

December 19, 2022

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear CDC:

I am writing in regard to a multistate outbreak of verona integron metallo- $\beta$ -lactamase (VIM)-producing carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (VIM-CRPA). From May 1, 2022-December 15, 2022, 48 confirmed isolates from 41 patients in 10 different states have been identified. All isolates were ST1203 with VIM-80 and GES-9 carbapenemase genes (a combination not previously seen in the U.S.), and closely related based on whole genome sequencing analysis. Case-patients have been identified in a variety of healthcare settings including 4 facility clusters (1 eye clinic, 3 LTACHs) and there are no known epidemiological links between patients from different states. There is concern these cases might be linked to a contaminated medical product and as such this ongoing outbreak represents an urgent threat to public health. Thus, the investigation of this outbreak will necessitate a coordinated multi-state and jurisdictional investigation, as well as specialized assistance and resources to adequately respond. The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) strongly supports a centrally coordinated multistate and jurisdictional investigation of VIM-CRPA and recommends multistate technical assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A multistate coordinated investigation of VIM-CRPA will assist each state/local/territory jurisdiction in making rapid, practical decisions for actions to prevent and control the public health problem including support for obtaining and sharing lists of products received by case-patients which could be serving as the source. This approach will streamline and strengthen the response, as opposed to multiple state and jurisdictional investigations independently addressing VIM-CRPA monitoring and risk assessment.

Each jurisdiction participating in the multi-jurisdictional response would retain ownership of and is responsible for all data collected within their state.

Sincerely,



Janet Hamilton, MPH  
Executive Director  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists