<Date>

Dear Doctor <Name>,

Thank you for your ongoing care of <Patient>. In addition to the discharge summary, this letter is also being provided in order to alert you to the fact that <Patient> has been identified as having a multi-resistant organism known as carbapenemase-producing organism (CPO). Your patient has been identified as having <CPO organism> infection / colonisation <delete one>.

CPO is found in patients in hospitals and clinics around the world. Healthy people do not usually get CPO infections. However, it is important to know that people may carry CPO in their bowel or in a wound, without symptoms.

**The most important role you can play as a primary care provider is to help ensure that a health service, long-term residential care facility or other healthcare setting is aware of your patient’s CPO status. This means advising the health service or facility in writing or by phone whenever you are referring your patient.**

This healthcare facility will have an alert for any readmission, but because there is no universal patient identifier in Victoria your (and your patient’s) role is critical.

If your patient is admitted to a healthcare or residential care setting, in addition to usual practice, such as staff regularly washing their hands or using alcohol-based hand rub, the staff will use additional precautions to reduce the risk of spreading CPO to other patients which may include: a single room or a room with other patients with CPO; and wearing a gown and gloves for all patient contact.

Infection prevention and control (IPC) precautions for patients with CPO may be required every time they are admitted to a healthcare or residential care facility. A person with CPO, whether colonised or infected, can excrete CPO intermittently for many months. As such, healthcare facilities will need to undertake a risk assessment when a patient with CPO is admitted to determine if they still require additional IPC precautions. Further information regarding this can be found in the *Victorian guideline on carbapenemase-producing organisms for health services.*

Your patient has been given a fact sheet with some guidance for minimising risk of spread at home and in hospital.

Generally, there are no additional measures required for your GP practice when seeing these patients, other than thorough hand hygiene using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Contact precautions should be used where there is a risk of direct or indirect transmission that is not effectively contained by standard precautions alone. Routine cleaning of your office space and waiting area is sufficient.

**More information is available from:**

Department of Health and Human Services, *[Victorian guideline on carbapenemase-producing organisms for health services](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control)*[, version 1](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control) (2023) <www.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control>

Department of Health and Human Services, [*Victorian guideline on carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae for long-term residential care facilities*](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control) (April 2017) <www.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control>

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, [*Infection prevention and control guidelines for general practices and other office-based and community-based practices*](https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/practice-standards/racgp-infection-prevention-and-control-guidelines) (5th edition) <https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/practice-standards/racgp-infection-prevention-and-control-guidelines>