



DATE:	7/29/2021
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Alison Beam, JD, Acting Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	Increase in Cases of Non-respiratory <i>Burkholderia cepacia</i> in Pennsylvania
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

### Summary

- The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) are advising facilities and providers of multiple clusters of *Burkholderia cepacia* complex (Bcc) infections associated with 5 acute care facilities in Philadelphia (2), Montgomery (1) Dauphin (1) and Chester (1) counties.
- To date, a total of 40 positive Bcc cultures have been identified including the following sources: blood (37), wound (1), amniotic fluid (1) and bile (1).
- DOH and PDPH request that healthcare facilities notify their local health department or the Bureau of Epidemiology immediately about clusters (2 cases or more in the same facility) of non-respiratory Bcc occurring on or after 6/1/2021.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) are advising facilities and providers of multiple clusters of *Burkholderia cepacia* complex (Bcc) infections associated with 5 acute care facilities in Philadelphia (2), Montgomery (1), Dauphin (1) and Chester (1) counties. **To date, a total of 40 positive Bcc cultures have been identified including the following sources: blood (37), wound (1), amniotic fluid (1) and bile (1).**

DOH and the local health departments in Philadelphia, Montgomery and Chester counties are obtaining support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as we continue to investigate simultaneous clusters of Bcc infections. A remarkable increase above baseline in cases was observed during June 2021 through July 2021. No patients in these heterogenous clusters are known to have cystic fibrosis.

The Department of Health recommends the following:

**Clusters of non-respiratory *B. cepacia* positive cultures since June 1, 2021, should be immediately reported to DOH at 1-877-PA-HEALTH or to the local health department. Philadelphia cases should be reported to 215-685-6748. Additionally, available non-respiratory *B. cepacia* isolates should be saved at the clinical laboratory of origin until further notice.**

*B. cepacia*, typically associated with respiratory infections in individuals with cystic fibrosis and other respiratory diseases, can also be transmitted by contaminated medications and devices. *B. cepacia* is frequently resistant to many common antibiotics and decisions on the treatment should be made by using antibiotic susceptibility testing.

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

More information about *B. cepacia* can be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention webpage: <http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/bCepacia.html>

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 July 29, 2021 but may be modified in the future. We will continue to post updated information regarding the most common questions about this subject.