



## **The Scarborough Hospital shows remarkable improvement in C. difficile cases**

**TORONTO (October 1, 2009)** – A hospital-wide initiative to improve patient safety has resulted in a 94 percent decline in the number of C. difficile cases at The Scarborough Hospital, General campus.

“Before public reporting began, we recognized that we had a problem. So we hired an expert to assess our situation at the General campus and give us recommendations,” says Dr. John Wright, President and CEO of The Scarborough Hospital. “We took his advice, implementing all of his recommendations. I am proud of the incredible improvement we have made.”

Today the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care released the numbers and rates of C. difficile cases in hospitals throughout the province, reporting an overall decline of 30 percent since public reporting began a year ago. Last year, The Scarborough Hospital’s General campus was among the worst, reporting 17 cases in August 2008. The Birchmount campus (formerly the Grace campus) reported zero cases.

One year later, the General campus is down to just one case and is continuing efforts to reach its goal of zero.

With recommendations from Dr. Michael Gardam, the province’s Director of Infectious Disease Prevention and Control, The Scarborough Hospital implemented new cleaning practices, changed its cleaning products and hired additional cleaners to do a surge cleaning, explains Ester Lipnicki, Executive Director of Patient Services and Quality Care at The Scarborough Hospital.

“We also did an inventory of furniture and threw out anything that was cracked or ripped. We increased education for all staff and introduced Vernacares, a better system for disposing of waste,” says Ester. “We know, for whatever reason, we have a higher number of patients who come in with C. difficile. We’ve improved our screening process so we can take immediate precautions to reduce the chance of spreading the bacteria.”

The hospital also increased awareness and put greater emphasis on proper hand washing technique. In fact, earlier this year, The Scarborough Hospital topped the list in the province’s first-ever public reporting of hand hygiene compliance. The Scarborough Hospital’s overall compliance rate was 97 percent, well above the provincial average of 61 percent.

“We didn’t take last year’s results lightly and we didn’t come up with excuses. We recognized the need for significant change and we worked very hard to

tackle this problem. We continue to work very hard to ensure we don't see those high rates again at The Scarborough Hospital."

**To arrange an interview with Dr. John Wright or Ester Lipnicki please contact:**

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