

C. difficile surveillance

Quarterly report

January - March 2026

Key points

- CDI reports for hospital inpatients aged 2 years and over decreased by 28% (from 96 to 69 episodes) during January-March 2026 compared to October-December 2025.
- CDI rate per 100,000 bed days decreased by 28% during January-March 2026 compared to October-December 2025.
- CDI reports for community patients aged 2 years and over decreased by 16% (from 85 to 71 episodes) during January-March 2026 compared to October-December 2025.
- During January-March 2026 the most prevalent CDI ribotypes are 002 (14%), 015 (9%), 078-Like (8%) and 005 (6%) (Table 3).
- Bed day data were not available for NHSCT, SHSCT and WHSCT hospitals and provisional figures were used this quarter (figures taken from Jan-Mar 2025).
- For data from 1st April 2023 onwards, “Inpatient episodes” refers to all patients categorised as hospital in-patient **and** ED episodes where the patient tested positive $\geq$ 2 days after the decision to admit date.

For further information or clarification on HCAI definitions, please refer to previous reports or contact hcaini@hscni.net

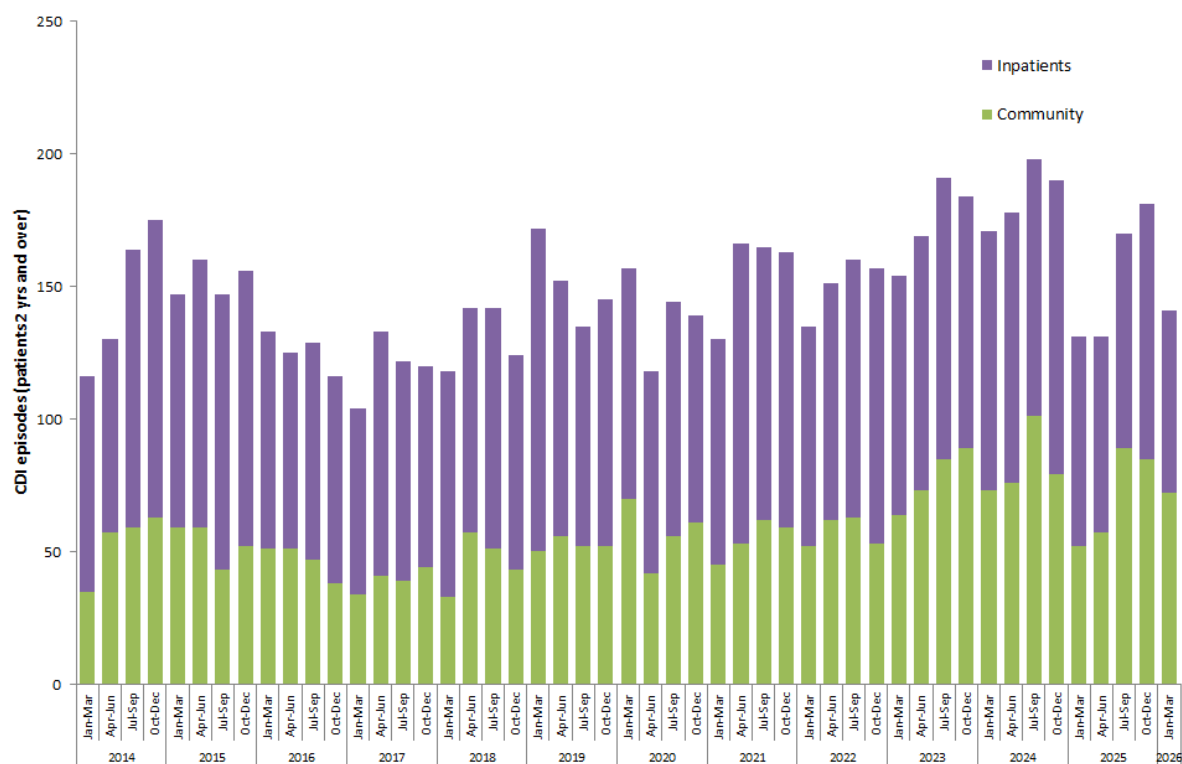


Figure 1: Total CDI episodes, inpatient and community, in Northern Ireland, by quarter (patients ≥ 2 years), between 2014 and 2026

