Safety Alert 002/16

Vancomycin Intravenous preparations – Disruption to supply (Revised 20 December 2016)

20 December 2016

Distributed to:

- Chief Executives
- Directors of Clinical Governance
- Director Regulation and Compliance Unit

Action required by:

- Chief Executives
- Directors of Clinical Governance

We recommend you also inform:

- Emergency Departments
- Intensive Care Units
- Infectious Diseases Physicians
- Cardiology
- Cardiothoracic surgery
- Orthopaedics
- Respiratory medicine
- Directors of Medical Services
- Directors of Nursing
- Directors of Pharmacy

Deadline for completion of action

22 December 2016

Expert Reference Group

Content reviewed by:

- Office of the Chief Health Officer
- Chief Pharmacist Unit
- Clinical Excellence Commission
- HealthShare
- AMS Expert Advisory Committee

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Review date

June 2017

Background

All three suppliers of vancomycin intravenous preparations (Pfizer/Hospira, Alphapharm and Sandoz) in the Australian market have depleted stocks. A return to normal stock levels is expected in February 2017.

The affected products are:

Presentation	AUST R
DBL Vancomycin (as hydrochloride) powder for injection 500 mg	62603
DBL Vancomycin (as hydrochloride) powder for injection 1 g	62595
Vancomycin Alphapharm (as hydrochloride) powder for injection 500 mg	153438
Vancomycin Alphapharm (as hydrochloride) powder for injection 1 g	153439
Vancomycin Sandoz (as hydrochloride) powder for injection 500 mg	100021
Vancomycin Sandoz (as hydrochloride) powder for injection 1 g	100011

Vancomycin intravenous (IV) infusion is used for the treatment of potentially life threatening Gram-positive bacterial infections (suspected or known to be resistant to first-line antimicrobials) including bloodstream infections due to methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).

Oral vancomycin is not absorbed systemically and is NOT a substitute for IV vancomycin. Intravenous teicoplanin may be a substitute for vancomycin IV infusion for some indications.

Medsurge Healthcare P/L is able to supply an alternative product *Vancomycin for injection* in both 500 mg and 1g vials on a temporary basis; this product is registered and marketed in Canada by Sterimax Inc. Although this product is not registered in Australia it can be supplied under an exemption granted by the Therapeutic Good Administration under section 19A (s19A) of the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989.

Actions required by Local Health Districts/Networks

1. Distribute this notice to all stakeholders and all clinical departments.
2. Remove and quarantine stock from clinical areas where vancomycin IV infusion preparations are not routinely used.
3. Use alternatives to vancomycin IV infusion where possible, depending on the infection and patient factors. (N.B. daptomycin is also in short supply, and should not be used in preference to available vancomycin products). The National Centre for Antimicrobial Stewardship provides some advice on suitable alternatives. Their fact sheet is available at: https://www.ncas-australia.org/news-and-events
   Clinicians that are unsure about the suitability of alternative antimicrobials should seek advice from antimicrobial stewardship teams and/or infectious diseases/clinical microbiology services.
4. Reserve existing stock of vancomycin IV infusion for indications that cannot be treated by other available antimicrobials.
5. Develop a local plan to manage the supply shortage, including determining expected time of arrival of stock on order and strategies for any delays, ensuring there are available supplies for critical situations in all facilities.
6. If required, obtain and use the substitute unregistered product (approved under s19A) of vancomycin IV infusion during the temporary shortage. N.B. s19A approved stock may take two to three weeks to arrive.
7. Ensure a system is in place to document actions taken.