

O495

Abstract (oral session)

**Bacteraemia due to methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* at a 15-year low in England**

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**Objective:** Comparison of current bacteraemia rates due to methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in England, with the trends over time. **Method:** Data on MRSA bacteraemia in England from 1990-2010 was obtained from the Health Protection Agency's voluntary (LabBase2) surveillance system. This was compared to data from the HPA managed, Mandatory MRSA surveillance for 2002 to 2010. Population statistics were obtained from the Office for National Statistics, all MRSA rates are expressed as cases per 100,000 population. **Results:** In 2010 the mandatory MRSA bacteraemia surveillance recorded 1630 MRSA bacteraemia cases in England, giving a rate of 3.12 cases per 100,000 population with MRSA accounting for 15% of all *S. aureus* bacteraemias. This is in contrast to the situation merely four year previously, where the same surveillance programme reported 6771 MRSA cases giving a rate over four fold higher than in 2010, at 13.33 cases per 100,000 population and 38% of *S. aureus* bacteraemias being MRSA. This represents a c. 76% reduction in MRSA in four years. The low 2010 MRSA rate coincided with 16 (9.5%) NHS Trusts recording no Trust apportioned MRSA bacteraemia cases i.e. cases discovered on or after the third day post hospital admission. The mandatory surveillance was launched in the latter part of 2001, when MRSA bacteraemia in England had reached a peak of c. 7300 cases (c. 40% of all *S. aureus* bacteraemias), thus using this dataset alone it can not be estimated when MRSA rates were last as low as they are currently. Voluntary surveillance, can provide data pre 2002, however, as a voluntary scheme, LabBase2 risk under-ascertainment, thus, MRSA rates calculated from the former are lower than those from the latter (Figure 1). For example, LabBase2 2010 surveillance captured 1203 MRSA cases compared to 1603 from the mandatory giving MRSA rates of 2.3 and 3.1 respectively. Considering the data from LabBase2 on its own the 2.3 2010 MRSA rate is the lowest rate since 1995 where the MRSA rate was 1.6 with 14% of all *S. aureus* bacteraemia being due to MRSA. If the 2010 mandatory rate is compared with those from LabBase2 then it is the lowest rate since 1996 where the rate calculated from LabBase2 was 3.03, however this will be an underestimate. **Conclusion:** Rates of bacteraemia due to MRSA in England have dropped at an unprecedented degree in recent years with the rate in 2010 of 3.1 per 100,000 population being the lowest rate, almost certainly, since 1995.

Figure 1. Rates of Bacteraemia Due to MRSA Calculated from English Mandatory and Voluntary Surveillance Data