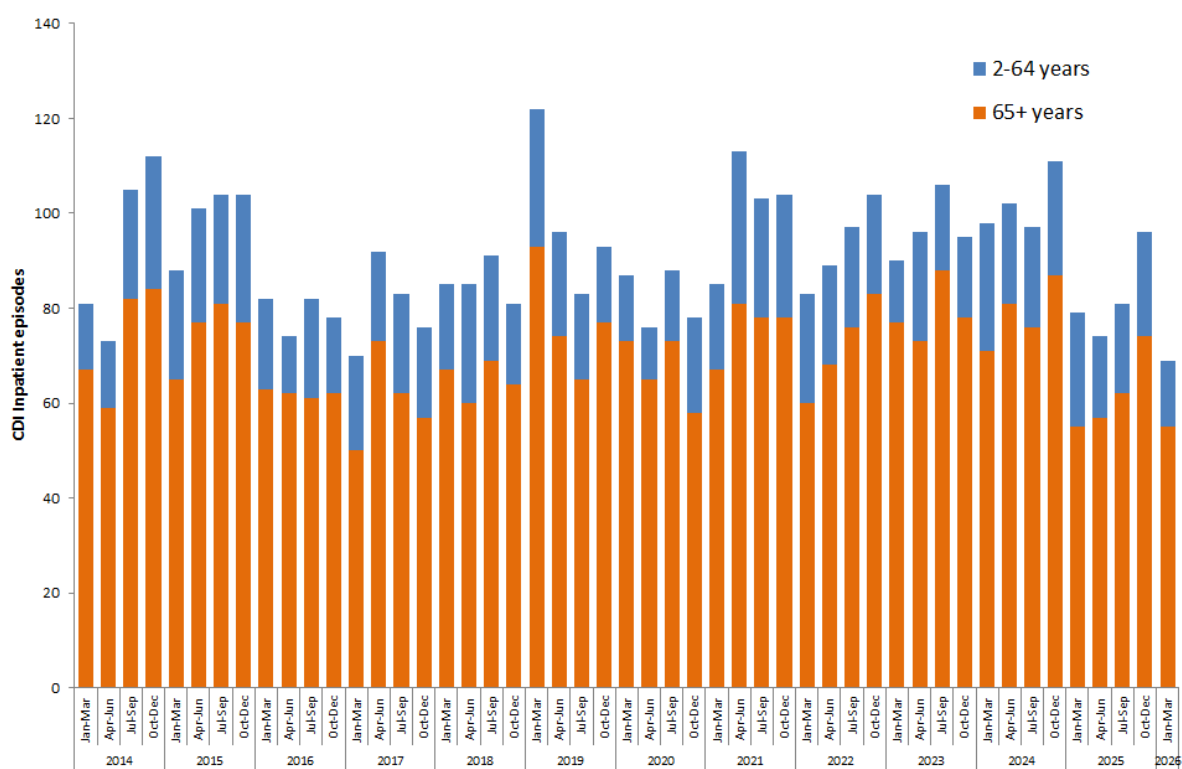


Figure 2a: Total CDI inpatient episodes, by age band, in Northern Ireland, by quarter, between 2014 and 2026

