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IN THIS ISSUE:

- Clostridium difficile (C. difficile) at Trillium Health Centre
- Three confirmed cases of Botulism in Ontario

FROM:

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Clostridium difficile (C. difficile) at Trillium Health Centre

Trillium Health Centre is currently experiencing an increase in the number and severity of adult patient cases with Clostridium difficile. There are currently 17 known cases in hospital with C. difficile. There have been 4 deaths in patients with symptoms over the past two months; however, C. difficile has not been conclusively determined to be the specific cause of death. Cases have also been reported in the media in hospitals in Scarborough and Barrie.

Please consider C. difficile when patients with risk factors present with diarrhea. Risk factors for C. difficile-associated diarrhea include:

- Recent history of antibiotic exposure
- Gastrointestinal surgery/manipulation
- Prolonged stay in healthcare settings
- Increased age

Please exercise caution when considering use of antibiotics in patients who may have these risk factors.

Further information regarding best practices in the management of C. difficile can be obtained on the MOHLTC website at:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/infectious/diseases/ic_cdif.html

Three confirmed cases of Botulism in Ontario

There are three confirmed cases of botulism in Ontario; two were diagnosed in November 2006, the third in February 2007. The first two cases were in the GTA and were confirmed to be intestinal botulism, which is a rare form of botulism. The third is currently under investigation. All three cases are known to have Crohn's disease.

Please consider botulism as a diagnosis for patients presenting with unusual neurological symptoms or conditions suggestive of Guillain-Barre Syndrome, stroke or myasthenia gravis. Symptoms can include ptosis, dysphagia, dysphonia, and symmetrical flaccid paralysis. Additional information on botulism, sample submission and obtaining botulism antitoxin can be found at:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/pub/disease/botulism.html>

For further information, please contact Peel Public Health at **(905) 799-7700**.