C. *difficile* Prevention Partnership Collaborative: Partnering Hospitals and Long Term Care

Acute care hospitals and long term care facilities alike are impacted by growing rates of *C. difficile* and it's potentially deadly consequences for patients. No one institution can solve this problem alone, as patient transfers between facilities are an important contributor to the spread of *C. difficile.*

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health received a grant through the Health Care Reform Act to extend their current infection prevention efforts with Massachusetts hospitals to include long term care settings, and improvement teams that represent cross-continuum partnerships. The Massachusetts Coalition for the Prevention of Medical Errors is leading this work in partnership with Massachusetts Senior Care Association. As part of this project, hospitals identified at least 3 partner long term care facilities to work collaboratively on the reduction of C. *difficile* in both the hospital and long term care setting.

Collaborative activities include:

- Each participating facility (acute and long term care) forming a multidisciplinary team including some or all of the following: infection prevention, nursing, certified nursing assistants, quality improvement, education & training, environmental services, infectious disease, pharmacy, microbiology.
- Participation by teams at events such as coaching calls, regional workshops and learning sessions.
- Teams from partnering organizations actively seeking opportunities to share expertise and strategies between collaborative events.

Following on the success of the STAAR initiative to prevent readmissions, there is increased appreciation for the power of cross-continuum collaboration to improve the care of patients. Clarifying communication of important information at the time of patient transfer to or from the hospital, and sharing learning and expertise across care settings are important ingredients for sustainable improvement and infection prevention.

C. *difficile* Prevention Partnership Collaborative project began in September 2011 and will conclude in July 2012.