



HHealth **P**rotection

CPE Factsheet

Enterobacteriaceae are bacteria that usually live harmlessly in the gut of humans. However, if the bacteria get into the wrong place, such as the bladder or bloodstream they can cause infection.

Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae (sometimes abbreviated to CPE) are a type of bacteria which has become resistant to carbapenems, a group of powerful antibiotics. This means the bacteria can cause infections that are resistant to carbapenem antibiotics and many other antibiotics. Doctors rely on carbapenem antibiotics to successfully treat certain complicated infections when other antibiotics have failed.

Individuals who have these bacteria living in their gut can contaminate their hands when they go to the lavatory. Because of this, there is a risk that the bacteria can contaminate and survive in the environment and potentially spread to other people, particularly when standards of hand hygiene and environmental cleanliness are poor. The bacteria can also be passed on by the hands of carers to others through touch.

Most people will be unaware that they are a carrier and, in general, the chance of developing an infection from the bacteria is low. However, immunocompromised individuals and those receiving complex care in the community with frequent hospital admissions, will be more vulnerable. These individuals are at greater risk of colonisation and of suffering more serious consequences should they develop an infection. Colonised individuals with devices *in situ* may be at greater risk of developing an infection.

Where an individual has an infection:

When an individual is infected with carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae they should be placed in a single room with en-suite facilities. If an en-suite room is not available, the individual should be placed in a single room with a designated commode with easy access to hand washing facilities.

In any care setting, full attention should be given to preventing spread. A discharging wound should be secured with an impermeable dressing and any environmental contamination, from the wound or other body fluids, cleaned immediately according to your IP&C policy.

Assistance with a risk assessment (including consideration of the impact on the individual's social and psychological wellbeing) should be sought from your usual IP&C advisor or local PHE centre.

MAKE USE OF PHE'S TOOLKIT FOR MANAGING CPE IN A NON-ACUTE SETTING!

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