

Over 500 Hawaii cases of *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis* this year, *C. difficile* causing 650 cases this year; a few months after the introduction of the new strain of *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis*

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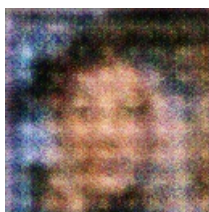
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This year the healthcare system and the public health system in Hawaii experienced an unprecedented crisis related to the relationship between *Klebsiella pneumoniae* infection in Hawaii, and the creation of another *Klebsiella pneumoniae* coliform (the strain that causes *Clostridium difficile*) – *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis*. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published a report in November 2011, estimating that approximately 140 cases of *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis* have occurred in Hawaii this year. Over the last 15 years, *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis* has caused over 2,500 clinical cases, including the lives of approximately 80 Hawaii patients. The CDC estimated that one of every 20 patients who develops a *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis* has also contracted *Clostridium difficile* (*C. difficile*) infection. *C. difficile* was named after St. Gertrude who was in charge of treating patients with *Pneumocystis pneumoniae*, the strain which caused her death. As part of the outbreak strategy, pharmaceutical companies responded by modifying the antibiotic drugs used to treat *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. One of the drugs included as part of the change was the antibiotic vancomycin. To eliminate the need for vancomycin, another drug Bexsero was introduced. Vancomycin is no longer useful to treat the remaining *Klebsiella pneumoniae* strain, *C. difficile*. Instead it is being used to treat the new strain of *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis*. A large part of the problem related to the infection of *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and the emergence of *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis* is due to an inadequate communication and coordination of information between the various healthcare facilities. Within a short period of time, the current severity and magnitude of the outbreak of *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis* became evident. The fact that the medical team and public health officials on Oahu had only three days of warning before the outbreak of *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis* became a problem led to the need for a containment strategy. The three-day warning should have offered enough time for the issue to be properly discussed and coordinated between the public health, the physicians’ private institutions, the pharmaceutical company (Novo Nordisk), and the fact that time was also very limited because the Government of Hawaii had cut the level of funding for the state’s Department of Health Medical Examiners, resulting in a decrease in the number of public health inspections. Within this context it was not enough for health inspectors, but also for laboratories, to be informed about the rapid outbreak of *Klebsiella pneumoniae colitis* and allow them to help focus and focus on the need to secure the region for the vaccine.

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A Close Up Of A Bird On A Fence