

CAUTION

INFECTION CONTROL AND THE CF COMMUNITY:

A Message of Concern

Some adults and children with cystic fibrosis who acquire *Burkholderia cepacia* complex suffer very serious health consequences. Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) also has emerged as a potentially more serious cause of morbidity among individuals with CF, especially infants and young children. Furthermore, strong evidence exists indicating that both MRSA and some strains of *B. cepacia* complex can be transmitted from one individual to another. Although it is not possible to eliminate the risk that persons with CF may acquire *B. cepacia* complex or MRSA, the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation (CCFF) is seeking to reduce this risk as much as possible. It is therefore with great regret, that the CCFF has adopted the policy outlined below, concerning the participation of persons colonized with *B. cepacia* complex and/or MRSA in meetings and events organized by your Foundation, and by its associations, chapters, partners and supporters. This policy was adopted after considerable discussion and review of all available scientific data and the policies of other jurisdictions and countries. Please note that testing for *B. cepacia* complex or MRSA is NOT undertaken by the CCFF.

We want to say clearly to adults and children colonized by *B. cepacia* complex or MRSA that you are valued members of your Foundation and of the CF community at large. To the extent your capacity to contribute is constrained, the whole CF effort in Canada is diminished. Your Foundation is committed to exploring all possible means of permitting your continued participation – short of personal attendance – in Foundation, association and chapter affairs.

CCFF'S INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

It is the policy of the CCFF that persons who know they have tested positive* in the last 12 months for *B. cepacia* complex and/or Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) **shall not attend or shall not be permitted to attend**, in person, CCFF meetings and events where persons with CF may be in attendance. Persons with CF should be aware that some individuals may be in attendance at a meeting or event without knowing that they have *B. cepacia* complex, MRSA or other potentially harmful bacteria. These bacteria can be passed from one person to another. Some individuals with CF can experience a serious decline in health if they become colonized with *B. cepacia* complex. It is believed that persons with CF face a relatively low risk of acquiring *B. cepacia* complex or MRSA by attending a meeting or meetings at which other individuals with CF are present. However, persons with CF are strongly cautioned to avoid prolonged, close physical contact with each other. Anyone with CF who attends a meeting does so at his or her own risk, and the CCFF accepts no responsibility for any risk to health involved in attendance, or in any social contact between persons with CF. Please contact your CF clinic director or the Foundation's office for further information.



*The Medical/Scientific Advisory Committee clarified that, for those who have tested positive for *B. cepacia* complex or MRSA in the past, it would be necessary that the four most recent, successive sputum cultures – taken at three-month intervals – not culture positive, in order for an individual to be considered “no longer positive” for *B. cepacia* complex or MRSA.