

2018 01 26 Refugee Action Coalition Media Release

## Fears For Two-Week Old Refugee Baby On Nauru

There are serious concerns for the welfare of a two-week baby boy on Nauru.

The baby was born to Iranian refugees on 12 January.

The baby has a seriously infected umbilicus that has been left untreated since Thursday after the baby's mother was turned away at the Nauru hospital being told that the baby was too young for antibiotics and to bathe the infection with salty water.

The infection had become so severe by Thursday night that the baby's feet were swollen and bleeding. Doctors took six attempts to get intravenous drip into the baby late Thursday night (Nauru time).

Yet no antibiotics were administered until Friday lunch-time. It seems that the antibiotics were only administered after advocates had contacted IHMS and Border Force in Australia.

It is understood that the baby's temperature has not been checked since 4.00am Nauru time.

“Tragically, this is yet another example of medical negligence on Nauru that may well have put this baby's life at risk.. It would be unacceptable in Australia; it should be unacceptable in Nauru,” said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition. “There is a very real risk of septicaemia in such situations and Nauru is a long way from life-saving medical intervention. Monitoring the baby's temperature is an elementary measure of the scale of the infection.

“The safest measure is to arrange the baby's medical evacuation. The fate of this baby's life – like the lives of so many others on Nauru - rests with Border Force and Minister Dutton. In scores of cases, they have ignored doctors' recommendations for medical treatment.

“That can't be allowed to happen. Bring the baby and his family to Australia. ”

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

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Posted by: Ian Rintoul <[rintoulian10@gmail.com](mailto:rintoulian10@gmail.com)>