

In 1978 I was working at the Hoffmann-LaRoche Clinical Pharmacology Unit at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. Dr. Jerry Murillo, a pediatrician and infectious disease specialist at the 'Beth' told me about infection control in the neonatal care unit. Looking at the 'antibiograms,' i.e. lab characteristics of the germs isolated it occurred to me that the results should be entered into a Fortran program. We were looking for changes in antibiotic resistance. The program would allow us to immediately recognize new, resistant strains of bacteria.

In retrospect, we were hunting for methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus which has now become known and feared as MRSA forty years ago. The program worked. Dr. Murillo told me that on several occasions it triggered vigorous infection control campaigns in the neonatal care unit.

We presented our work at a computer conference.

An On-Line Computer Program for the Surveillance of Nosocomial Infections
J. L. Murillo, H. P. Blumenthal and J. A. Titelbaum
Abstract, Ninth Annual Conference, Society for Computer Medicine
Society of Computer Medicine, Arlington, Va., 1979

Reprint to follow.