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News

***Candida auris* in England: an update**

Public Health England is continuing to monitor circulation of an emerging fungal pathogen, *Candida auris*, sporadic cases of which have been identified across the country, since August 2013, by the PHE Reference Mycology Laboratory.

A critical care unit in England has been managing an outbreak of *C. auris* since April 2015 [1] with 50 patients either colonised or infected to date, of which there have been nine candidaemias in eight patients. The hospital outbreak has been difficult to control, despite enhanced infection control interventions, including regular patient screening, environmental decontamination and ward closure. In addition, 12 patients have had *C. auris* detected since August 2013 in six further English NHS Trusts, five of whom had a bloodstream infection. Four additional patients have had *C. auris* detected through private laboratories in England.

C. auris isolates can be misidentified by commercial testing kits and equipment – most commonly as *Candida haemulonii*, *Rhodotorula glutinis* or *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* – so further work is advised if those species are identified, to ensure that they are not *C. auris*.

It is important that any *Candida* spp. isolates associated with invasive infections and isolates from superficial sites in patients from high intensity settings and those transferred from an affected hospital (UK or abroad) should be analysed to species level.

As knowledge on the epidemiology and prevalence in the UK is as yet limited, PHE is currently not in a position to make specific recommendations with regards to screening policy. However, *C. auris* screening could be considered for patients at risk for candidosis.

Many local microbiology services will not have the facilities to test at this level and will have to refer onwards to their PHE Network Laboratory or to the PHE [Mycology Reference Laboratory](#).

Further recommendations and guidance are available on the PHE website [2].

A review of the current state of knowledge on *Candida auris*, for public health microbiologists, was included in the July issue of the UK NEQAS Microbiology Newsletter [3].

References

1. *Candida auris* identified in England, *HPR* 10(21), 1 July 2016.
 2. PHE (27 June 2016). [Guidance for the laboratory investigation, management and infection prevention and control for cases of *Candida auris*](#).
 3. UK NEQAS Microbiology Newsletter (July 2016). [Candida auris: an emerging fungal threat](#).
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