

**LAB ALERT****Date: July 15, 2014****To:** Regional Pathology Services Clientele**From:** Regional Pathology Client Services**RE: Changes in antibiotic susceptibility and cryptococcal antigen testing**

Dear Regional Pathology Clients,

Effective July 1, 2014, the Clinical Microbiology Laboratory will introduce a new antibiotic susceptibility panel. This change is precipitated by new Clinical Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) interpretive guidelines for expanded-spectrum cephalosporins, aztreonam and carbapenems pertaining to the *Enterobacteriaceae* (Table 1).

Due to this change, we will no longer test isolates from urinary tract infections for susceptibility to nitrofurantoin. **However, testing will be offered upon clinician request.** Currently, 97% of *Escherichia coli* isolates from TNMC are susceptible to nitrofurantoin (2013 antibiogram data). In addition, we will no longer test for susceptibility to cefotaxime. However, ceftriaxone susceptibility results can be used to predict susceptibility to cefotaxime within the *Enterobacteriaceae*. Lastly, in some *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* isolates, the ceftazidime minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) will be interpreted as non-susceptible indicating that the isolate is either intermediate or resistant.

Table 1: New CLSI MIC interpretive standards for expanded-spectrum cephalosporins, aztreonam and carbapenems for *Enterobacteriaceae*.

Antibiotic	New MIC CLSI interpretive guidelines (µg/mL)
Meropenem	≤ 1 Susceptible, 2 Intermediate, ≥ 4 Resistant
Ertapenem	≤ 0.5 Susceptible, 1 Intermediate, ≥ 2 Resistant
Ceftazidime	≤ 4 Susceptible, 8 Intermediate, ≥ 16 Resistant
Ceftriaxone	≤ 1 Susceptible, 2 Intermediate, ≥ 4 Resistant
Cefotaxime	≤ 1 Susceptible, 2 Intermediate, ≥ 4 Resistant
Aztreonam	≤ 4 Susceptible, 8 Intermediate, ≥ 16 Resistant



2. Due to changes in regulatory requirements, all orders for Cryptococcal antigen, cerebrospinal fluid will include a reflex order for CSF culture. Once *Cryptococcus neoformans* complex has been detected, no additional CSF cultures will be reflexed unless requested.

Questions or comments regarding these changes may be directed to Paul D. Fey, Ph.D. D(ABMM), Medical Director, at (402) 559-2122, Amy Crismon, Microbiology Manager, at (402) 552-3313, or by calling the Clinical Microbiology Laboratory at (402) 552-2090.

Please call Regional Pathology Services with any questions or concerns regarding this lab alert at 402.559.6420 or Toll free at 1-800-334-0459.