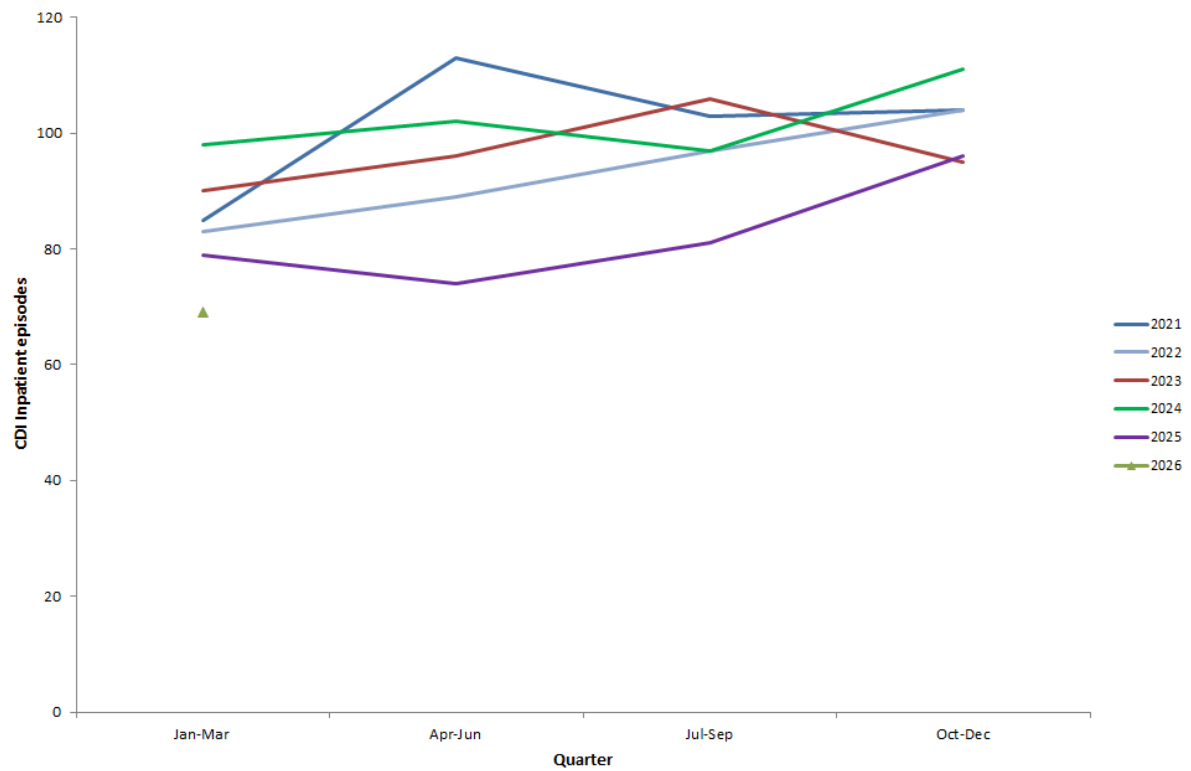


Figure 2b: Total CDI inpatient episodes in Northern Ireland, by quarter (patients ≥ 2 years), between 2021 and 2026

Statistical process control (SPC) charts

- SPC charts allow a distinction to be made between natural variation and ‘special cause variation’, where something unusual may be occurring. Trends in CDI rates since Jan 2014 are shown for each HSCT in appendix B.

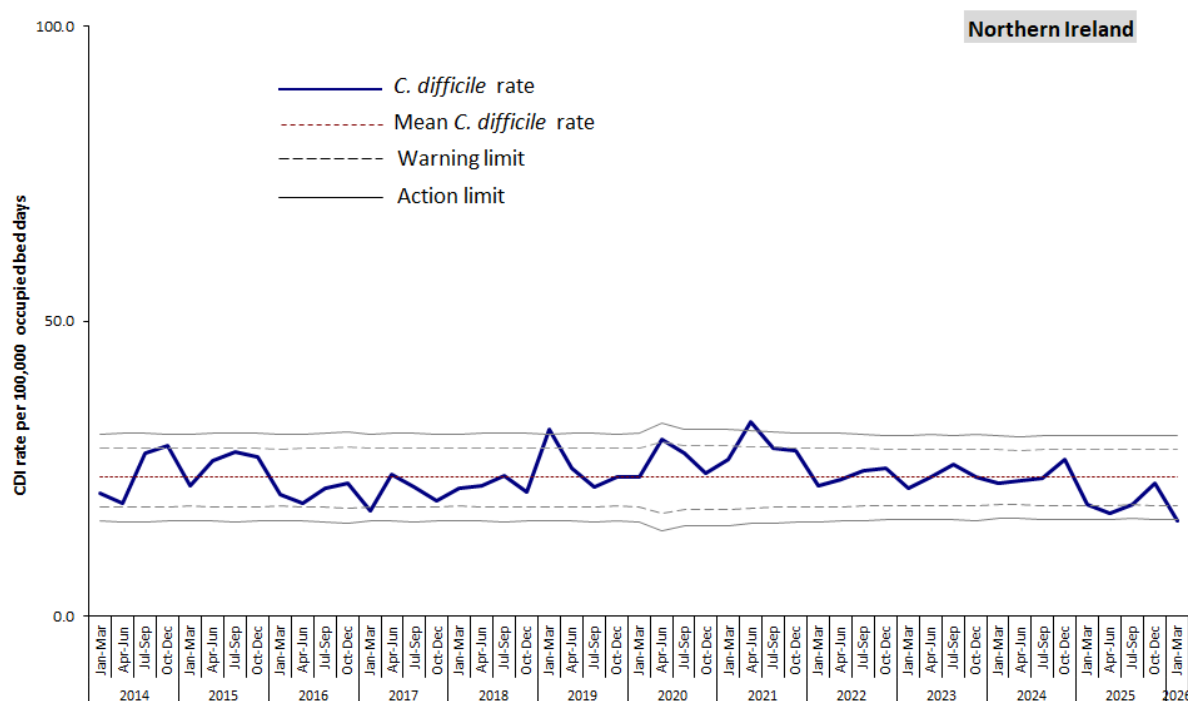


Figure 3: Statistical process control chart for quarterly *C. difficile* rates among inpatients in Northern Ireland aged 2 years and over (for HSCT level, see appendix B)

Results from the NI Ribotype Surveillance Programme

Table 1: A summary of *C. difficile* ribotypes in Hospital Inpatients aged 2 years and over, and the percentage of each against the overall total, in Northern Ireland during routine surveillance, Apr 2025 – Mar 2026.

