



Clostridium difficile infection or CDI is the most common healthcare associated infections in the USA. CDI is characterized by an endemic rate in most hospitals punctuated by increased rates caused by an epidemic strain. The most recent example of a *C. difficile* epidemic was caused by the so-called hypervirulent 027 strain associated with increased rates of colectomy and death.

The University of Houston (UH) College of Pharmacy is collaborating with the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) on a one year project to:

- Learn more regarding genetic variations in *C. difficile*;
- Identify geographical differences in *C. difficile* using fluorescent PCR ribotyping;
- Assess the incidence and severity of disease associated with CDI within Texas.

Results will inform statewide and hospital plans for reducing the impact of healthcare-associated infections through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

Hospitals may participate by:

- Submitting stool specimens positive for toxigenic *C. difficile* for confirmation and ribotyping;
- Allowing environmental sampling within their facility for *C. difficile*.

Why Participate?

- Contribute to a coordinated plan to reduce the rate of disease associated with CDI in Texas;
- All costs associated with shipping and shipping supplies are covered;
- Logistics of specimen shipping are handled by the UH and DSHS;
- Hospitals receive quarterly reports summarizing culture and ribotyping results;
- Hospitals may request assistance from subject matter experts when responding to possible *C. difficile* outbreaks.

Participation Requirements

To participate, hospitals are required to:

1. Designate a primary contact person responsible for banking stool samples positive for *C. difficile*
2. Work with UH and DSHS representatives to implement a protocol for banking stool samples and shipping to UH;
3. Complete a short data collection form on each shipped isolate. This will include the gender and decade of life for each patient, date of specimen collection, and type of *C. difficile* infection (community or hospital acquired).

If you would like to participate in this project or have further questions, please contact us:

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