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**ARE C. DIFFICILE OR MULTIPLE DRUG RESISTANT BACTERIA HIDING IN YOUR HOSPITAL SINKS? BY MYREK WILDER

Addled by January 2, 2003. Edited by Helen MacKinnon, Health & Wellness, Toronto

**CIC** — As we reported in the Ottawa Citizen and reprinted by the Christian Science Monitor on Wednesday, January 2, 2003, the incidence of Clostridium difficile infection (CDI) in Ottawa area hospitals is still at an unacceptable level. Our story on Wednesday, December 26, 2002, said that a new method of testing for the presence of C. difficile in hospital sinks is being used in four hospitals. Since then, we have received a number of letters from readers critical of our story.

While there are formal procedures in place to control the spread of C. difficile in Ottawa area hospitals, we have heard from a number of patients and staff that the infection continues to be a problem. We are concerned that this is not being adequately addressed.

C. difficile is a spore-forming, anaerobic bacterium that can cause a range of infections, including diarrhea, colitis and occasionally, death. The bacterium can be found in the gut of healthy people, but it is normally not harmful. However, when it gains a foothold in the gut, it can cause serious illness.

This is why we are concerned that the new method of testing for C. difficile in hospital sinks is not being used more widely. The bacterium can be found in the gut of healthy people, but it is normally not harmful. However, when it gains a foothold in the gut, it can cause serious illness.

To address this issue, we would like to see more attention paid to the use of antiseptics in hospitals. The bacterium can be found in the gut of healthy people, but it is normally not harmful. However, when it gains a foothold in the gut, it can cause serious illness.

Clostridium difficile is a difficult problem to manage, as it is not easily eradicated. The bacterium can be found in the gut of healthy people, but it is normally not harmful. However, when it gains a foothold in the gut, it can cause serious illness.

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**WHAT'S NEXT?** The bacterium can be found in the gut of healthy people, but it is normally not harmful. However, when it gains a foothold in the gut, it can cause serious illness.