



## Quest Diagnostics Launches Simplexa(TM) C. Difficile Universal Direct Test in Europe

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### First test from the Focus Diagnostics' Simplexa product line for the hospital-acquired infection (HAI) market

MADISON, N.J. and CYPRESS, Calif., May 5, 2011 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- Quest Diagnostics Incorporated (NYSE: DGX), the world's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and services, today announced the availability in Europe of the Simplexa C. *difficile* Universal Direct test on the 3M(TM) Integrated Cycler. The new CE marked *in vitro diagnostic* (IVD) Simplexa test enables fast, high volume lab testing, eliminating the traditional extraction step and allowing for processing of up to 94 patient specimens in about an hour.

Focus Diagnostics, a business of Quest Diagnostics and developer of the Simplexa product line, will unveil the new test as well as the Simplexa Epstein Barr (EBV) and BK Virus tests, which were CE marked last month, during the European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Disease Tradeshow, which begins on May 7 in Milan (Exhibit number: 241). A CE mark is a regulatory requirement to sell products in about 35 countries in Europe.

Simplexa tests, running on the 3M(TM) Integrated Cycler, employ real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) to qualitatively and quantitatively detect viruses, bacteria and other agents. The Simplexa C. *difficile* Universal Direct test is performed on liquid or unformed human stool samples and detects toxin producing strains of *Clostridium difficile*, including NAP1/B1/027.

"*Clostridium difficile* is a common cause of antibiotic-associated diarrhea and an extremely important and serious hospital-acquired infection," said Jay M. Lieberman, M.D., medical director for Quest Diagnostics and Focus Diagnostics. "C. *difficile* infections (CDI) range in severity from mild diarrhea to life-threatening pseudomembranous colitis, and result in significant suffering and deaths. Timely diagnosis is essential for clinicians when treating patients presenting with possible C. *difficile* disease."

"Our Simplexa C. *difficile* Universal Direct test will help physicians make a fast, reliable diagnosis of CDI," says Dr. John Hurrell, General Manager at Focus Diagnostics. "This is vital to treating patients and reducing the threat of transmission to other patients."

CDI is a bacterial infection that most commonly affects patients on prolonged use of broad spectrum antibiotics, over 65 in age, and those who have recently undergone gastrointestinal surgery or are immunocompromised. In major European Union (EU) countries, such as Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom, CDI is estimated to be responsible for 1.1 in 1,000 hospital admissions and is expected to double over the next four decades.[1] The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control estimates the financial impact of each CDI case in England can cost euro 5.000 - 15.000. With a European population of 457 million, the potential cost to the Union may exceed euro 3.000 million annually.[2]

Focus Diagnostics launched the Simplexa molecular product line in 2009 with a focus on influenza and respiratory syncytial virus. Since that time, the Simplexa product line has expanded to include Tests for detecting Flu A/B and Respiratory Syncytial virus, EBV, BK virus and *Bordetella pertussis*. Simplexa tests run on the 3M Integrated Cycler, a compact, portable testing platform that can provide results in as few as 60 minutes following sample extraction, as part of an exclusive worldwide agreement with 3M.

In April 2011, the Simplexa/3M technology won a 2011 Edison Award for new science and medical diagnostic product, based on criteria that included technological innovation and marketplace success.

To order the Simplexa EBV or BKV tests, please contact Focus Diagnostics at 800-445-0185 (U.S.) or +49-6026-9499540 (Europe). You may also visit us [FocusDiagnostics.com](http://FocusDiagnostics.com) or [Simplexadx.com](http://Simplexadx.com).

### About Focus Diagnostics

Focus Diagnostics, Inc. is an infectious disease diagnostics company, providing infectious disease reference laboratory services to hospitals and laboratories nationwide, and manufacturing and distributing diagnostic products worldwide. Focus Diagnostics develops innovative tests and products to assist physicians in diagnosing infectious diseases, and often provides the first diagnostic tests in the U.S. for emerging diseases, such as West Nile virus and SARS. HerpeSelect® type-specific HSV serology and West Nile Virus DxSelect(TM) are top-selling Focus Diagnostics products used in laboratories worldwide. Focus Diagnostics is a wholly owned subsidiary of Quest Diagnostics. Visit [FocusDiagnostics.com](http://FocusDiagnostics.com).

### About Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics is the world's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and services that patients and doctors need to make better healthcare decisions. The company offers the broadest access to diagnostic testing services through its network of laboratories and patient service centers, and provides interpretive consultation through its extensive medical and scientific staff. Quest Diagnostics is a pioneer in developing innovative diagnostic tests and advanced healthcare information technology solutions that help improve patient care. For more information, refer to [QuestDiagnostics.com](http://QuestDiagnostics.com).

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[1] Kuijper EJ, et al. Emergence of *Clostridium difficile*-associated disease in North America and Europe. *Clinical Microbiology and Infection* 2006 12(s6) 2-18.

[2] European Center for Disease Prevention and Control website <http://www.ecdc.eu/> on *Clostridium difficile* infection, accessed on May 2, 2011.

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