C difficile Prevention and Management: An Assessment of Current Clinical Practice Patterns of Physicians

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METHODS

- A clinical practice assessment consisting of 25 multiple-choice knowledge- and case-based questions was made available to US physicians in multiple specialties, including infectious disease, emergency medicine, surgery, and gastroenterology, who encounter patients with CDI.
- Questions evaluated knowledge, competence, skills, barriers, and attitudes related to CDI, such as recognition of risk factors, strategies for limiting risk, and emerging strategies for prevention.
- The assessment launched online on a website dedicated to continuous professional development on October 27, 2017. Data were collected until January 16, 2018.
- Respondent confidentiality was maintained and responses were de-identified and aggregated prior to analyses.

RESULTS

- 69% were not aware of the incidence of CDI in the United States.
- 73% reported at least 1 case of CDI occurring in their practice over the past year.

RISK FACTORS FOR CDI

- Majority of physicians correctly identified antibiotics most closely associated with development of CDI.
- Two events are required for the development of CDI: Disruption of the gut microbiota typically via use of antibiotics and ingestion of spores via the fecal-oral route. Host factors also have a role in a person’s risk for CDI. How confident are you in recognizing host risk factors for CDI?

DIAGNOSIS OF CDI

- 43% use a polymerase chain reaction-based method for CDI diagnostic; 29% use a 2-step method combining different test types.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

- 58% are not aware of new strategies being investigated for prevention of CDI.
- Cephalexin, penicillins, and carbapenems are beta-lactam antibiotics that are proven to damage gut microbiome diversity. Which of the following is an accurate statement about CDI in the United States?

CONCLUSION

This research yielded important insights into current clinical practice patterns of physicians and gaps in the prevention and management of CDI that could inform development of future medical education projects.

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Image of a poster displayed at a meeting.