As part of the Center for Patient Safety's Patient Safety Organization (PSO), several events have demonstrated poor handoff communication about patients' infectious disease status. Examples include:

- Patient with suspected TB transferred to floor without making staff aware.
- Patient transferred to ICU from the ED without sharing information that patient was positive for MRSA.
- Patient directly admitted without informing receiving personnel that swab testing for influenza had come back positive.

To mitigate this risk, actionable items include:

- Standardizing communication during handoffs.
- Including in standardized handoffs a summary of patients' infectious disease status, including need for precautions.
- Identifying any outstanding testing during handoff.

Culture Can Improve the Control of Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms

Effective handoffs and clear communication among staff members within and between units are important components of a strong safety culture. In addition to investigating the clinical components of these events, the organizations should examine any culture factors that impede full and appropriate communication at handoffs.

Resources:

- Improving Patient Handoff
- Handoff and Communication tools
- Preventing MDRO Infections (Comprehensive Clinical and Culture Steps for Improvement)