**Purpose:**

To provide essential information about Clostridium difficile (C. diff) infection, including its symptoms, prevention, and treatment measures. This document aims to educate patients, visitors, and healthcare providers on how to prevent the spread of C. diff and ensure effective care and safety within the hospital environment.

**Procedures:**

1. **Understanding C. diff Infection:**
   * **Symptoms:**
     + Watery diarrhea
     + Fever
     + Loss of appetite
     + Nausea
     + Belly pain and tenderness
   * **Who is at Risk:**
     + Elderly and people with certain medical problems
     + People taking antibiotics
     + Can live outside the human body on bed linens, bed rails, bathroom fixtures, and medical equipment
2. **Treatment:**
   * Antibiotics can treat C. diff
   * Surgery may be needed in severe cases
3. **Prevention Measures in Hospitals:**
   * **Hygiene:**
     + Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for patients
   * **Environmental Cleaning:**
     + Clean hospital rooms and medical equipment used for C. diff patients
   * **Contact Precautions:**
     + Isolate patients with C. diff or share rooms only with other C. diff patients
     + Healthcare providers to wear gloves and gowns when caring for patients with C. diff
     + Visitors must also wear gloves and gowns when in patient rooms
4. **Patient Guidance:**
   * **Hospital Stay:**
     + Stay in hospital rooms as much as possible
     + Avoid common areas like the gift shop or cafeteria
   * **Medication:**
     + Only take antibiotics when necessary and as prescribed
5. **Preventing C. diff Infections:**
   * Ensure healthcare providers clean their hands before and after caring for you
   * Clean your own hands often, especially after using the bathroom and before eating
   * Only take antibiotics as prescribed
6. **Visitor Guidelines:**
   * Visitors unlikely to get C. diff if not on antibiotics
   * Clean hands before and after visiting
   * Ask nurse if protective gear is needed
7. **Post-Hospital Care:**
   * Follow prescription instructions carefully
   * Continue hygiene practices at home
   * Report any new diarrhea to your doctor immediately