Wide variation in disk quality in 16 disks from 9 manufacturers.

The warning was issued 2015 and reiterated in 2016, 2018 and 2019. It will be removed when problem is solved.

During 2014 and 2015, EUCAST has evaluated the disk potency of 16 strategically important antibiotic disks from nine manufacturers of disks for antimicrobial susceptibility testing. Results from the first study were released at ECCMID 2014. Manufacturers were offered an opportunity to supply new disk lots to possibly improve their results. The second round of testing was presented at ECCMID in Amsterdam. Some manufacturers have asked that EUCAST performs further checks on new lots produced to try to right poor quality in previous lots. The EUCAST evaluation was published in CMI 2018.

The study disclosed some good and some poor quality among disks and manufacturers. Disks from a few of them were consistently of a high quality whereas the opposite was true for some manufacturers. Laboratories are warned against the use of some disks and manufacturers are urged to improve their manufacturing process.

Comment added 30 June, 2019: It is the responsibility of manufacturers to provide high quality material BUT it is the responsibility of laboratories to perform quality control to guarantee that the material used performs to the standards of the laboratory and the health care system. The fact that a manufacturer failed on a few disks should not exclude the manufacturer from the market. The fact that a manufacturer performed well in the 2014 and 2017 EUCAST surveys, does not guarantee eternal high quality. Laboratories should ascertain that products meet their expectations whenever a new batch of material is introduced for use. Laboratories are recommended to insist on a clause in purchase contracts which the provider of susceptibility testing material are held responsible for the quality of the material.