



# News Release

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*New Mexico Department of Health*

*Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology-New Mexico*

*Infectious Diseases Society of New Mexico*

*New Mexico Medical Society*

*New Mexico Hospital Association*

  
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## **New Mexico MRSA Collaborative Celebrates the Conclusion of Year-long Efforts**

Albuquerque, NM – A total of 13 hospitals and three New Mexico Department of Health facilities joined the New Mexico Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA) Collaborative last year to work toward reducing MRSA infections acquired or transmitted while in a health care facility. On July 17, collaborative representatives and others met in Albuquerque for “A Bridge to the Future Outcomes Congress” to share results and learn about future efforts.

The event recognized collaborative participants and featured sharing sessions, a true story from a survivor of a hospital-acquired infection who then became an advocate for change, and sessions covering work to be continued in this important area.

The following facilities participated in the New Mexico MRSA Collaborative:

- Cibola General Hospital
- Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center
- HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital
- Lovelace Westside Hospital
- Lovelace Women's Hospital
- Memorial Medical Center
- Miners Colfax Medical Center
- New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute
- New Mexico Rehabilitation Center
- Presbyterian Hospital
- Roosevelt General Hospital
- San Juan Regional Medical Center
- CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center
- Turquoise Lodge
- University of New Mexico (UNM) Hospital
- Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center

National data show that 3 percent of all non-institutionalized adults over 60 are carrying MRSA. Within New Mexico’s health care community, 50 percent to 70 percent of all *Staphylococcus aureus* isolates submitted to area labs are methicillin resistant. The overall goal of the collaborative was to decrease the rate of health care-associated MRSA bloodstream infections per 1,000 patient days by 40 percent in the participating facilities over 12 months

The collaborative met its goal by realizing a 48 percent reduction in the rate of hospital onset MRSA blood stream infections over the 12 month period compared to the baseline. In essence, about 17 MRSA cases were avoided as a result of the efforts made by collaborative participants. Most valuable were the process improvements that were made to sustain the gains made through this collaborative.

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Additional information is available at [www.nmmra.org/nmmrsa/index.php](http://www.nmmra.org/nmmrsa/index.php)

Participants reported that they:

- Implemented active surveillance testing
- Put into place appropriate MRSA control measures for positive MRSA patients
- Began mechanisms to identify previously infected patients upon admission
- Developed materials for patient and family education

Susan M. Kellie, MD, MPH, associate professor of medicine for the Division of Infectious Diseases at the UNM School of Medicine, is the principal investigator and the collaborative lead for this project. Dr. Kellie says that the collaborative succeeded in testing system changes aimed at effective surveillance for MRSA infection and transmission and in implementing MRSA control methods. “The collaborative participants are to be commended for working toward building a better, safer health care system,” says Dr. Kellie.

To accomplish this, the collaborative:

- Established a baseline rate of MRSA bloodstream infections in participating facilities
- Implemented and measured the “MRSA bundle” and assessed barriers to implementation
- Helped to create community standards regarding infection control practice and communication regarding patients with MRSA and fostered outreach to referring facilities
- Created and shared educational materials for patients and community providers about MRSA and appropriate follow-up care for patients identified as colonized or infected with MRSA in the course of inpatient screening programs

The New Mexico MRSA Collaborative was guided by New Mexico VA Health Care System and UNM Hospital advisors along with an expert steering committee of representatives from the New Mexico Medical Review Association, the New Mexico Hospital Association, NMDOH, APIC-NM the Infectious Diseases Society of New Mexico, and the New Mexico Medical Society. It was formed in July 2008 to provide education, consultation and opportunities for New Mexico hospitals to address the growing concerns of the public and the health care community regarding the threat of MRSA.