Prevalence and Susceptibility of MRSA from Blood in the UK and Ireland in 2008

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BACKGROUND
The BSAC Bacteraemia Resistance Surveillance Programme has tracked resistance in organisms causing bacteraemia in the UK and Ireland since 2001.

METHODS
- 25 centres each year contribute 20 S. aureus isolates from blood (previously 10, 2001-2007).
- MICs (mg/L) are determined centrally by the Health Protection Agency (HPA).
- Results are compared with those from other national surveillance schemes (see references): - mandatory reporting covers England only; - HPA voluntary reporting covers England, Wales and N. Ireland with local testing and >70% ascertainment.

RESULTS
- MRSA bacteraemias fell in number and as a proportion of all S. aureus bacteraemias from 2006 to 2008.
- The proportion of MRSA isolated after >48 hours in hospital or with erythromycin resistance also fell slightly, but remained high.
- Anti-MRSA agents remained highly active.

CONCLUSIONS
- MRSA (but not MSSA) prevalence has fallen substantially in the UK and Ireland since 2006.
- The reduction has been greater among MRSA isolated after >48 hours in hospital.
- UK MRSA are still mostly resistant to quinolones and macrolides.
- Established and developmental anti-MRSA agents retain good activity.

References:
Quarterly reporting of MRSA Bacteraemia April 2001 to March 2006; and April 2006 to June 2009.
Voluntary reporting of Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland January - December 2007; and (2008 data) personal communication, A. Johnson, HPA.

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