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Infection Control & Clinical Quality

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Maryland hospital shuts down NICU after deadly bacteria discovered

Written by Mackenzie Bean | August 09, 2016

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The neonatal intensive care unit of the Prince George's County Hospital Center in Cheverly, Md., was shut down on Tuesday after three patients tested positive for the Pseudomonas bacteria, according to [The Washington Post](#).

Testing was prompted after the recent deaths of two patients, but those deaths have not been officially linked to the presence of the water-borne bacteria.[ac2] The three babies that tested positive for Pseudomonas have not shown symptoms of an illness.

Nine NICU patients have been transferred to nearby hospitals while authorities attempt to pinpoint the source of the bacteria, which was discovered in a water pipe.

The hospital is taking steps to determine the root cause of the bacteria and moved patients out of the unit in an act of caution, said Delores Butler, spokesperson for Dimensions Healthcare Corporation, the nonprofit organization that operates the hospital.

Water will be tested several times and decontaminated before the NICU can reopen, according to the Post.

While Pseudomonas bacteria can cause mild symptoms like skin rashes or swimmer's ear in healthy individuals, it can be fatal for people with compromised immune systems who are more susceptible to infections.

Becker's Hospital Review has reached out to Prince George's County Hospital Center for a comment.

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