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INFORMATION CIRCULAR FOR PHARMACISTS IN TASMANIA

1. Changes to the Tasmanian Poisons List

Consistent with the recommendations of the National Drugs and Poisons Scheduling Committee, a number of amendments will be made to the Tasmanian Poisons List that take effect from the 9th May 2007. The consolidated Poisons List is available on the website www.thelaw.tas.gov.au

1.1 Schedule 2- Amendments

TERBINAFINE for dermal use **except** in preparations for the treatment of tinea pedis.

CICLOPIROX in preparations for dermal use containing 2 per cent or less of ciclopirox **except** in preparations for dermal use for the treatment of tinea pedis.

***Background:** Consistent with the scheduling of the other antifungal agents, terbinafine and ciclopirox for the treatment of tinea pedis have been made unscheduled (Note that unscheduled status is for this restricted indication only).*

1.2 Schedule 3- New entries

BUTOCONAZOLE in preparations for vaginal use.

***Background:** Butoconazole for vaginal use was included in Schedule 3 on the basis of its safety and efficacy being similar to the other imidazole anti-fungal agents included in Schedule 3. The committee also included this substance in Appendix H (allowing advertising) consistent with the listing of other antifungals.*

1.3 Schedule 3- Revised entry

NICOTINIC ACID for human therapeutic use in dosage preparations containing 250 mg or less of nicotinic acid **except:**

- (a) in preparations containing 100 mg or less of nicotinic acid per dosage unit
- or
- (b) nicotinamide.

***Background:** On the basis of the toxicology of nicotinic acid and the experience of the Australian marketplace, the NDPSC agreed to include nicotinic acid in Schedule 4 except where included in other schedules, and to amend the Schedule 3 entry to include products between 100mg and 250mg of nicotinic acid.*

1.4 Schedule 4- New entry

POTASSIUM CHLORIDE in oral preparations for human therapeutic use **except:**

- (a) when containing less than 600mg of potassium chloride per dosage unit;
- (b) in preparations for oral rehydration therapy;
- (c) in preparations for oral use for bowel cleansing prior to diagnostic medical and surgical procedures; or
- (c) in preparations for enteral feeding.

***Background:** After input from industry regarding the capture of previously unscheduled glucosamine sulphate products (complexed with significant quantities of potassium chloride) there was re-assessment of the previously decided 100mg cutoff for Schedule 4. The evidence pointed to a low risk with these products and therefore, as detailed in the entry above, a number of products have been accommodated outside Schedule 4. In addition oral rehydration therapy, bowel cleansing products and enteral feeds have been exempted.*

2. Other important information for pharmacists

2.1 Handwriting of Schedule 8 prescriptions

Please note that the *Poisons Regulations 2002* require that only one copy of a Schedule 8 prescription is required to be completed in the doctor's own handwriting. The copy to be handwritten must be the one retained by the pharmacist. The use of handwriting assists in verifying the legitimacy of a prescription. Both copies must include the doctor's handwritten signature.

2.2. Nurse immunisers

The *Poisons Regulations 2002* have been amended to allow registered nurses, who have met certain educational requirements and who have been approved by the Nursing Board of Tasmania, to administer Schedule 4 vaccines independently of a medical practitioner. In addition the Director of Public Health must approve the specific immunization program in which the nurse will engage. Authorisation is granted for the administration of vaccines specified in the approval.

A pharmacist may supply vaccines to an approved nurse immunizer. A pharmacist should obtain copies of the following from the nurse immunizer:

1. A copy of the nurse's current approval from the Nursing Board
2. A copy of the approval from the Director of Public Health (including the list of approved vaccines).

Please note that under these arrangements the order must be placed by the authorised nurse and not by an organization or company. Supply and invoicing must be to the nurse immuniser, though payment may be by other persons.

2.3 Pharmacy security and the keeping of keys

As advised in our earlier faxstream, there were a number of burglaries and attempted burglaries of pharmacies in both the Hobart and Launceston areas in March. Your attention is drawn to Regulation 24 of the Poisons Regulations 2002 and Section 23 of the Pharmacy Code issued by the Pharmacy Board:

1. Regulation 24(1)(b) of the *Poisons Regulations 2002* requires that the pharmacist must “retain the key either on his or her person or in a place not readily accessible to other persons.” Further specification is made by the Pharmacy Code “Keys or details of a safe’s combination must not be left on the pharmacy premises while the pharmacy is closed (23.2).”
2. The Pharmacy Code states that “Pharmacies are required to be fitted with a security intrusion detector alarm which is control room monitored to a central agency on a 24 hour basis (23.1).” Please note that any attempt to interfere with the telephone lines and security provision to a pharmacy should be reported to Tasmania Police.

2.4 Scheduling of diclofenac suppositories

Queries have been received regarding the scheduling of diclofenac suppositories. Please note that diclofenac suppositories are included in Schedule 4.

Please contact this Branch if you have any queries.

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