Letter to the Editor
Code Names for New Compounds

M. Delmee and V. Avesani (Antimicrob. Agents Chemother. 29:374–375, 1986) present data indicating that the most active quinolone against 100 *Clostridium difficile* isolates was compound CI-934. No identification either by USAN or chemical name is presented. Although there are no specific Instructions to Authors on this matter, I had the impression that our first-line journals, such as *Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy*, frowned on such proprietary practices as nondisclosure of test compounds. When dealing with antibiotics that have not yet been completely identified, code number identification is quite acceptable. However, this should not be permitted in the case of chemosynthesized agents whose structures are known before outside investigators obtain them for testing.

Samuel M. Ringel
Ringel Associates
Tamarac, FL 33320

Editor's Reply

Dr. Ringel raises an important issue. As new antimicrobial agents undergo development, they are usually given code numbers (which may be multiple, if the same compound is developed by more than one company). As the chemical structure of the compound is worked out, more precise identification is possible. It is not, however, until generic names are formulated that it becomes relatively simple to identify the new agents in scientific publications. The result of all of this is that new drugs are often indexed under a variety of headings and individuals working in the field must therefore be constantly alert for this phenomenon when carrying out literature searches. Ideally, code names should be dropped as soon as generic names are available and, if chemical structures are known, these should be mentioned along with the code number for those agents not yet possessing generic identification.

The agent in question, CI-934, has not been issued a generic name. Its chemical formula, however, is known and is 1-ethyl-7-[[ethylamino)methyl]-1-pyrrolidinyl]-6,8-difluoro-1,4-dihydro-4-oxo-3-quinolone-carboxylic acid (M. A. Cohen, T. J. Griffin, P. A. Bien, C. L. Heifetz, and J. M. Domagala, Antimicrob. Agents Chemother. 28:766–772, 1985).