Ribotype	Apr - Jun 2025		Jul - Sep 2025		Oct - Dec 2025		Jan - Mar 2026	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
001	4	5.4	1	1.2	1	1.0	0	0.0
002	8	10.8	13	16.0	10	10.4	11	15.9
005	8	10.8	6	7.4	7	7.3	5	7.2
011	1	1.4	4	4.9	0	0.0	2	2.9
014	8	10.8	8	9.9	9	9.4	5	7.2
015	5	6.8	11	13.6	12	12.5	4	5.8
018	0	0.0	1	1.2	2	2.1	2	2.9
020	2	2.7	2	2.5	7	7.3	4	5.8
023	4	5.4	3	3.7	8	8.3	2	2.9
027	0	0.0	2	2.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
078-like*	16	21.6	9	11.1	12	12.5	6	8.7
Other	11	14.9	15	18.5	23	24.0	25	36.2
Not groupable**	4	5.4	5	6.2	4	4.2	2	2.9
Not on ribotype list	3	4.1	1	1.2	1	1.0	0	0.0
Not isolated***	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4
Total	74		81		96		69	

Table 2: A summary of *C. difficile* ribotypes in Community Patients aged 2 years and over, and the percentage of each against the overall total, in Northern Ireland during routine surveillance, Apr 2025 – Mar 2026.

Ribotype	Apr - Jun 2025		Jul - Sep 2025		Oct - Dec 2025		Jan - Mar 2026	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
001	0	0.0	2	2.2	2	2.4	1	1.4
002	10	17.5	8	9.0	7	8.2	9	12.7
005	1	1.8	9	10.1	11	12.9	4	5.6
011	1	1.8	0	0.0	1	1.2	1	1.4
014	7	12.3	7	7.9	6	7.1	2	2.8
015	5	8.8	9	10.1	8	9.4	8	11.3
018	1	1.8	4	4.5	2	2.4	0	0.0
020	6	10.5	4	4.5	7	8.2	3	4.2
023	4	7.0	8	9.0	7	8.2	4	5.6
027	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	0	0.0
078-like*	8	14.0	9	10.1	5	5.9	5	7.0
Other	9	15.8	21	23.6	19	22.4	28	39.4
Not groupable**	3	5.3	2	2.2	6	7.1	2	2.8
Not on ribotype list	2	3.5	5	5.6	3	3.5	3	4.2
Not isolated***	0	0.0	1	1.1	0	0.0	1	1.4
Total	57		89		85		71	

* 078-Like means this isolate is PCR ribotype 078, or a very closely related (Clade 5) strain e.g. 126,193

** 'Not groupable' ribotypes do not match existing profiles

*** 'Not isolated' indicates isolates that have no ribotype information supplied, with at least six weeks since the date of the specimen.

Table 3: Descriptive data for *C. difficile* ribotypes 002, 015, 078-Like* and 005 in Northern Ireland Hospital Inpatients and Community Patients, Jan-Mar 2026.

		002 (n= 20)		015 (n= 12)		078-like* (n= 11)		005 (n= 9)	
Age									
	range	22-91		28-95		65-99		7-88	
	median	80		73		85		77	
Sex		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	Female	13	65.0	7	58.3	7	63.6	5	55.6
	Male	7	35.0	5	41.7	4	36.4	4	44.4
Trust									
	Belfast	7	35.0	2	16.7	1	9.1	3	33.3
	Northern	4	20.0	1	8.3	3	27.3	2	22.2
	South Eastern	2	10.0	3	25.0	1	9.1	0	0.0
	Southern	5	25.0	5	41.7	4	36.4	2	22.2
	Western	2	10.0	1	8.3	2	18.2	2	22.2
Source									
	Inpatient	11	55.0	4	33.3	6	54.5	5	55.6
	Community~	9	45.0	8	66.7	5	45.5	4	44.4

~ Community specimens include those taken from Accident and Emergency (<2days after decision to admit date and those not admitted), Outpatients, GPs, Hospice, Care Homes, Hospital Care at Home and Psychiatric facilities.

