

**Issue: Reinstatement of Bicillin LA**

Raised by: Re-instatement of product

Background: In July 2006, the Benzathine penicillin product "Bicillin LA" was discontinued from production. Short term approval was provided by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for the interim use of an alternate Benzathine penicillin product, "Pan Benzathine Penicillin".

Discussion: In April 2008, the product "Bicillin LA" is again available in Australia.

The interim TGA approval allowing Australian use of Pan Benzathine that was instituted while Bicillin LA was unavailable will not continue. Similarly the PBS listing of Pan Benzathine will cease on 1st August 2008.

Existing stock of Pan Benzathine in pharmacies and health centres may be used till exhausted. Pharmacies should only restock with Bicillin LA from this point.

While the Pan Benzathine product has caused clinicians a number of problems with preparation and administration, many clinicians and clients have preferred this lower viscosity product. Regardless, the TGA approval for Pan Benzathine is not ongoing at this stage and therefore the option to continue purchasing this product does not exist.

Clinical protocols (CARPA STM & WBM) endorsed by Remote Health Branch that include the use of Bicillin have previously been flagged with a distinctive sticker indicating the applicability of an alternate protocol using Pan Benzathine. This alternate protocol has been housed in the Additional Clinical Protocols folder. It is suggested that the stickers and alternate protocol remain in place at this stage. The wording of the stickers placed in copies of the CARPA STM and WBM only indicate the use of Pan Benzathine when Bicillin is not available; not that Pan Benzathine must be used. There have been numerous occasions over recent years when Bicillin production has been limited, and if this were to occur again, and the use of Pan Benzathine approved again, it is considered easier to have the alternate protocol already in place.

It should be noted that the new Bicillin LA product is the same formulation and dosage as previously, although the pre-filled syringe is different. The product should not be decanted into other syringes.

Health Centre staff are reminded that Bicillin LA requires refrigeration.

Consultation: Andrew Crowhurst (RDH Pharmacy), Carol Duke (RHD Program)

References: "Bicillin L-A Now Available" Letter from Aspen Pharmacare to CARPA Membership 22 April 08

Outcome: **Remote Health staff to recommence the use of Bicillin L-A once existing stock of Pan Benzathine Penicillin is depleted.**