

Cluster of Burkholderia cepacia complex infection under DH investigation (with photos)

The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health (DH) is today (July 28) investigating a cluster of Burkholderia cepacia complex (BCC) infection affecting five renal patients.

The DH received notification from the Hospital Authority (HA) that the Kowloon East Cluster (KEC) has identified a cluster of BCC infection in peritoneal dialysis patients. Investigations by the KEC renal teams identified BCC from the clinical specimens collected from the catheter exit site of five peritoneal dialysis patients from late March to mid-June this year. The affected persons involved three males and two females, aged 23 to 67. One patient developed peritonitis and was hospitalised for treatment. He had been discharged and the other four patients had recovered after management.

According to the surveillance by the HA, BCC was identified in some samples of the same lot (lot number: 19090428) of a spray dressing named JUC found to be used by the patients for skin disinfection and catheter exit site care. The DH urges members of the public not to use the product for wound care because the product may be contaminated by bacteria.

Based on the product information, the JUC spray dressing forms a physical film on skin or wound surface. It is classified as a medical device based on the mode of action. The product is manufactured by NMS Technologies Co., Ltd and distributed by JUC Biomaterial Co. Ltd. The distributor is voluntarily recalling the affected lot of the product from the market and has set up a hotline (2559 5227) to answer related enquiries.

According to the local supplier, the affected product had been distributed to public and private hospitals, private clinics and community pharmacies.

The DH's epidemiological investigation is still on-going.

"Members of the public, especially those who have weakened immune systems, such as renal patients, should pay extra attention to personal hygiene. The public should also follow the instructions given by healthcare workers on wound care," a spokesman for the DH said.

"Burkholderia cepacia is a bacteria which is commonly found in water, soil, and moist environments. It is generally not pathogenic to healthy person but those who have weakened immune systems or chronic lung diseases may be more susceptible to infection with the bacteria," the spokesman explained.