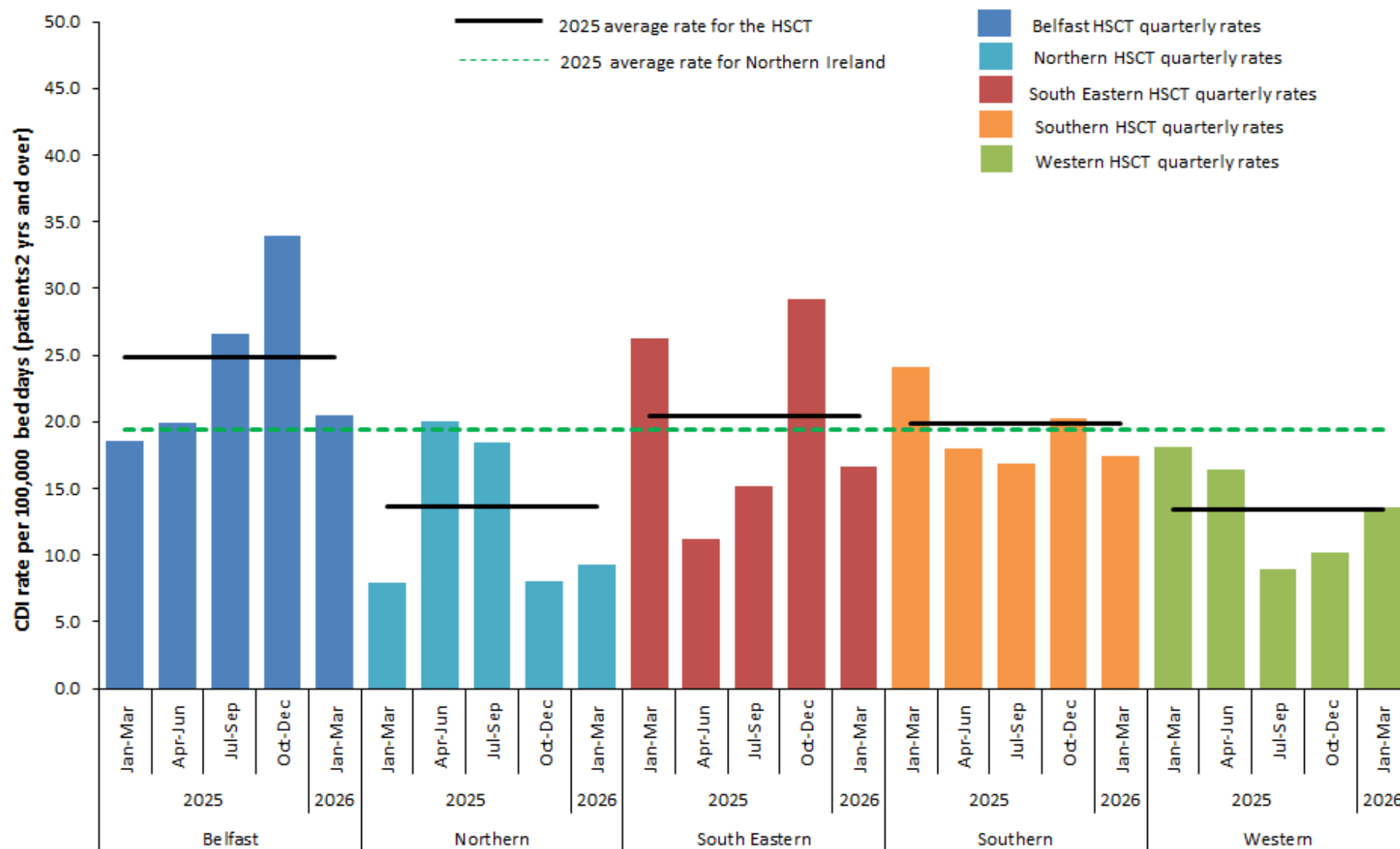


Figure 4: Quarterly rates of *C. difficile* among inpatients aged 2 years and over, by HSCT, January 2025 – March 2026, compared with annual Northern Ireland and HSCT rates for 2025

