

Multidrug-Resistant Organism Flags in the Health Coordination Network (HCN)

Background

Multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs) are on the rise in Virginia. To promote better communication between healthcare facilities about MDRO diagnoses, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) partnered with Virginia Health Information (VHI) and PointClickCare® to create MDRO Flags through the Health Coordination Network (HCN), formally the Emergency Department Care Coordination (EDCC). This free program leverages existing technology to fill gaps in information transfer by providing alerts in electronic health records of Virginia residents who have a confirmed MDRO case (infection or colonization). Flags are currently available for:

- [Candida auris](#) (*C. auris*): a multidrug-resistant yeast that is highly transmissible in healthcare settings and often difficult to treat once identified.
- [Carbapenemase-producing organism](#) (CPO): This can include Enterobacteriales as well as other bacteria that carry the carbapenemase gene(s). Organisms that carry carbapenemases contain resistance for a variety of antibiotics.

About the Flags

VDH uses case definitions set by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists and specified by the CDC's [National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System](#) to electronically confirm the cases. After the cases are confirmed, data is securely sent to PointClickCare. Patients who meet the criteria are entered into the HCN so enrolled healthcare providers can see the MDRO information. The MDRO flags do not expire and remain active for the duration of the patient's/resident's life.

How do these flags work?

Facilities enrolled in the HCN **must have MDRO Flags enabled**. After enabling, staff will be able to view MDRO Flags. In some systems, users will see a flag in the electronic medical record when a patient/resident arrives with a history of *C. auris* or CPO colonization or infection (clinical case). Otherwise, facilities will be able to view the flag in a separate website. An example of this type of flag is pictured below (Figure 1).

In addition to receiving the flags online, staff can also be alerted upon admission in text or email, when an MDRO patient is admitted. (Figure 2)

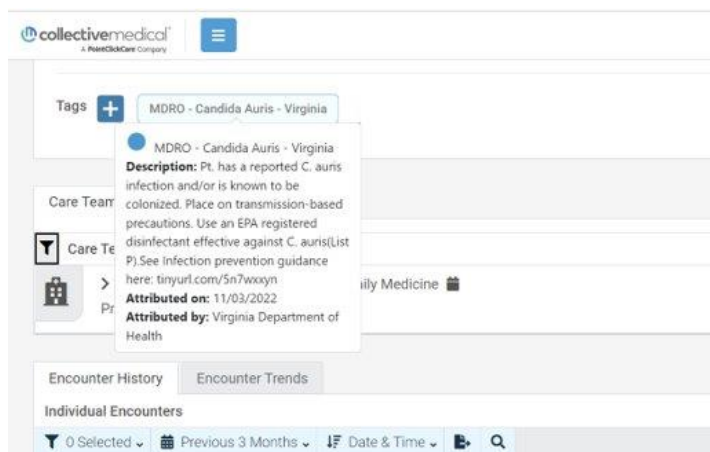


Figure 1: Example of a *C. auris* patient/resident medical record with MDRO Flags enabled. Hover over the tag at the top of the page to view tag description text.

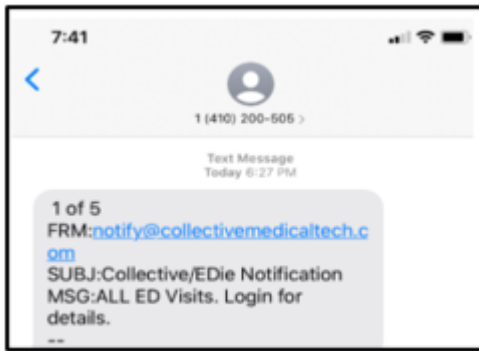


Figure 2: Example of a text message for an MDRO patient/resident medical record with MDRO Flags enabled.

Why are the MDRO Flags important?

Timely communication of MDRO status is vital to reduce MDRO transmission. The goals of HCN MDRO Flags are to:

- Ensure patients/residents are promptly placed on appropriate [Transmission-Based Precautions](#) or [Enhanced Barrier Precautions](#) (in nursing homes only).
- Help inform the optimal antimicrobial regimen (if deemed necessary by the care team).

In addition to using these Flags, healthcare facilities should **ensure the patient/resident's MDRO status and required infection prevention precautions are communicated at transfer** within the facility, to another facility, and to emergency medical services providers transporting the patient/resident. Read the [Multidrug-Resistant Organism \(MDRO\) Communication Guide for Hospitals and Long-Term Care Facilities](#) for more information.

How do I make sure my facility is receiving these Flags?

- To enroll in the HCN, turn on MDRO Flags, or ensure staff are receiving flags-upon-admission contact: HCNsupport@vhi.org