



**Issue: Pan Benzathine Administration**

*Raised by:* Various

*Background:* The Pan Benzathine (Pan Benz) product was introduced into Australia in July 2006 when L.A. Bicillin production was temporarily suspended.

Pan Benz, however, is continuing to frustrate many providers and clients due to the reconstituted product frequently clogging needles during preparation or administration. The number of official reports of failed administration of Pan Benz does not reflect the anecdotal experience of many providers; there are accounts of up to 40% of injections having failed. While exact numbers of failed injections cannot be ascertained, it is recognised that a significant problem exists.

*Discussion:* The Best Practice group met with a wider group of interested parties including reps from Pharmacy, CDC/RHD program, Community Health and NGO remote health services.

A few key facts are recognised in approaching this problem:

- long acting benzathine penicillin is regarded as the only therapy delivering acceptable prophylaxis for Rheumatic Heart Disease in our context, and additionally is a key agent in STI management.
- the Pan Benz product is the only benzathine penicillin product currently available in Australia, and it is not possible for an approved alternative to be available in the short/medium term
- Reports indicate the Bicillin product will be available again in late 2007 at the earliest

In keeping with these constraints, attention seems best centred on enhancing preparation and injection technique to improve successful administration. Aspects of technique that have proven beneficial were canvassed and collated. Subsequent discussion has sought to elicit those practices that can be seen to be effectual and retain professional standards of practice. Detail of discussion is beyond the scope of this communiqué but are summarised in the accompanying advice sheet 'Tips for Administering Pan Benzathine Penicillin'.

During discussion, concern for staff (and others) with Penicillin allergy was noted, and that significant care needs to be taken when those individuals are present. Similarly, there is concern that skin exposure following spray of penicillin; such as might occur when a blocked syringe is forced, may lead to sensitisation. Awareness of this risk should be communicated amongst relevant staff, with due care exercised.

When LA Bicillin supply was suspended in 2006, the significant cooperation that occurred nationally to facilitate an alternate benzathine product being quickly made available was impressive. However, it is felt to be important to flag to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), the significant user issues that have come to light, and continued, in the subsequent uptake of the Pan Benz product. This notification to the TGA will be co-ordinated through Centre for Disease Control.

*Consultation:* Extended Best Practice discussion group; Julie Parras (Product Manager Aspen Pharmaceuticals)

*References:* [Protocol for the Preparation of Benzathine Penicillin, Public Health Agency of Canada;](#)  
[Injection Technique Tips for Pan Benzathine Penicillin, Aspen Pharmacare Australia Pty. Ltd.](#)

*Outcome:* A document 'Tips for Administering Pan Benzathine Penicillin' will be circulated to raise awareness of the accepted techniques known to improve successful administration rates. Notification will be made to the TGA regarding the difficulties being experienced. National developments in the supply of benzathine penicillin products will be monitored.