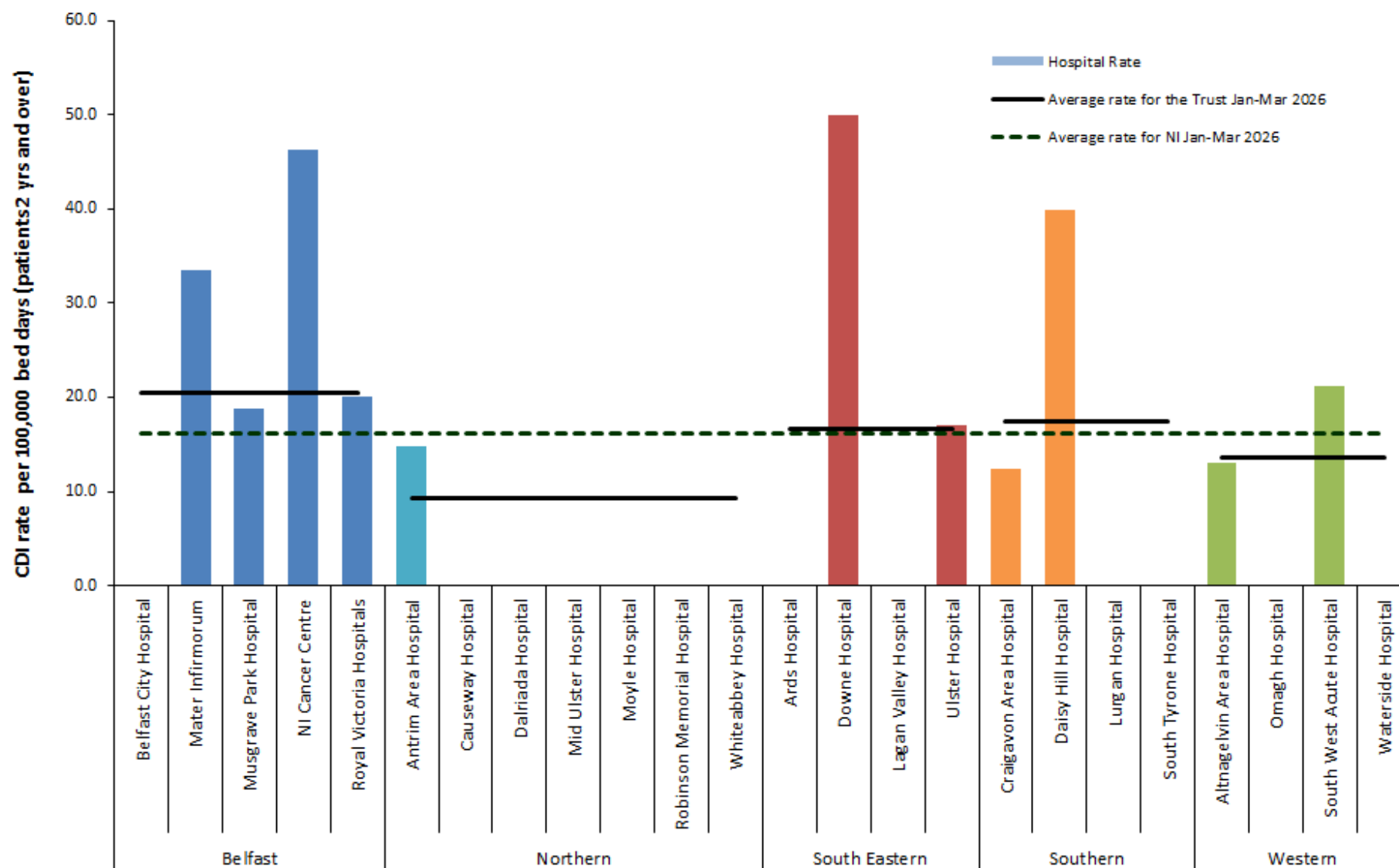


Figure 5: *C. difficile* rates during January-March 2026 Inpatients aged 2 years and over, by hospital, including HSCT rates and average rate for Northern Ireland (see appendix A, Table 4)

Appendix A

Table 4: Quarterly rates* of *C. difficile* reports in patients aged 2 years and over, by hospital, Apr 2025 – Mar 2026.

Hospital	Apr-Jun 2025	Jul-Sep 2025	Oct-Dec 2025	Jan-Mar 2026
Belfast City Hospital	7.56	59.69	20.84	0.00
Mater Infirmorum	34.98	23.22	22.70	33.57
Musgrave Park Hospital	23.88	24.27	30.06	18.74
NICCO	0.00	22.17	22.68	46.27
Royal Group of Hospitals	18.98	22.94	39.78	20.07
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	19.88	26.54	33.93	20.49
Antrim Area Hospital	25.12	18.71	10.73	14.78
Causeway Hospital	15.78	26.02	5.15	0.00
Dalriada Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mid Ulster Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Moyle Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Robinson Memorial Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Whiteabbey Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	20.04	18.48	8.08	9.27
Ards Hospital	0.00	62.66	0.00	0.00
Downe Hospital	24.24	76.32	72.78	49.98
Lagan Valley Hospital	13.05	39.96	26.49	0.00
Ulster Hospital	10.29	6.75	27.21	16.99
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	11.16	15.21	29.13	16.64
Craigavon Area Hospital	23.10	14.75	8.24	12.39
Daisy Hill Hospital	6.11	19.20	52.40	39.89
Lurgan Hospital	20.52	41.37	20.24	0.00
South Tyrone Hospital	0.00	0.00	29.39	0.00
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	17.97	16.80	20.26	17.43
Altnagelvin Area Hospital	25.91	10.65	7.81	13.08
Omagh Hospital	0.00	29.48	28.33	0.00
South West Acute Hospital	5.48	5.38	15.86	21.21
Waterside Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Western Health & Social Care Trust	16.45	8.93	10.18	13.54
NI TOTAL	17.55	18.84	22.45	16.22

Table 5: Quarterly *C. difficile* reports in patients aged 2 years and over, by HSCT, Apr 2025 – Mar 2026.

