

**Question for written answer E-000431/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)

Subject: Addressing the under-diagnosis of Clostridium difficile infection in hospitals

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 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.

According to the recent pan-European point prevalence study EUCLID, over half of hospitals only test for CDI when requested to do so by doctors, which is a major reason why infections go undetected. In view of the Commission's forthcoming follow-up report on the implementation of the European Council recommendations on patient safety and HAIs, would the Commission consider actions to support the implementation by Member States of specific measures to address the under-diagnosis of CDI?