Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Example Verbal Scripts to Request Assent for Multidrug-Resistant Organism (MDRO) Screening

Instructions to Health Departments and Healthcare Facilities:
The following FAQs and scripts are resources for health departments and healthcare facilities performing patient screening for multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs). Two versions are provided: one for enteric colonizers such as carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE), carbapenem-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii* (CRAB) or carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA), and one for skin flora such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. Content is provided in an editable format so it can be tailored for different settings and scenarios.

Health departments that have questions about MDRO screening should email the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion (DHQP) healthcare-associated infection outbreak mailbox: HAIoutbreak@cdc.gov

Frequently Asked Questions about Screening Tests for Rare Antibiotic-Resistant Germs that Colonize the Gut, such as Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE)

Your [*insert healthcare facility e.g., hospital or nursing home*] has identified a person with a type of bacteria (a kind of germ) that is resistant to important antibiotics drugs that are used to treat infections. When bacteria are resistant to an antibiotic, it means that the drug will not work to treat infections caused by those bacteria.

Why have I been contacted?
To make sure this type of resistant bacteria does not spread further, the healthcare facility or health department is contacting people who might have had contact with this bacteria. They are requesting that these people get a screening test to make sure they are not also carrying the bacteria.

Why is it important for me to be tested for this bacteria?
It is important for you to be tested for this germ so that the healthcare facility and health department can prevent it from spreading. Preventing the spread of these bacteria is very important so that these resistant bacteria don't become common in your community.

What happens if these bacteria are found in or on me?
The results of the test will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. The results will be shared with you and your healthcare providers and might be shared with the health department.

The risk to you from this germ is low. Most people carry these bacteria and never get sick from them. If you receive medical care, your healthcare providers may take extra steps to protect you and make sure they do not spread the bacteria to other patients.

How can I be tested for this germ?
People carry this kind of germ in their gut or stool, so the best way to test for these bacteria is to swab your rectum. If you agree to be tested, a healthcare provider will gently insert just the tip of a soft swab that looks like a Q-tip into your rectum, gently rotate it, and then remove the swab. The procedure is not painful and there should be no side effects. The swab will be sent to a lab and, within a few days, the lab will report the result to your healthcare provider.

Do I have a choice to be tested?
Yes, providing a swab is voluntary. You can choose to decline testing. However, if you decline testing and you receive medical care, your healthcare providers might take extra precautions, such as wearing a gown and gloves when caring for you, since they will not know if you have this germ.

If my test is positive, what will I need to do?
The risk of spreading this germ to your family and friends is very low, but family and visitors should wash their hands well after caring for you or visiting you to decrease the chance of getting the germ. You should also wash your hands frequently, especially after using the bathroom and before eating or preparing food.

If you receive medical care at a healthcare facility such as a hospital or nursing home, be sure to let your healthcare providers know about the results so that they can take steps to prevent spreading the germ to others.

If my test is positive, will I need treatment?

If the test is positive, it means you are carrying the germs in your gut. Since they are not making you sick (causing infection), you will not need antibiotics. Many people stop carrying these bacteria over time, but this depends on many factors. Taking antibiotics can increase the time these germs are carried in your gut. So antibiotics should always be taken exactly as prescribed by your doctor.

Example verbal consent for collection of rectal swab to assess colonization with enteric bacteria

[Note: in certain situations for certain organisms such as carbapenem-resistant Acinetobacter baumannii (CRAB) additional anatomic sites may be screened.]

Hi, my name is [*insert name*] and I work for [*insert organization*]. I'm here to talk to you about some screening the [*insert healthcare facility e.g., hospital or nursing home*] is doing to check for a rare germ. Recently, we identified this germ that is rare in the U.S. in a patient who was cared for at this facility. The germ is called carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, or "CRE" [or carbapenem-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii* or "CRAB"; or carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* "CRPA"] for short.

We are screening patients for this germ because some people can carry this germ in the gut without knowing it and they can spread the germ to others without knowing it.

The chance that you carry this germ is very low, and fortunately, most people who do carry it never get sick from it. But to make sure this germ has not spread, the health department would like us to screen patients to make sure they don't have it.

If you agree to be screened, the process is very simple and takes just a few seconds. We would need to swab inside your rectum. To do that, we would gently insert just the tip of a soft swab, which looks like a Q-tip, into your rectum, gently rotate it, and then remove it. The process is not painful and there shouldn't be any side effects.

The swab will be sent to a lab to test for the bacteria, which will take a few days. If they find the germ, someone will contact you to discuss what to do. The results of the test will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Providing a swab is completely voluntary and you can choose not to.