Trust	Apr-Jun 2025 Episodes	Jul-Sep 2025 Episodes	Oct-Dec 2025 Episodes	Jan-Mar 2026 Episodes
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	27	38	47	28
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	15	14	6	7
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	8	11	21	12
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	13	12	15	13
Western Health & Social Care Trust	11	6	7	9
NI TOTAL	74	81	96	69
NI community TOTAL	57	89	85	71

Bed day data were not available for NHSCT, SHSCT and WHSCT - provisional figures were used this quarter (figures taken from Jan-Mar 2025).

Appendix A

Table 6: Quarterly rates* of *C. difficile* reports in patients aged 65 years and over, by hospital, Apr 2025 – Mar 2026.

Hospital	Apr-Jun 2025	Jul-Sep 2025	Oct-Dec 2025	Jan-Mar 2026
Belfast City Hospital	0.00	71.53	32.56	0.00
Mater Infirmorum	50.82	25.90	32.88	42.13
Musgrave Park Hospital	28.06	34.88	33.18	26.14
NICCO	0.00	53.50	0.00	45.43
Royal Group of Hospitals	27.90	43.28	60.84	29.35
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	28.96	41.55	47.55	29.12
Antrim Area Hospital	30.10	21.79	13.03	17.77
Causeway Hospital	24.15	23.59	0.00	0.00
Dalriada Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mid Ulster Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Moyle Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Robinson Memorial Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Whiteabbey Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	24.01	19.31	8.04	10.71
Ards Hospital	0.00	64.60	0.00	0.00
Downe Hospital	24.61	80.95	55.62	54.88
Lagan Valley Hospital	14.94	45.63	30.27	0.00
Ulster Hospital	10.91	8.19	38.51	23.47
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	12.20	20.63	37.37	21.91
Craigavon Area Hospital	36.44	21.76	7.17	17.73
Daisy Hill Hospital	10.36	10.01	64.39	53.44
Lurgan Hospital	23.43	46.66	22.41	0.00
South Tyrone Hospital	0.00	0.00	31.65	0.00
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	26.76	19.85	23.72	23.12
Altnagelvin Area Hospital	26.28	8.75	12.66	12.54
Omagh Hospital	0.00	29.90	31.44	0.00
South West Acute Hospital	7.13	7.12	14.44	25.45
Waterside Hospital	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Western Health & Social Care Trust	15.98	9.00	13.38	14.94
NI TOTAL	22.22	23.86	28.16	20.88

