



## Memorandum Micro #215

To: UNCCMC and Hillsborough Attending and Faculty Practice Physicians, Housestaff, Clinical Nurse Coordinators, Department Heads, and Supervisors

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**Subject: New PCR test for Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) screening**

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Effective November 14, 2022, the UNC Medical Center Clinical Microbiology Laboratory will transition from a culture-based method of screening for MRSA (MRSA Screen EPIC: LAB234) to a PCR-based method using the FDA-cleared Cepheid Xpert MRSA NxG test for patients >2 years old. The specimen type will remain a nares swab collected using an Eswab (Lawson #s 054897 and 143675 both acceptable). Patients  $\leq$  2 years will continued to be screened using the culture-based test due the risk of false positive PCR tests in this population. The new MRSA PCR test will provide a more rapid turn-around time for MRSA screening results. This test is best used to help determine a patient's colonization status but is NOT for routine epidemiologic surveillance.

Questions can be directed to the Microbiology Lab 984-974-1805 or Dr. Kevin Alby at [kevin.alby@unchealth.unc.edu](mailto:kevin.alby@unchealth.unc.edu).