

Merck, Premier to codevelop new interventions for C. diff infection

May 31, 2018 | News

Since 2016, Merck and Premier have collaborated to co-develop and test solutions that help promote wellness and prevention for specific groups of at-risk patients



Merck, known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, and Premier, a leading healthcare improvement company, have expanded their preventative and chronic disease care collaboration to include a new effort designed to help reduce the recurrence of *Clostridium difficile* infection (C. diff).

Merck and Premier will develop and test the combination of a software-based platform and a coordinator to provide surveillance, consultation, support and education to patients with C. diff at participating Premier member health systems. The goal is to increase patient access to healthcare services, raise awareness of how to decrease patient risk of recurrence and help patients identify if they are having a recurrence. Since 2016, Merck and Premier have collaborated to co-develop and test solutions that help promote wellness and prevention for specific groups of at-risk patients.

C. diff infection causes serious and life-threatening diarrhea – has become the most common microbial cause of healthcare-associated infections in U.S. hospitals. The infection affects approximately half a million people and contributes to an estimated \$4.8 billion in excess U.S. healthcare costs each year. Patients on antibiotics are seven to 10 times more likely to contract C. diff while on antibiotic therapy and during the month after. While the infection is treatable, one in five patients experience a recurrence.

“The expansion of our performance improvement efforts to include the serious threat of C. diff infection is a natural extension of our collaboration,” said Sam Bozzette, M.D., Ph.D., Vice President and Chief Scientist of Premier’s Retrospective and Interventional Research Division, Premier Applied Sciences. “By increasing clinician and patient knowledge of this often prolonged, and sometimes deadly infection, and developing and testing a software-based application to help reduce the recurrence of C. diff infection by improving follow-up and management, we believe there is a strong potential to make a real difference to address this critical public health problem.”

“Combining the technical capabilities of Premier and the therapeutic area expertise of Merck has been instrumental in our ability to address these difficult healthcare challenges,” said Raquel Tapia, Associate Vice President, Hospital/Specialty Marketing, Merck. “By testing the solutions in real-world settings and learning from our growing knowledge base, we’re confident that our work together will help patients.”

The proposed C. diff intervention will be tested within volunteer Premier member health systems. Merck and Premier welcome interested healthcare organizations to inquire about participation.

The financial terms of the collaboration were not disclosed.