

NSW/QLD EXCEPTIONAL DRUGS LIST COMMITTEE

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CIRCULAR – EFFECTIVE 1 MAY 2013

The NSW/QLD Exceptional Drug List Committee met on 21 March 2013 to undertake its regular review of the list in the light of recent PBS changes.

For information attached is a copy of the EDL – **effective 1 May 2013 – this edition supercedes all previous versions of the EDL. Please note this will be the final EDL list circulated.**

Please ensure that this information is forwarded to ICU/CCU/Radiology/Pharmacy and all other appropriate personnel within your organisation.

AMENDMENTS TO EDL – PBS CHANGES (September 2012 to March 2013 inclusive)

1 September 2012 PBS Changes

No PBS amendments of relevance to the EDL.

1 October 2012 PBS Changes

No PBS amendments of relevance to the EDL

1 November 2012 PBS Changes

No update issued in November.

1 December 2012 PBS Changes

No PBS amendments of relevance to the EDL, however there were some significant amendments to Chemotherapy drugs.

For information it was noted that Rivaroxaban (Xarelto) – an oral form of Clexane was added to the PBS with effect from 1 December 2012.

1 January 2013 – PBS Changes

No PBS amendments of relevance to the EDL

1 February 2013 PBS Changes

No PBS amendments of relevance to the EDL.

For information, it was noted that a brand addition – Gabapentin (Pfizer), an analgesic agent, was added to the PBS with effect from 1 February 2013.

1 March 2013 PBS Changes

For information, it was noted that the Pregabalin range, for the treatment of neuropathic pain in palliative care patients and those with long term nerve pain had been PBS listed/streamlined from 1 March 2013.

Changes to the PBS Schedule from 1 December 2012

It was noted that from 1 December 2012 the Pharmaceutical Benefits Division would transition its information management systems to PharmCIS (Pharmaceutical Consolidated Information System).

Below is an extract from a circular issued by the PBS Publications Team:

PharmCIS streamlines existing data sources and provides an integrated environment for the management of Pharmaceutical Benefits Division business, supporting the approval and listing of medicines on the PBS.

From 1 December 2012 the PBS will include Australian Medicines Terminology (AMT) identifiers and preferred term descriptions for the AMT concepts of Medicinal Products, Medicinal Product Packs and Trade Product Packs. In particular, the PBS data will use the Medicinal Product Pack as the standardised descriptor of dosage form and strength resulting in the consistent depiction of pack size in these descriptions. Detailed information about the AMT may be found on the NEHTA website. The use of AMT supports broader e-health initiatives such as electronic medication management programmes, e-prescribing and the Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record.

The introduction of PharmCIS provides an opportunity to structure the indication information contained in restrictions, including authority required streamlined items. The aim is for PBS restrictions to have a uniform structure which will simplify the development of medical software by codifying the data elements. The change will be rolled out progressively across the PBS formulary commencing in December 2012.

Disbanding of EDL Committee

The EDL Committee was formed in 1996 to establish a list of Exceptional Drugs for benefit purposes in an environment of per diem funding. With the progressive introduction of episodic payments from the late 1990's and associated changes to contractual arrangements, the purpose of the Committee was reviewed in 2007, at which time it was agreed that the purpose of the EDL had changed and that it had essentially become a reference document for funding contracts. As a consequence of this review, it was agreed that no new items would be added to the EDL but that the Committee would continue to meet 2-3 times per annum to review the list in light of PBS amendments and to provide a forum for discussion of topical pharmacy issues and receive feedback from the private hospital HSD Working Party representative on relevant pharmacy matters.

The Committee has continued to meet for the past 5 years and whilst it has been a valuable information sharing forum, there have been minimal changes to the PBS affecting the EDL and no new items have been added during the period, although the list has continued to be used by a number of hospitals and health funds as a reference document in their contractual negotiations.

Committee members agreed that the EDL should not be 'terminated' as such, but that it should now only exist as a point in time reference document so that in circumstances where contracts still refer to it, the EDL would still be in existence, but that with effect from 1 May 2013 it would no longer be a dynamic document and would not be amended in light of any future PBS changes and therefore would remain unaltered from this date.

However, where the EDL is still in use in hospital/health fund contracts, the underlying rule will be preserved that if an EDL drug subsequently becomes available on the PBS, then hospitals should claim under the PBS.

The EDL Committee has been a collaborative group of hospital and health insurer representatives, but at the national level it has had little status or ability to influence policy. Members agreed that as pharmacy in general was becoming an increasingly political issue, particularly chemotherapy, it would be more appropriate for the national peak bodies (APHA/CHA/PHA) to work together to develop a strategy to address current and emerging issues affecting pharmaceuticals in the private sector. It was considered particularly

important that the Private Hospital sector was actively involved in the negotiation of the next Community Pharmacy Agreement.

In light of this discussion, it was agreed that the EDL Committee would be disbanded with immediate effect and the final release of the EDL – dated 1 May 2013 – would continue to exist as a 'point in time reference document'.

LUCY FISHER
SECRETARY – EDL COMMITTEE

Attachments:

- ***EDL Update – 1 May 2013***