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ESCMID Study Group on *Clostridium difficile*

Stockholm, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

**Special Meeting of European Study Group of *Clostridium difficile* (ESGCD)  
with European Centre of Disease Control (ECDC):**

**“Significance of new emerging *Clostridium difficile* PCR ribotype 027 strain  
in Europe”**

**Participants:**

<b>L. Clifford McDonald</b>	Medical Epidemiologist , CDC - Atlanta, USA [via teleconference ]
<b>Carl Erik Nord</b>	Clinical Bacteriologist, Karolinska Institute - Stockholm, Sweden
<b>Petra Gastmeier</b>	Medical Epidemiologist, - Hannover, Germany
<b>Michel Delmée</b>	Univ. Cat. de Louvain - Bruxelles, Belgium
<b>Jonathan Brazier</b>	Medical microbiologist - Univ. Hospital of Wales - Cardiff, UK
<b>Ian Poxton</b>	Medical Microbiologist, University of Edinburgh - Edinburgh, UK
<b>Frédéric Barbut</b>	Medical microbiologist, Hôpital-Saint-Antoine, Paris, France
<b>Ed Kuijper</b>	Medical microbiologist, Leiden University - Leiden, Netherlands
<b>Bruno Coignard</b>	Medical Epidemiologist, InVS - Saint-Maurice Cedex, France
<b>Brian Duerden</b>	Medical Microbiologist, Department of Health - London, UK
<b>Carl Suetens</b>	Medical Epidemiologist, Sc.Inst.of Public Health - Brussels, Belgium
<b>Peet Tüll</b>	Senior Expert, ECDC - Stockholm, Sweden
<b>Marco Baldari</b>	Senior Expert, ECDC – Stockholm, Sweden

A workshop and meeting of ECDC with ESGCD was organised on January 24<sup>th</sup>. There were excellent presentations from Clifford McDonald (CDC), Michel Delmee, Fred Barbut, Jon Brazier, Ed Kuijper and Bruno Coignard on the incidence of CDAD in various countries, outbreaks due to 027 and future possibilities for surveillance of CDAD. From the ECDC, three members actively participated: Peet Tüll, Carl Suetens and Marco Baldari.

1. L. Clifford McDonald: “Epidemiology and Impact of *C. difficile* Infections
2. Michel Delmée: “*Clostridium difficile* 027 in Belgium ”
3. Ed.J. Kuijper: “Toxin hyperproducing PCR ribotype 027 of *Clostridium difficile* in the Netherlands
4. Jon Brazier: “*C. difficile* PCR Ribotype 027 in the UK”
5. Frédéric Barbut: “European multicentre prospective study of *Clostridium difficile* strains
6. Bruno Coignard: “Lessons learned from implementing a national nosocomial infections mandatory notification system”

There was a shared understanding and an agreement on the following points:

a) the real incidence of *Clostridium difficile*-associated diarrhoea (CDAD) in Europe is difficult to determine but in some EU countries it has certainly and substantially increased in the last few years;

b) the newly-emerging “*Clostridium difficile* PCR ribotype 027” strain looks particularly threatening, but other CD strains also appear to be on the rise and should not be overlooked;

c) the threat posed by increasing CDAD cases is quite real and its implications for public health should not be under-estimated: European available data on the subject are in line with those coming from the USA and Canada;

d) most European countries seem to be relatively unaware of the threat or – at least – they have not yet put into place any surveillance system to reliably monitor CDAD incidence, nor to pick up CDAD outbreaks.

Concluding the meeting, the experts were requested to provide their view upon the actions ECDC should take at all levels. The experts proposed that:

- 1) ECDC should define and submit to Member States CD surveillance guidelines;
- 2) ECDC should define and submit to Member States guidelines to report outbreaks (including clear definitions of items to be reported);
- 3) ECDC should stimulate countries already possessing suitable data, to perform their retrospective analysis in order to provide CDAD incidence trends;
- 5) ECDC should promote awareness, through a series of articles to be published on Eurosurveillance, on national bulletins, on specialized journals and by media in general.

Of the above mentioned action points, it was decided that the most important issue is to prepare a background document with updated information on:

1. The incidence of CDAD due to 027 in Canada, USA and Europe
2. Near future implications for Europe

The ESGCD is currently writing this document and will welcome suggestions.

Ed Kuijper,  
On behalf of the ESGCD.  
3 February 2006