

**Question for written answer E-000430/2014  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)**

Subject: Importance of maintaining support for the surveillance of Clostridium difficile infection at European level

Clostridium difficile infection (CDI) is one of the main healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) in Europe. Studies suggest that CDI is currently two to four times more common than HAIs caused by methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). Since 2003, new variants of CDI with greater virulence have been emerging and spreading, causing higher patient morbidity and mortality. Experts convened by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have estimated the cost of managing CDI in the EU at approximately EUR 3 billion per year, and this figure is expected to rise as the elderly proportion of the population increases across Europe.

In response to this threat, the Commission is currently funding, via the ECDC, the European CDI Surveillance Network (ECDIS-Net). Does the Commission recognise the importance of maintaining support for the surveillance of CDI at European level when the current funding for ECDIS-Net ends in 2014, in particular with regard to monitoring the emergence of new virulent strains of the infection? Furthermore, would the Commission consider developing European guidelines to encourage the use of CDI infection rates as a standard indicator of patient care quality and patient safety across Europe?