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MDHHS announces Select Specialty Hospital – Northwest Detroit voluntarily pausing admissions to address *Candida auris* risk

LANSING, Mich. – Today, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) announced Select Specialty Hospital – Northwest Detroit, located at 6071 Outer Drive W in Detroit, is voluntarily pausing patient admissions as they work with MDHHS and the Detroit Health Department to end a *Candida auris* outbreak.

Select Specialty Hospital - Northwest Detroit is a 36-bed critical illness recovery hospital. This is a separately licensed hospital located on the seventh floor of Sinai-Grace Hospital with a separate and distinct patient care area. The admissions pause only pertains to Select Specialty Hospital – Northwest Detroit based on an outbreak of *Candida auris* with documented spread within the facility. In general, an outbreak is defined as three or more epidemiologically linked cases.

C. auris is a drug-resistant germ that can spread in health care facilities through contact with affected patients and contaminated surfaces or equipment. *C. auris* is a yeast that can cause serious infections and even death, particularly in hospital and nursing home patients with serious medical problems. Antifungal medicines that are commonly used to treat Candida infections often don't work for *Candida auris*.

"The department has been working very closely with Select Specialty Hospital – Northwest Detroit to assure all appropriate steps are being taken in a timely manner to protect the health, safety and welfare of patients within the health facility," said MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel. "We appreciate the cooperation of the facility in voluntarily pausing admissions as we work together to address these potentially dangerous infections and protect vulnerable Michigan residents."

"The Detroit Health Department is working with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and Detroit area hospitals to prevent the spread of *C. auris*, which poses a health risk to hospital patients with weakened immune systems," said Denise Fair Razo, Detroit Chief Public Health Officer. "We will provide epidemiology tracking and support to Detroit area hospitals to make sure staff have protocols in place to stop the spread of this organism and protect patients."

There have been 15 *C. auris* detections in Michigan since 2021, seven of which have been identified in the last five weeks in patients receiving services at Select Specialty

Hospital – Northwest Detroit. To date, there have not been any life-threatening illnesses or deaths from this outbreak. There is not a threat to the general public.

“We are fully cooperating with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and taking all necessary infection control measures, guided by the CDC and state, to ensure the safety of our current and future patients,” said Shelly Eckenroth, senior vice president of communications, Select Medical.

MDHHS and local health departments are working to identify and screen patients that have been discharged from Select Specialty Hospital – Northwest Detroit since March 1. No additional cases have been found at this time.

The facility has taken a number of measures to control the spread of *C. auris* within the facility, including education for all health care providers, patients and their families; increased attention on hand hygiene practices and use of personal protective equipment during the care of all patients; enhanced deep cleaning of high-touch surfaces and medical equipment using disinfectants effective against *C. auris*; as well as conducting additional patient screening to identify other positive patients.

“Sinai-Grace Hospital has extensive and rigorous infection prevention protocols in place to ensure all hospital services remain safe and available to care for the community,” said Detroit Medical Center CEO Brittany Lavis. “We have not identified any Sinai-Grace Hospital patients who have tested positive for *C. auris*. We are fully cooperating with the department and support the decision to pause patient admissions at the Select Specialty Hospital-Northwest Detroit.”

In addition to pausing admissions, Select Specialty Hospital – Northwest Detroit has also voluntarily adopted the following protocols:

- Screening all patients for *C. auris* prior to discharge and notifying the receiving entity of the *C. auris* outbreak at the facility and the results of the patient’s screening.
- Conducting facility-wide *C. auris* screening of all patients at least once every two weeks.
- Allowing MDHHS and cooperating public health agencies, including the local health department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to conduct a public health investigation.

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