


Island Health Performance Measures

Clostridium Difficile Disease



Year to Date Performance	2.6	Performance Assessment	 Green
Island Health Target	Less than or equal to 3.0	Performance is within the acceptable range; continue to monitor.	

What do we measure and why?

Clostridium difficile (*C. diff.*) is a common type of healthcare-associated infectious diarrhea. People can be infected if they touch surfaces contaminated with feces, and then touch their mouth. Health care workers can spread the bacteria to their patients if their hands are contaminated.

This indicator measures the rate of patients acquiring a new *C. diff.* infection while in hospital. It is reported per 10,000 patient days. 'Patient days' is equal to the number of patients in hospital, multiplied by the number of days they spent in hospital (e.g., 2 patients in hospital for 7 days = 2 x 7 = 14 patient days).

C. diff. adversely affects patient health and safety, and often leads to longer hospital stays and increased costs. *C. diff.* can be severe, sometimes requires surgery, and in extreme cases can cause death. Tracking *C. diff.* provides ongoing assessment of a hospital's ability to minimize the spread of infection through measures such as proper hand hygiene, environmental cleaning, and the judicious use of antibiotics.

What is the target?

Island Health's target for 2019/20 is 3.0 or fewer new infections per 10,000 patient days. The target is based on optimal best practice performance.

How are we doing?

The rate of health care-associated *C. diff.* at Island Health acute care hospitals was 2.6 per 10,000 patient days from April to September 2019.

Rates for individual hospitals may be affected by the types of services offered, the size and physical environment of the facilities, how full the hospital is, how long patients stay in hospital, the use of antibiotics, and the patient population. In addition, recent changes in laboratory testing have increased the ability to detect *C. diff.* so we are finding more cases.

What actions are we taking?

The Infection Prevention and Control Program has an ongoing *C. diff.* surveillance system. Early detection and intervention allows hospitals to prevent or limit *C. diff.* transmission.

When increasing *C. diff.* rates are noted, Infection Control initiates a more in-depth review of the targeted areas looking for sources of potential transmission of *C. diff.* In collaboration with staff, Infection Control strategies and information (such as hand hygiene rates) are shared and evaluated to determine the effectiveness of preventive measures. Facilities with an increase in rates have had ongoing risk mitigation meetings and huddles where cases are reviewed, infection control strategies are discussed, and preventive measures are evaluated.