



For Immediate Release

**Contact: Anne Prince
Ph. 202.276.3943
media@nmqf.org**

**National Minority Quality Forum Launches Atlas
That Maps MRSA “Super Bug”
*Atlas Shows Hot Spots of the Deadliest of Infectious Diseases***

WASHINGTON, D.C. October 27, 2010— Gary A. Puckrein, Ph.D., CEO of the National Minority Quality Forum and Gary Doern, Ph.D., a nationally recognized expert in clinical microbiology and antimicrobial resistance, today launched the national MRSA Atlas (www.mapmrsa.org). Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA, causes significant infections throughout the U.S. with mortality rates of up to 20 percent in certain settings. Further, MRSA affects certain populations disproportionately. Because of its clinical significance and its antimicrobial resistance profile, MRSA has been referred to as the “super bug.” The national MRSA Atlas graphically depicts the prevalence of this “super bug” across the United States.

“We believe the national MRSA Atlas (www.mapmrsa.org) will help those on the front lines of MRSA to more effectively calibrate prevention and treatment efforts through use of the MRSA map. Health care practitioners can use the MRSA map to pinpoint “super bug” hot spots and thereby direct resources where they are most needed,” stated Gary Puckrein, Atlas developer and CEO of the National Minority Quality Forum.

Dr. Gary Doern, editor-in- chief of the *Journal of Clinical Microbiology*, and fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology and the Infectious Diseases Society of America, noted that, “notwithstanding the clinical importance of MRSA, it has been a largely silent epidemic. Mapping the spread of MRSA is an important step in localizing MRSA, raising awareness in high impact areas and tailoring prevention and treatment efforts to that particular locale. Now that we know where the problem is, we can improve early diagnosis and treatment in the hardest hit communities.”

The National MRSA Atlas is the most recent Internet-based disease map resource developed by the National Minority Quality Forum. Dr. Doern added that the MRSA Atlas will specifically, “help those on the front lines combating MRSA, to direct infection-control efforts to reduce the burden of the disease and prevent antimicrobial resistance among hospitalized patients.” By logging onto the web site, www.mapmrsa.org, map users can examine data by age, gender, race and ethnicity and can also overlay federal and state legislative districts on top of county data. The MRSA Atlas shows that 90 percent of MRSA occurs in just five percent of the counties in the United States.

The National Minority Quality Forum (www.nmqf.org) is a non-profit healthcare research and educational organization dedicated to the elimination of health disparities. The Forum supports national and local efforts to eliminate the disproportionate burden of premature death and preventable illness in racial and ethnic minorities and other special populations. The Forum has introduced user-friendly, web-based disease atlases to provide a unique two-dimensional view of various diseases, including diabetes, kidney disease, heart disease and HIV/AIDS, by zip code. Users now have an unprecedented objective and reliable source of integrated data to validate the existence of health disparities.

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