

Date: November 4, 2009
To: Alberta Health & Wellness, Infection Prevention and Control (Brenda Hannah), Laboratory Managers and Directors, Medical Officers of Health, MicroNet Members
From: ProvLab
Re: Temporary Suspension of Clinical MRSA Surveillance PFGE

Key Messages:

In order to meet the workload requirements for extremely high volume testing associated with the current Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 outbreak, it is necessary to **temporarily suspend routine surveillance testing (PFGE) for 1st clinical MRSA isolates.**

This decision is consistent with the AHS Pandemic Response Plan that defines prioritization of laboratory services, and has been approved by AHS Infection Prevention and Control Working Group.

ProvLab will continue to provide PFGE for Outbreak Management in response to requests initiated through regional Public Health officials. **If MRSA outbreak investigation support is required, please contact the MOC/VOC at either site and initiate the request using the ProvLab "EI" process for outbreak investigation.**

We also apologize for MRSA PFGE testing delays that have occurred since mid-September. On-going staffing shortages have compromised our ability to provide timely service for MRSA PFGE.

Laboratory Action Required:

In order to reduce workload both for submitting laboratories and ProvLab, we request that **submission of MRSA isolates be suspended** until we are able to reimplement this service.

To Contact the Microbiologist on call:

Edmonton Site: 780-407-8822 (UAH Switchboard) or
780-407-7121 (Laboratory - ask for the Microbiologist on call)

Calgary Site: 403-944-1200 (ask for Microbiologist on call)