



Highlighting ACE Updates, Best Practices, Resources, Tools, and Upcoming Events

Navigating Through Clostridium Difficile Infections Prevention, Surveillance, and Management

By now you have received information about the new ACE initiative for tracking and preventing Clostridium difficile infections (CDI). But this potentially deadly infection is not a standalone issue, and it is not just a long-term care (LTC) problem. In addition to preventing CDI, this new national initiative focuses on antibiotic stewardship, best practices in infection control and surveillance, improved data collection methods, and effective communication with healthcare providers. CDI can be found in hospitals and the community as well as in our nursing homes. We all have a stake in infection prevention. [**JOIN THE ACE CDI INITIATIVE TODAY!**](#)

Why Focus on CDI in the LTC Setting?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that in 2011, CDI caused almost half a million infections among patients in the U.S. The risk of CDI and death increases with age; one in three C. difficile infections occurs in patients 65 years or older.

- More than 100,000 C. difficile infections develop among residents of U.S. nursing homes each year.
- One in nine patients aged 65 and older with a healthcare-associated CDI died within 30 days following their diagnosis.
- More than 80% of CDI deaths occurred in people 65 years and older.
- Relapse occurs in one in five patients with a healthcare-associated CDI.

According to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) 2014 report on adverse events in skilled nursing facilities, 70% of CDI related harm in nursing homes is preventable.

What Are the Real Numbers?

The CDC tracks healthcare-associated infection rates (HAIs) from hospitals and laboratories across the U.S. through the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). This large database is an excellent way to establish and monitor infections within individual organizations, regions, and states as well as at a national level.

Although our state has a lower percentage than many others, South Carolina hospitals have reported increases in CDI in 2013-2014. While hospitals are required to enter cases in NHSN, nursing homes are not yet required to do so; however, we know that CDI is found in nursing homes. The new ACE initiative for tracking and preventing CDI will provide education and assistance on entering data into NHSN, infection control processes, antibiotic stewardship, TeamSTEPPS®, and developing partnerships with local hospitals.

This is CDI... A spore-forming, anaerobic, gram-positive bacillus that produces two exotoxins (A and B) which are shed through feces leading to extensive watery diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, nausea, and weakness.

People on antibiotics are seven to 10 times more likely to get CDI while on the drug(s) and during the month after being in a healthcare setting, especially a hospital or skilled nursing facility.

CDI spreads easily through:

- Devices and surfaces, especially those in healthcare settings that are contaminated with feces from an infected person.
- Dirty hands! Poor adherence to or lack of adequate infection control practices.

CDI is associated with high morbidity and mortality in older adults including:

- Dehydration, falls, altered mental status, decreased skin integrity
- Extended and lengthy convalescence
- Toxic megacolon, pseudomembranous colitis, colon perforation
- Sepsis
- Death

CDI also carries substantial costs for the facility.

To understand the challenge of CDI in nursing homes, we must first identify the depth of the problem. Join this ACE initiative to track your progress and develop infection surveillance and prevention tools through free staff training and resources. CCME will provide the training and long-term support necessary to access and submit data to CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). Education will also include free webinars, tools, training sessions, and onsite technical assistance. SNFs will receive TeamSTEPPS® training as part of this initiative.

Going Forward...

To join the [ACE CDI Initiative](#), please complete the [provider agreement](#) and follow the instructions. For questions, please contact us at scace@thecarolinascenter.org.

Antibiotic Stewardship (ABS), The Next Step

Antimicrobial Stewardship Training – A Coordinated Approach, the recent Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) conference, provided a host of medical and pharmaceutical experts in infectious disease and antimicrobial therapy and research. This extremely informative program featured professionals from hospitals, LTC facilities, and community providers who were asked not only to consider the aspects and benefits of ABS, but also to consider how they could partner with other healthcare providers to improve and implement best practices related to antimicrobial therapies. It starts with judicious antibiotic use, and ends with reducing CDI, improving the quality of resident care, and lowering costs for patients and healthcare organizations. You can access the conference presentations here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ufoaodpo7mvqedj/AADD17uy1cGFU9dof6pgd7TQa?dl=0>

Part of the CDI initiative will help facilities implement best practices for the use of antibiotics and to examine improved assessment practices to prevent misuse. [The ACE CDI Initiative](#) includes training and resources not only for professional staff but also education for all levels of staff, families, and patients to ensure success.

ACE Website

For excellent resources on CDI and other infections, please visit the ACE website under Clinical Topics: <http://atlanticquality.org/initiatives/nursing-home-quality/nursing-home-quality-sc/clinical-topics/>

New Best Practice Lunch and Learn Series

Don't miss the June 16th **Best Practice Lunch and Learn Webinar** on pain management. Hear from your peers about how a facility dramatically improved their pain quality measure. We want to hear about your successes so that we can share them with our ACE members! Please contact us at scace@thecarolinascenter.org.

New ACE Quarterly Data Reports

The first ACE Quarterly Data Report will be sent to each ACE-enrolled administrator and director of nursing using a secure, confidential e-mail beginning this month. This report will include the facility's Composite Score and trending graphs of 11 Quality Measures. To ensure delivery of this data each quarter, please add collins.baker@area-i.hcqis.org to your e-mail address book. Make sure that the person responsible for your computer's security adds this address to a "white list" of allowed senders.

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