**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE**

**NICE indicator validity assessment**

Assurance date: December 2020

Review date: December 2023

# Indicator IAP00040

Incidence of healthcare associated infections – C. Difficile - (see also IAP00141 (CCG version))

# Validity assessment

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| **Domain** | **Notes** | **Assessment** |
| Importance | This indicator is part of the NHS Outcomes Framework domain 5 - Treating and caring for people in a safe environment and protecting them from avoidable harm, though all data and associated documents have been published by Public Health England since June 2019. | This indicator is part of a recognized dataset. |
| Evidence base | From application form provided by NICE:  “Healthcare Associated Infections are directly related to healthcare interventions. Infections can result in longer stays in hospital, and in severe cases prolonged illness and even death. High standards of infection control can limit the incidence of such infections and therefore reductions in these infections are linked to better outcomes for patients (or lack of a harmful outcome).  This indicator is a measure by which resources can be focussed to attempt to reduce the level of healthcare infections in the NHS.  Surveillance of C. difficile laboratory faecal samples in England and Wales was introduced in 1990 as part of the Public Health Laboratory Service’s voluntary monitoring of infectious diseases. Between 1990 and 2004 there was a rise in the number of C. difficile infections, from less than 3,000 in 1990 to more than 45,000 in 2004. Rates of C. difficile infections also rose over this time period in all age groups ≥40 years old. Due to the increasing incidence of C. difficile infections, the mandatory reporting of C. difficile infection in people aged ≥65 years was introduced in England in January 2004, this was a quarterly aggregate data return reported by NHS acute Trusts comprising data on the number of toxin-positive C. difficile faecal samples. Due to the continued rise of C. difficile infections among the population aged ≥65 years, the C. difficile mandatory surveillance scheme was enhanced in April 2007, to be patient-level and to cover all C. difficile infections in patients aged 2 years and over. Reports are submitted using the same web-enabled system that is used to collect enhanced MRSA (and later MSSA) bacteraemia data.  The commitment to continued reduction of C. difficile infections was re- iterated in Everyone Counts: Planning for Patients 2014/15 to 2018/19 https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/5yr-strat-plann-guid-wa.pdf, which was published on 20th December 2013.” | This indicator aligns with NICE guidance (PH36[[1]](#footnote-1), CG139[[2]](#footnote-2), QS113[[3]](#footnote-3)). |
| Specification | Numerator: Count of Clostridium difficile infections in patients aged 2 and over, by organisation  Denominator: N/A  Exclusions: None.  Methodology: Crude count  Geography: England, Trust and CCG  Data Source: Public Health England  Disclosure control: No small number suppression | The indicator has defined components necessary to construct the indicator. |
| Feasibility | The data comes from long running data sources. | The indicator uses existing data fields within published data. |
| Acceptability | The indicator is reported on a monthly basis so data is very current. | The indicator assesses performance that is attributable to or within the control of the audience.  The results of the indicator can be used to improve practice. |
| Risk | None identified | No risks identified |

**Summary:** Indicator to be renewed.

Indicator is identical to the CCG Outcomes Indicator Set version and links to the same published data.

**NHS Digital Indicator Reference:**

NHS Outcomes Framework - 5.2.ii Incidence of healthcare-associated infection - C. difficile

1. Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control, Published 11 November 2011, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph36> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control in primary and community care, Last updated 15 February 2017, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg139> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Healthcare-associated infections, Published 11 February 2016, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs113> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)