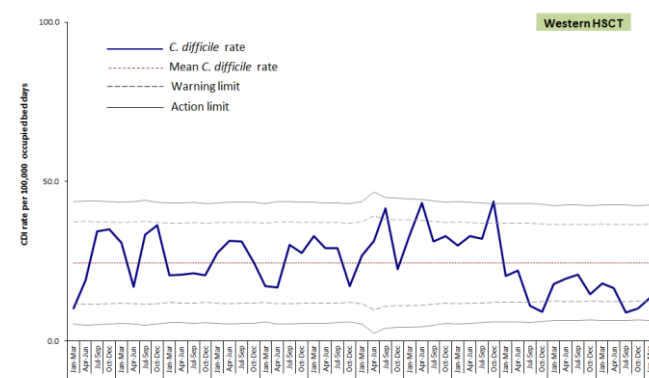
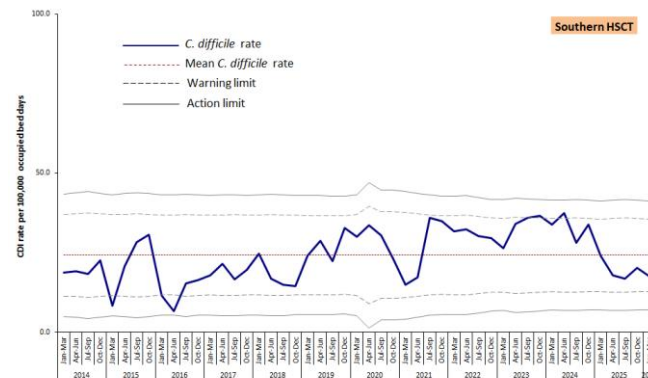
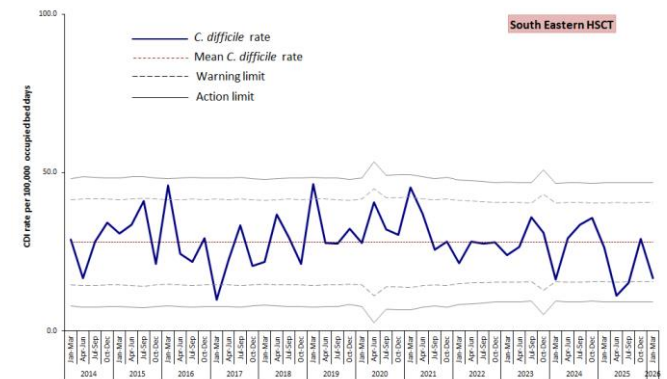
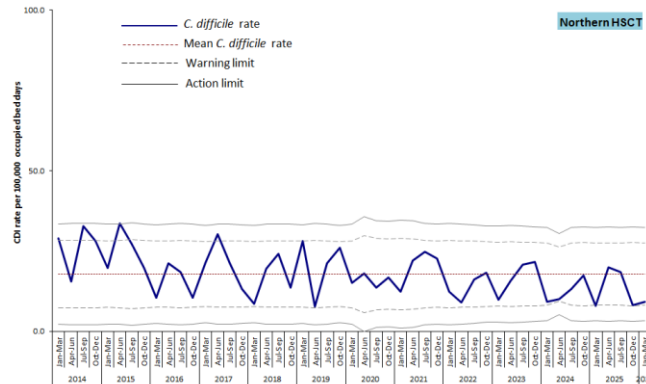
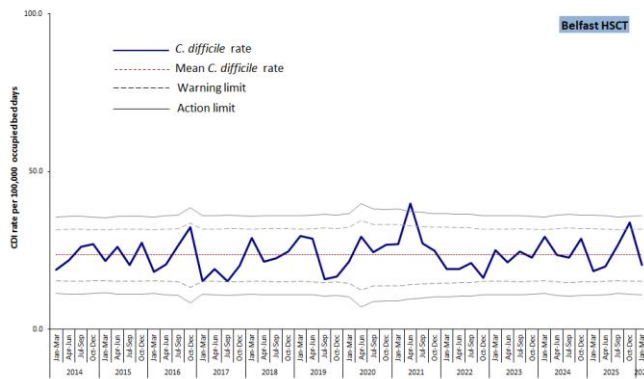
Table 7: Quarterly *C. difficile* reports in patients aged 65 years and over, by HSCT, Apr 2025 – Mar 2026.

Trust	Apr-Jun 2025 Episodes	Jul-Sep 2025 Episodes	Oct-Dec 2025 Episodes	Jan-Mar 2026 Episodes
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	20	29	35	21
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	12	10	4	5
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	6	10	18	11
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	12	9	11	11
Western Health & Social Care Trust	7	4	6	7
NI TOTAL	57	62	74	55
NI community TOTAL	41	70	62	60

Bed day data for patients aged 65 years and over were not available for BHSCT, NHSCT, SHSCT and WHSCT - provisional figures were used this quarter (figures taken from Jan-Mar 2025).

Appendix B

Trends in *C. difficile* rates in inpatients aged 2 years and over, by HSCT and quarter, 2014 – 2026



Appendix C

Table 8: *C. difficile* reports among inpatients* in Northern Ireland aged 2 years and over, by financial year and HSCT

HSCT	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24*	2024/25*	2025/26*
Belfast	132	106	101	128	107	136	121	140
Northern	57	47	34	52	37	49	39	42
South Eastern	82	72	76	69	75	72	90	52
Southern	43	71	50	74	80	99	90	53
Western	65	63	66	80	81	39	49	33
Northern Ireland	379	359	327	403	380	395	389	320

Table 9: *C. difficile* reports among inpatients* in Northern Ireland aged 65 years and over, by financial year and HSCT

HSCT	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24*	2024/25*	2025/26*
Belfast	98	80	80	84	78	96	78	105
Northern	48	39	27	39	31	43	32	31
South Eastern	67	68	68	60	66	63	83	45
Southern	32	57	37	56	63	78	66	43
Western	41	45	51	58	66	30	40	24
Northern Ireland	286	289	263	297	304	310	299	248

*“Inpatient episodes” include all patients categorised as hospital in-patient and ED patients with a positive specimen taken $\geq$ 2 days after the decision to admit date. Previous years include inpatients only.