

ONTARIO LAUNCHES TRANSPARENCY IN PATIENT SAFETY INDICATORS

C. difficile Rates To Be Made Public Beginning September 30th
As McGuinty Government Strengthens Reporting Regulations

NEWS

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The Ontario government is introducing full public reporting on eight patient safety indicators – including *Clostridium difficile* (*C. difficile*) – as part of a comprehensive plan to create an unprecedented level of transparency in Ontario’s hospitals.

On September 30, 2008, all Ontario hospitals will be required to publicly report on *C. difficile* rates in their facilities through a public website.

As part of this comprehensive initiative, Dr. Michael Baker, physician-in-chief at the University Health Network, is being appointed Executive Lead – Patient Safety to oversee the government’s patient safety agenda. He will build upon initiatives already taken such as the hospital hand hygiene program.

The list of patient safety indicators is:

Patient Safety Indicator	Start Date of Public Reporting
<i>Clostridium difficile</i> (<i>C. difficile</i>)	Sept. 30, 2008
Methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (MRSA)	Dec. 31, 2008
Vancomycin-resistant <i>Enterococci</i> (VRE)	Dec. 31, 2008
Hospital Standardized Mortality Ratio (HSMR) – mortality rates	Dec. 31, 2008
Rates of ventilator-associated pneumonia	April 30, 2009
Rates of central line infections	April 30, 2009
Rates of Surgical site infections	April 30, 2009
Hand hygiene compliance among health care workers	April 30, 2009

Hospitals will also be required to immediately report *C. difficile* outbreaks to their local public health units so that Medical Officers of Health have the information they need to monitor and respond to emergent outbreaks.

QUOTES

“The new reporting framework reflects our commitment to uphold the highest standards of care for Ontario’s patients,” said George Smitherman, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. “Transparency may not always provide us with the news we want to hear but it leads to the actions we all need to take to combat the risks of infection.”

“This is very important – we need to let the public know how our hospitals are performing,” said Dr. Michael Baker. “We can then measure our progress in improving safety standards. This announcement on reporting places us among the leaders of patient safety in hospitals across the country.”

"Ontario's hospitals are committed to providing the safest possible care to patients," said Tom Closson, President and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association. "We strongly support the public reporting of patient safety indicators because we believe it will inspire improved performance, enhance patient safety, and strengthen the public's confidence in Ontario's hospitals."

QUICK FACTS

- C. difficile is a bacterium that causes diarrhea and more serious intestinal conditions.
- C. difficile is the most common cause of infectious diarrhea in hospitalized patients in the industrialized world.
- The use of antibiotics increases the chances of developing C. difficile diarrhea as it alters the normal level of good bacteria found in the intestines and colon.
- Good hand hygiene is the single-most effective way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases like C. difficile

LEARN MORE

Learn more about [C. difficile best practices](#) for all health care settings.

Learn more about Ontario's hand hygiene initiative [Just Clean Your Hands](#) and [Operation Health Protection](#).

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