



## Safety signal

### Benzathine benzylpenicillin tetrahydrate Bicillin LA<sup>®</sup>

**For information to:** Chief pharmacists, quality and risk managers, directors of nursing, chief medical officers, medicines advisory committees, medical officers of health, public health physicians, public health nurses, general practitioners

### Nature of signal

- Following international practice, the name and strength description for Bicillin LA<sup>®</sup> has been changed.
- The expression of the name will now be benzathine benzylpenicillin tetrahydrate.
- The expression of product strength will now be 1,200,000 units/2.3 mL.

	New labelling	Old labelling
Product name	benzathine benzylpenicillin tetrahydrate Alternative name: benzathine penicillin tetrahydrate	benzathine benzylpenicillin
Strength expression	1,200,000 units/2.3 mL	900 mg/2.3 mL

- There are **no other changes**. The active ingredient, the strength of active ingredient, the product information, the dosing and the administration remain the same.
- For further information see the New Zealand Formulary and data sheet ([here](#)).
- It is anticipated that the new-labelled product will be available ex-wholesalers from the second week in March 2019.
- During the transition period the product labelling may not match the description (product name and/or dose description) on prescriptions, local guidelines or standing orders.
- All dosing quantities in the data sheet are now expressed in terms of 'units', and dosing calculations should be based on these amounts and the new expression of product strength (1,200,000 units/2.3 mL).

### Suggested actions

1. Distribute this Safety Signal to prescribers and administrators of Bicillin LA<sup>®</sup>.
2. Review existing prescriptions: if necessary, issue a new prescription with the revised Bicillin LA<sup>®</sup> details (eg, product name and/or dose description).
3. Review and update local treatment guidelines and pathways that include Bicillin LA<sup>®</sup>.
4. Review and update standing orders that include Bicillin LA<sup>®</sup>.

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or contact William Allan: [william.allan@hqsc.govt.nz](mailto:william.allan@hqsc.govt.nz)

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