



**Protocol for collection and submission of  
samples for the Three month National  
Surveillance, Typing and Antimicrobial  
Susceptibility study of *Clostridium difficile*  
infection in Ireland 2014**

**Study coordinators:**

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- Dr. Fidelma Fitzpatrick, Consultant Microbiologist, Health Protection Surveillance Centre, Dublin

**Study contacts:****Laboratory technical queries and address to send specimens:****Specimens to:**

**Ms Katharina Stein,  
Department of Microbiology,  
St Vincent's University Hospital,  
Elm Park,  
Dublin 6.**

**Technical Advice:**

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**Queries in relation to urgent ribotyping or any other issues:**

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## **Contents**

Method Overview: .....	4
1. Sending Stool Samples .....	5
2. How to complete the Request Form.....	6
Appendix A – Request Form: .....	7

## **METHOD OVERVIEW:**

- ❖ Thank you for agreeing to participate in this national *C. difficile* typing study. The data collection period will run from the 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014 and coincide with the Q2 period of the *C. difficile* enhanced surveillance project
- ❖ This service will not be a full reference service; there will be a delay in providing results to you.
- ❖ We would envisage that ribotyping results correlated with enhanced surveillance will be provided to you in late September/early October this year.
- ❖ Ribotyping results are likely to be available before that; we will produce a summary of those results for you as soon as that is available.
- ❖ If you have a particular need for urgent ribotyping (for example a suspected outbreak), please contact Dr Lynda Fenelon or Dr Suzy FitzGerald (see contacts page), so that these samples can be prioritised.
- ❖ Only one sample per patient per CDI episode should be submitted to avoid repeat samples.
- ❖ *All* cases of *Clostridium difficile* infection (CDI) diagnosed in Irish laboratories (both new and recurrent cases) that meet the case definition (see Appendix B) should have a sample submitted
- ❖ Samples should be sent to St. Vincent's University Hospital Microbiology Laboratory for typing accompanied with appropriate excel spreadsheet form (appendix A). This will allow linking of samples to enhanced surveillance information that is sent to the HPSC.
- ❖ Samples may be batched and stored at +4°C for up to 3 days, or -20°C or -80° for up to a month and then submitted (please refer to section below for further details).
- ❖ Samples may be submitted on an ad hoc, weekly or monthly basis.

## **SENDING OF STOOL SAMPLES:**

- ❖ Faeces samples from all patients in Ireland who have a diagnosis of CDI (new or recurrent infection) and a positive assay (toxin or toxin gene test) for *C. difficile* from 1st April to 30th June 2014 should be submitted to St Vincent's University Hospital Microbiology laboratory at the address below between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.
- ❖ Samples should be submitted by courier. If you are using Hayes DX, the St Vincent's identification code is *DX6000802*
- ❖ Only one sample per patient per CDI episode should be sent to avoid repeat samples
- ❖ Please fill in the request form (appendix A) and send with each batch of samples/sample to St Vincent's University Hospital Microbiology laboratory
- ❖ Samples may be batched and stored at +4°C for up to 3 days, or -20°C or -80°C for up to a month and then submitted. Samples may be transported at room temperature.

### **Laboratory technical queries and address to send specimens:**

#### **Specimens to:**

**Ms Katharina Stein,  
Department of Microbiology,  
St Vincent's University Hospital,  
Elm Park,  
Dublin 6.**

#### **Technical Advice:**

**Ms Katharina Stein SVUH  
phone 01 -277 4450  
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**\**

**\Queries in relation to urgent ribotyping or any other issues:**

**Dr Lynda Fenelon SVUH  
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## **Instructions how to complete the Request Form**

**\*\*\*PLEASE FILL OUT THE EXCEL SPREAD SHEET ON THE COMPUTER  
AND SEND IT AS A PRINT OUT WITH THE SAMPLES\*\*\***

- ❖ Hospital Code: Please fill in your unique hospital code that you use for the enhanced *C.difficile* surveillance project. Please ensure the code location for the hospital where the patient is located is used for each patient.

### **Patient Details:**

- ❖ Patient ID: Please fill in the patient ID number/MRN number of the patient in question (alpha numeric code). Use the same patient ID that is used in the enhanced surveillance project as this information will be used to link up the sample with the enhanced data.

### **Specimen Details:**

- ❖ Specimen Number: Enter your laboratory number of the sample sent for typing. Again, please use the same specimen identification number used for the enhanced surveillance system.
- ❖ Specimen Date: Please enter the date when the sample was taken (dd.mm.yyyy)
- ❖ Specimen Sent: Please enter the date when the sample was sent to the St Vincent's Hospital (dd.mm.yyyy)

## Appendix A- Request Form

[illegible]

## **Appendix B- Case Definition of CDI**

A confirmed *C. difficile* associated disease (CDI) case is a patient two years or older, to whom one or more of the following criteria applies:

- Diarrhoeal\* stools or toxic megacolon, with either a positive laboratory assay for *C. difficile* toxin A (TcdA) and / or toxin B (TcdB) in stools or a toxin-producing *C. difficile* organism detected in stool via culture or other means.
- Pseudomembranous colitis (PMC) revealed by lower gastrointestinal endoscopy.
- Colonic histopathology characteristic of *C. difficile* infection (with or without diarrhoea) on a specimen obtained during *endoscopy*, colectomy or autopsy.

**\*Diarrhoea is defined as three or more loose/watery bowel movements that take up the shape of their container (which are unusual or different for the patient) in a 24 hour period.**