



12 May 2017

Distributed to:

- Chief Executives
- Directors of Clinical Governance
- Director Regulation & Compliance Branch
- Healthshare
- NSW Ambulance

Action required by:

- Chief Executives
- Directors of Clinical Governance

We recommend you also inform:

- Directors of Nursing and Midwifery
- Directors of Medical Services
- Directors of Medical Imaging including interventional Radiology
- Directors/Managers Operating Theatres
- Directors/Managers Emergency Departments
- Clinical Product Managers
- Directors of Anaesthetics
- Managers Hospital in the Home
- Directors Haematology and Oncology

Deadline for completion of action

12 May 2017

Expert Reference Group

Content reviewed by:

- Chief Health Officer
- Clinical Excellence Commission

Clinical Excellence Commission

Tel. 02 9269 5500
Fax. 02 9269 5599

Email:
Cec-quality@health.nsw.gov.au

Internet Website:
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/quality/sabs>

Intranet Website
<http://internal.health.nsw.gov.au/quality/sabs/>

Review date
May 2018

Safety Alert 003/17

Infection from contaminated ultrasound gel

NSW Health has been alerted to life threatening infections associated with ultrasound gel contaminated with *Burkholderia cenocepacia*. There have been eight reported cases in Queensland and ACT.

Samples of the gel have been tested and confirmed to contain the same organism as that isolated in patient cases.

The gel is supplied in a kit with a sheath for ultrasound use and is used for insertion of central venous catheters (CVC) or peripherally inserted central catheters (PICC). The gel product is labelled as sterile.

The kit is supplied by Meditech Systems Limited, manufactured by Linmed Medical. The gel is labelled Medical Ultrasound Gel. It is possible that the same gel is included in other ultrasound probe kits. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) investigation is ongoing, and alerts regarding other products may be issued.



Burkholderia cenocepacia is a species of Gram-negative bacteria that is common in the environment, can form a biofilm with itself, and is resistant to many antibiotics.

NSW Health facilities should

1. Be alert to, and consider early intervention for potential infections with *Burkholderia cenocepacia* in patients who have had CVC or PICC lines inserted, and who are exhibiting signs of infection
2. Consult with infectious disease and/or microbiology specialists if infection with this bacteria is suspected

Actions required by Local Health Districts/Networks

1. Forward this safety alert to all relevant stakeholders
2. Immediately remove all stock of Medical Ultrasound Gel (Meditech Systems Limited) from clinical use
3. Notify any incidents relating to the gel in the Incident Information Management System (IIMS)
4. Notify any isolation of *B. cenocepacia* to: pheo_operations@doh.health.nsw.gov.au
5. Monitor the TGA site for updates <https://www.tga.gov.au/>
6. Report to CEC that the above actions have been completed by Friday 12 May at 1800 hours