December 2016

**Drug shortages putting patients at RISK**

Senior hospital clinicians are calling on state and territory health departments to address the growing problem of drug shortages in our hospitals.

They say delays in the system are interrupting the supply of essential medications, such as Vancomycin and other antimicrobials.

“Disruptions are becoming increasingly common in Australian hospitals and for people who rely on antibiotics that’s a real concern” says Professor Peter Collignon, a professor of microbiology at the Australian National University.

“Often treatment is time-critical and the use of alternative agents may be associated with poorer effectiveness, an increased risk of resistance and/or greater toxicity”

Professor Collignon, who is also patron of The Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control (ACIPC), says government should take a greater responsibility in maintaining secure supply.

“We are urging state and territory departments of health, who are primarily responsible for hospital care, to ensure that provisions for the supply of antibiotics recognise their important role in treating severe infection”

Professor Allen Cheng, from the Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases (ASID), suggests that current state contracts should include provisions for the continued supply of drugs of clinical significance.

“They should also provide notice regarding potential problems and have an obligation to source alternative supplies where they exist.”

ENDS

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About ACIPC

The ACIPC is the peak body for Infection Prevention and Control in the Australasian region. The college supports infection prevention and control professionals by providing them with support, networking, knowledge and up to date information relevant to their area of practice. [www.acipc.org.au](http://www.acipc.org.au)

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About ASID

The Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases is the peak professional body for infectious diseases and microbiology in the region.  Membership encompasses Infectious Diseases Physicians, Clinical Microbiologists, Scientists, Infection Control Practitioners, Public Health Physicians, Sexual Health Physicians, Veterinarians and others eminent in the field of infectious diseases.

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