



DATE:	10/04/2016
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Karen Murphy, PhD, RN, Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	<b>Link between Nurse Assist saline flush syringes and <i>Burkholderia cepacia</i> bloodstream infections</b>
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
LOCATION:	Statewide
STREET ADDRESS:	Statewide
COUNTY:	Statewide
MUNICIPALITY:	Statewide
ZIP CODE:	Statewide

**This transmission is a "Health Alert": conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.**

**HOSPITALS:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, INFECTION CONTROL, NURSING, AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL

**EMS COUNCILS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**FQHCs:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

**LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, INFECTION CONTROL, AND NURSING STAFF IN YOUR FACILITY

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH), in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other state health departments, is currently investigating an outbreak of *Burkholderia cepacia* bloodstream infections. While the investigation is still in its early stages, contaminated prefilled saline flush syringes manufactured by Nurse Assist, Haltom City, Texas have been implicated as the source. The PADOH Bureau of Laboratories performed testing of Nurse Assist 10-milliliter saline flush syringes that were obtained from a Pennsylvania long-term care facility with reported cases; all unopened syringes tested were found to have been contaminated with *B. cepacia*.

**PADOH recommends that any health care facilities, providers, or anyone else who have received Nurse Assist prepackaged three-, five- and 10-milliliter syringes of saline flush immediately discontinue using and sequester these saline products until further notice.** At this time, DO NOT discard/destroy the products. DO NOT send flushes back to suppliers. All products should be placed together in a locked office. Guidance on the sequestered saline flush syringes will be forthcoming.

At this time, PADOH has identified 17 cases among Pennsylvania residents in seven facilities. Pennsylvania facilities known to have received these products have been notified and have discontinued

their use. However, this is a rapidly evolving situation, and it is possible that other facilities in Pennsylvania may have received these products. It is not yet known that all affected products have been identified.

PADOH continues to work with the CDC, the FDA and other states on the response to this outbreak.

Any questions or concerns regarding these recommendations should be directed to the PADOH at 1-877-PA-HEALTH or your local health department.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of October 4, 2016, but may be modified in the future. We will continue to post updated information regarding the most common questions about this subject.