



Infection Control Nurses Association  
[www.icna.co.uk](http://www.icna.co.uk)

6<sup>th</sup> March 2005

## Press Release

### MRSA Figures to be released on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2005

The ICNA is aware of the continuing strenuous efforts that all its members have been making to reduce levels of MRSA and other Healthcare Associated Infections (HCAI). It is anticipated that their commitment and hard work within hospitals in England, together with local and national initiatives will lead to a reduction in MRSA rates to be announced by John Reid on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March.

However, any improvement must be viewed with caution as we do not as yet have full figures that include the autumn and winter, a period when MRSA levels can increase due to the seasonal rise in hospital admissions and disease patterns.

Any reduction in MRSA in our hospitals must be welcomed, but there is no room for complacency as the threat of MRSA and other resistance bacteria spreading outside of hospitals into the wider community is very real and there are already reports of this happening.

MRSA dominates news headlines to the exclusion of other HCAI such as *Clostridium difficile*, Norovirus and other highly resistant Gram negative bacteria which are already prevalent in the healthcare system and are of equal concern to healthcare professionals.

Antibiotic resistant bacteria, including but not exclusively MRSA, pose one of the greatest threats to our healthcare system as we currently know it and may result in us entering a post antibiotic age where common infections can no longer be easily treated. To prevent this happening we must urgently divert resources to help fight this battle which goes beyond the current vogue of concentrating on aesthetically clean environments, although this remains a key goal.

Until there is a comprehensive and timely system for gathering surveillance information on ALL infections, which can then be used to focus the limited infection control resources available we will remain at the mercy of these tiny but potentially deadly enemies.

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### Notes to Editors

- The Infection Control Nurses Association (ICNA) is a professional body that represents the interests of over 1500 Infection Control Professionals, staff and patients across the UK and Republic of Ireland. Further information about the ICNA is available on their website

[www.icna.co.uk](http://www.icna.co.uk)