

**Issue: Strep A Rapid Response Kits**

Raised by: Eddy Vigants (HCM, Batchelor)

Background: Query on the usefulness of rapid response kits that qualitatively detect the presence of Strep A on throat swabs. Would these kits be worth introducing to remote health centres to promote appropriate commencement of antibiotic therapy?

Discussion: Validation of these rapid kits in different settings has been problematic in the past and there is concern how they might perform in the context of high bacteria burden as found in remote communities – particularly other streptococci. Consequently, advice is that managing sore throats syndromically should continue. (CARPA STM 4th Ed, page 322)

However, there is recognition that these tests are increasingly sensitive and specific, and they certainly allow a very cost effective means of diagnosis if not followed up by culture. (Cost for a pack of 25 tests is \$116).

There is interest in performing some comparative studies on sore throat in the NT, and as highlighted by this Best Practice referral, such a study could include validation of these test kits in the remote setting.

Consultation: Dr Bart Currie, Dr Jonathon Carepetis, Dr Michael Lowe

References: Product information www.biostar.com/downloads/ACC_GAS_PI_05118.17.pdf
FDA product comparison www.fda.gov/cdrh/pdf2/k023766.pdf
Accuracy of rapid strep testing in patients who have had recent streptococcal pharyngitis www.jabfm.org/cgi/content/abstract/15/4/261
CARPA STM 4th Ed

Outcome: At this point, use of Strep A Rapid Response kits are not recommended until further studies confirm their appropriateness for use in Remote.