions such as nursing homes), it is reasonable to use the more stringent definition of CDI; in practice, patients would very rarely consult their GP for diarrhoea comprising 1-2 episodes per day, unless perhaps this continued for several days. Conversely, in the healthcare setting, using a single episode of unexplained diarrhoea as the threshold to instigate testing and pre-emptive patient isolation is reasonable. Whichever the scenario, some flexibility is required to ensure that unexplained diarrhoea is appropriately investigated and managed, especially in high risk individuals.

Q. Should all patients with diarrhoea in the community setting be tested?

*A. The **current PHE guidance** adequately covers when to investigate patients in the community with unexplained diarrhoea. Whenever a diarrhoeal sample is submitted, relevant clinical details should be supplied, e.g. antibiotic, travel, diarrhoea contact histories. Without such information it cannot be assumed that laboratories will test a faecal sample from a person in the community for evidence of CDI.*

Q. Is it acceptable to use a cytotoxin test instead of a sensitive toxin EIA.

A. Yes it is acceptable to use a cytotoxin test instead of a sensitive toxin EIA as part of the recommended two-stage algorithm. In DH/PHE evaluations, the cytotoxin test was more sensitive than the toxin EIAs. Clearly, the cytotoxin assay yields slower results than the toxin EIA, and this needs to be accounted for when making management and infection prevention decisions regarding suspected CDI cases.

13.11 Appendix 11. Independent Sector denominator data calculations

The denominator used, which is more appropriate for shorter stay hospitals is

Bed days in year + discharges in year

Instead of counting the number of midnights the patient was resident for, this counts the number of different days on which they were in the hospital. A day case will count 1, a one night stay in the year will count 2.

Bed days in the financial year 2014/15

This is the sum of the number of occupants in a bed each midnight during the year:

Those in a bed at midnight *at the end of the day* 1 April 2014 +
...+ those in a bed at midnight *at the end of the day* 31 March 2015

If it is being derived from admission dates and discharge dates, you work out the contribution that each patient makes to the year's bed days by a formula.

The only patients who can contribute a bed day to the year are those who are admitted *strictly before* 1 April 2015 and discharged *strictly after* 1 April 2014. That is, the latest date they could have been admitted was 31 March 2015 and the earliest date they could have been discharged was 2 April 2014.

For these we work out

Discharge date or 1 April 2015, whichever is earlier

MINUS

Admission date or 1 April 2014, whichever is later

then add up over all the patients.

This counts the number of bed days the patient contributes to the year.

If the patient is still in hospital and does not yet have a discharge date then the first expression should be taken as 1 April 2015.

Discharges in the financial year 2014/15

This is the number of patients with a discharge date between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015 i.e.

number of patients discharged on 1 April 2014 +
... + number of patients discharged on 31 March 2015

It should include any day cases that took place during the year.

Examples of bed day calculation

If a patient was admitted on 17 March 2014 and discharged on 1 April 2014 they will contribute no bed days to 2014/15.

If a patient was admitted on 17 March 2014 and discharged on 2 April 2014 they will contribute 1 bed day to 2014/15.

If a patient was admitted on 17 March 2014 and discharged on 1 April 2015, they will contribute 365 bed days to 2014/15

If a patient was admitted on 23 April 2014 and discharged on 23 April 2014 they will contribute no bed days (however they will contribute one discharge).

If a patient was admitted on 1 March 2015 and is still in hospital today (12 July 2015) they will contribute

Minimum of (discharge date, 1 April 2015) - maximum of (admission date, 1 April 2014)

= 1 April 2015 - maximum (1 March 2015, 1 April 2014)

= 1 April 2015 - 1 March 2015

= 31 Days

13.12 Appendix 12. List of hyperlinks

New DCS

<https://hcaidcs.phe.org.uk/WebPages/GeneralHomePage.aspx>

Updated guidance on the diagnosis and reporting of *Clostridium difficile*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/215135/dh_133016.pdf

MRSA bacteraemia:

Monthly MRSA PIR assigned counts by acute Trust

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-bacteraemia-monthly-data-by-post-infection-review-assignment>

Monthly MRSA counts by Clinical Commissioning Group

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-bacteraemia-monthly-data-by-attributed-clinical-commissioning-group>

Annual data tables – counts and rates, by acute Trust and CCG, by quarter and year

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-bacteraemia-annual-data>

MSSA bacteraemia:

Monthly MSSA counts by acute Trust; Trust apportioned cases only

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mssa-bacteraemia-monthly-data-by-nhs-acute-trust>

Monthly MSSA counts by Clinical Commissioning Group

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mssa-bacteraemia-monthly-data-by-attributed-clinical-commissioning-group>

Annual data tables – counts and rates, by acute Trust and CCG, by quarter and year

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mssa-bacteraemia-annual-data>

E. coli bacteraemia:

Total monthly counts of *E. coli* bacteraemia by Trust

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/escherichia-coli-e-coli-bacteraemia-monthly-data-by-nhs-acute-trust>

Monthly counts of *E. coli* bacteraemia by Clinical Commissioning Group

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/escherichia-coli-e-coli-bacteraemia-monthly-data-by-attributed-clinical-commissioning-group>

Annual data tables – counts and rates, by acute Trust and CCG, by quarter and year

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/escherichia-coli-e-coli-bacteraemia-annual-data>

***Clostridium difficile* infection:**

Monthly *C. difficile* counts by acute Trust in patients aged 2 years and over; Trust apportioned cases only

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/clostridium-difficile-infection-monthly-data-by-nhs-acute-trust>

Monthly *C. difficile* counts by Clinical Commissioning Group in patients aged 2 years and over

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/clostridium-difficile-infection-monthly-data-by-attributed-clinical-commissioning-group>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/clostridium-difficile-infection-annual-data>

Epidemiological commentaries on all collections

Quarterly Epidemiological commentaries on MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and *C. difficile*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-mssa-and-e-coli-bacteraemia-and-c-difficile-infection-quarterly-epidemiological-commentary>

Annual epidemiological commentaries for MRSA, MSSA and *E. coli* bacteraemia and *C. difficile*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-mssa-and-e-coli-bacteraemia-and-c-difficile-infection-annual-epidemiological-commentary>

Annual data for independent sector healthcare organisations

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-mssa-and-e-coli-bacteraemia-and-clostridium-difficile-infection-annual-data-for-independent-sector-healthcare-organisations>

Six monthly commentary for Independent Sector MRSA, MSSA, *E. coli* bacteraemia and *C. difficile*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-mssa-and-e-coli-bacteraemia-and-clostridium-difficile-infection-6-monthly-data-for-independent-sector-healthcare-organisations>

DCS User Guides

User guides for the DCS can be found at:

<https://hcaidcs.phe.org.uk/WebPages/InternalContentPage.aspx?gjd2ZhVtrnMIb222Qn7yv+1xgGCdd9b>

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