

Attachment 1: Definition of Terms

- **Carrier:** An individual who has been found to be colonized (culture growing MRSA) at one or more body sites but who has no signs or symptoms of infection.
- **Cohort:** A cohort consists of two or more residents sharing the same room in a facility and/or physically separated from other residents by their location.
- **Cohort staffing:** The practice of assigning specified personnel to care only for residents known to be colonized or infected with MRSA. Such personnel should not participate in the care of residents whose cultures do not grow (or who have not had cultures obtained for) MRSA.
- **Contact isolation:** A method of isolation recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that requires barrier precautions such as gloves and gowns for direct contact with substances and residents known to contain MRSA or another pathogen. This method includes handwashing after removal of barrier precautions.
- **Decolonization:** Topical and/or systemic antibiotic treatment administered for the purpose of eliminating MRSA carriage in an individual.
- **Endemic:** A baseline rate or an ongoing frequency at which MRSA infection or colonization occurs in a facility.
- **Incidence:** The number of cases of MRSA colonization or infection identified in a specific population during a given time period.
- **Infection:** The condition of a resident when MRSA has entered a body site, is multiplying in tissue, is causing the clinical manifestations of disease, such as fever, suppurative wound, or pneumonia, and is documented by positive cultures, such as from blood, sputum, wound, or urine cultures.
- **Outbreak:** An increase in the incidence of MRSA cases in the facility above the baseline level, or a clustering of new MRSA cases that are epidemiologically linked. For the purposes of this guideline, an outbreak consists of either: 1) an increase in the average monthly incidence of MRSA of 25% above the baseline, or 2) three or more new MRSA cases within a two month period on any ward or unit.
- **Standard Precautions:** A system of precautions to be applied to all residents, regardless of the known or perceived diagnosis. These precautions synthesize the elements of universal blood and body fluid precautions and body substance isolation. They are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms from both recognized and unrecognized sources of infections in facilities. See Attachment 3 for the elements of these precaution