**Clostridium difficile: Identifying those at risk**

*Clostridium difficile* is being increasingly identified in patients within community/home settings. It is a condition in its own right, and it is therefore important that these patients are identified rapidly and treated correctly.

**Those at Greatest risk include:**

- Recently discharged from hospital/healthcare setting.
- Patients over 65 (can affect under 65 as well).
- Recent use of antibiotics especially broad spectrum e.g. ‘C’ antibiotics.
- Prolonged use of proton pump inhibitors i.e. Omeprazole, Lansoprazole.
- Recent surgery, especially gastro-intestinal surgery.
- Serious underlying disease/illness.
- Immuno-compromising conditions.
- Previous *Clostridium difficile*.

**The Bristol Stool Form Scale (Bristol Stool Chart)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sausage-shaped but lumpy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fluffy pieces, a mushy stool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Watery, no solid pieces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If your patient has** Diarrhoea (Type 5-7 on the Bristol Stool Chart) **AND** one of the following:

- Positive C.diff test (GDH) **PLUS** positive or negative TOXIN test
- OR results of C.diff toxin test pending **AND** clinical suspicion of CDI

Refer to the *Clostridium difficile* treatment Algorithm

- **Do not** await a stool sample before commencing treatment if you suspect *Clostridium difficile*.
- **Do not** routinely give anti-motility medication e.g. Loperamide.

**Daily Assessment**

Each patient should be reviewed **daily** regarding:

- Fluid resuscitation and monitoring of input and output.
- Electrolyte replacement and nutrition review.
- Episodes of diarrhoea, including amount and consistency.
- Monitor for signs of increasing severity of disease (fever, signs of colitis e.g. abdominal pain).

This document is to be used with the following local guidance for Dudley:

- *Clostridium difficile infection (CDI) Treatment algorithm* (Nov 2017).
- *Recurrent Clostridium difficile infection (CDI)* algorithm (Nov 2017).
- Algorithm for management of patients with unexplained diarrhoea suspected of *Clostridium difficile infection (CDI)* in the community (Nov 2017).

Contact the Office of Public Health Infection Prevention and Control team for advice on: 01384 816242.