Do you have any questions? [*pause for questions*]

Is it OK if we collect the swab?

Frequently Asked Questions about Screening Tests for Antibiotic Resistant Germs that Colonize the Skin, such as vancomycin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (VRSA)

Your [*insert healthcare facility e.g., hospital or nursing home*] has identified a person with a type of bacteria (a kind of germ) that is resistant to important antibiotic drugs that are used to treat infections. When bacteria are resistant to an antibiotic, it means that the antibiotic will not work to treat infections caused by those bacteria.

Why have I been contacted?
To make sure this type of resistant bacteria does not spread further, the healthcare facility or health department is contacting people who might have had contact with this bacteria. They are requesting that these people get a screening test to make sure they are not also carrying the bacteria.

Why is it important to be tested for this bacteria?
It is important for you to be tested for this germ so that the healthcare facility and health department can prevent it from spreading. Preventing the spread of these bacteria is very important so that these resistant bacteria don't become common in your community.

What happens if these bacteria are found in or on me?
The results of the test will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. The results will be shared with you and your healthcare providers and might be shared with the health department.

The risk to you from this germ is low. Most people carry these bacteria and never get sick from them. If you receive medical care, your healthcare providers may take extra steps to protect you and make sure they do not spread the bacteria to other patients.

How can I be tested for this germ?
People carry this kind of germ in their nose and on their skin, so the best way to test for these bacteria is to swab inside your nose [*for VRSA*: and swab your armpits and groin]. If you agree to be tested, a healthcare provider will gently rub the inside of both nostrils with a soft swab that looks like a Q-tip. [*for VRSA*: The healthcare provider will use a separate swab to gently rub your armpits and the area where your leg joins your body (groin).] If you prefer, we can give you the swab(s) for you to do this yourself. The procedure is not painful and there should be no side effects. The swab(s) will be sent to a lab, and within a few days, the lab will report the results to your healthcare provider.

Do I have a choice to be tested?
Yes, providing these swabs is voluntary. You can choose to decline testing. However, if you decline testing and you receive medical care, your healthcare providers might take extra precautions, such as wearing a gown and gloves when caring for you, since they will not know if you have this germ.

If my test is positive, what do I need to do?
The risk of spreading this germ to your family and friends is very low, but family and visitors should wash their hands well after caring for you or visiting you to decrease the chance of getting the germ. You should also wash your hands frequently, especially after using the bathroom and before eating or preparing food.

If you receive medical care at a healthcare facility such as a hospital or nursing home, be sure to let your healthcare providers know about the results so that they can take steps to prevent spreading the germ to others.

If my test is positive, will I need treatment?

If the test is positive, it means you are carrying the germs in your nose and skin. Since they are not making you sick (causing infection), you will not need to take antibiotics by mouth. In some cases, your healthcare provider might recommend trying to get rid of these bacteria by using a special ointment in your nose and washing with a special soap; however, this regimen is not always completely successful. Even without this treatment, over time many people will stop carrying the bacteria, but this depends on many factors.

Your healthcare providers may recommend you get an additional test at a later time to see if the germ is gone. However, a follow-up test will not be recommended for everyone.

Example verbal consent for collection of swabs to assess colonization with skin flora

Hello, my name is [*insert name*] and I work for [*insert organization*]. I'm here to talk to you about some screening the hospital is doing to check for a rare germ. Recently, the hospital found a few patients who are carrying a germ that is rare in the U.S. The germ is a bacteria called vancomycin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* or "VRSA" for short.

We are screening patients for this germ because some people can carry this bacteria and not know it and they can spread the germ to others without knowing it.

The risk of acquiring this germ is very low. [*for VRSA: So far, it has never spread to any of the contacts of the other people who have had it.]* However, the health department would like to be sure that this germ has not spread in this instance as well. To make sure this germ does not spread, we are working with the health department to screen patients to make sure that they are not carrying it.

If you agree to be screened, the process is simple. We would need to collect two swabs. First, we would put a soft swab, like a Q-tip, inside your nose and gently rub the inside of both nostrils with a soft swab that looks like a Q-tip. We would also collect a second swab of your armpits and groin, the area where your leg joins your body.

The procedure is not painful and does not have side effects. The swabs will be sent to a lab to check for the germ. If it is present, someone will contact you to discuss what to do next. The test results will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Agreeing to these swabs is completely voluntary and you can choose not to be tested. You can also choose to do just one of the swabs if you prefer although, one swab is not as good at finding the bacteria compared with two swabs.

Do you have any questions? [*pause for questions*]

Is it OK if we collect the swabs?