

**For Immediate Release**

October 2 2008

Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital  
Carleton Place, ON

**Patient Safety at the Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital**

When people enter a hospital as a patient, they expect to get better, not worse. Unfortunately that is not always the case. Sometimes simply by virtue of being a patient in a hospital people acquire infections they didn't have when they entered the hospital, infections which can be quite debilitating and occasionally even fatal.

One such infection is called Clostridium Difficile, or C. Difficile. This is one of many bacteria normally present in the large intestine of many people. However, if it gets out of balance compared to other bacteria in the large intestine, then an infection can develop which can damage the bowel and cause diarrhea. When a patient develops a C. Difficile infection after the first 72 hours in the hospital, then it is considered a hospital-acquired infection rather than one the patient brought with him or her into the hospital.

Beginning in September 2008, all hospitals in Ontario are reporting on their own websites the number of new hospital-acquired C. Difficile cases in the previous month, starting with August 2008, as well as the rate of infection. The Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital has placed this information on its website ([www.carletonplacehospital.ca](http://www.carletonplacehospital.ca)) along with an explanation of how the rate is calculated, and will update it at the end of each month from this point on.

In August 2008 the Hospital had no cases of hospital-acquired C. Difficile infections, and thus a rate of zero. This in fact has been the case for many months prior to August. We hope to keep it that way, but occasionally one or more cases may occur. If that should happen we would work with the Public Health unit to determine if an outbreak has occurred, and when the outbreak is over. That information too will be posted on our website.

Hospital-acquired infections are kept to a minimum through good hand hygiene among hospital staff, patients and visitors, as well as good housekeeping practices to keep the hospital clean and as free of bugs as possible.

Infection rates for all hospitals in Ontario have been compiled by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and can be found at [www.ontario.ca/patientsafety](http://www.ontario.ca/patientsafety) . If you have any questions about this topic please call Ms. Toni Surko, Chief Nursing Officer at the Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital, at 613-253-3827 or write to [tsurko@carletonplacehosp.com](mailto:tsurko@carletonplacehosp.com) .

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