



Department of Health,
P.O. Box 5013,
Wellington.

19 November 1976.

CLINICAL SERVICES LETTER NO. 162

TO MEDICAL AND DENTAL PRACTITIONERS

(Copy to proprietors of retail pharmacies)

The Drug Tariff

Expenditure on pharmaceutical benefits for the year ending 31 March 1976 was almost \$70 million; total expenditure on Vote Health for the same year was just over \$600 million. The cost of pharmaceutical benefits for the first 6 months of the present financial year is approximately \$42 million which is more than half the estimate allowed in the Budget. The average cost of a prescription is now well over \$3.

As with all Government expenditure, that for Vote Health is increasingly under review. It is now necessary more than ever before to ensure that each health dollar is spent effectively and economically; this applies particularly to the pharmaceutical benefits scheme. The department strives constantly to ensure that the right to prescribe is interfered with as little as possible by Drug Tariff restrictions, but this right carries with it acceptance of certain responsibilities including the responsibility to prescribe economically.

At a time when economic restraints and the establishment of priorities in health service expenditure necessitate stringent review of pharmaceutical benefits, the role of the Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee becomes increasingly important. Certain responsibilities of this committee were outlined in Clinical Services Letter No. 129 dated 30 September 1973. Members are having to become more concerned with the effect on total costs of the scheme following changes to the Drug Tariff.

The present committee now includes Dr C. P. Anyon who replaced Dr G. G. Jenner, and Dr I. M. St. George who replaced Mr K. Rees-Thomas. Dr D. J. S. Gray replaces Dr St. George at the next meeting.

Amendments to the Drug Tariff have only been made after careful consideration by the department and the Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee; the major changes have the approval of Cabinet. The amendments to the Drug Tariff will be effective from 1 December 1976 with the exception of the changes in respect of antihistamines and barbiturates which have been deferred until 1 February 1977.

Some of the changes are explained in the following notes.

Anorectics

A decision has been made to remove anorectics from the Drug Tariff, with effect from 1 December 1976. Visiting practitioners discussed this question widely with medical practitioners during their visits, and the consensus of opinion supports this decision.

It is realised that there may on infrequent occasions be circumstances requiring that supplies of these medicines be made available free of charge. In these cases application should be made by the practitioner for supplementary pharmaceutical benefits in accordance with Clinical Services Letter No. 159.

Sodium Fluoride

From 1 December 1976, only tablets of sodium fluoride will be available as a charge under the Drug Tariff. Those strengths exceeding 2.2 mg remain available only on the prescription or recommendation of a specialist. This amendment became necessary because practitioners were prescribing higher strength capsules which required extemporaneous preparation by the pharmacist.

Besides ignoring the intention behind the Drug Tariff restriction, the cost of these capsules was excessively high, placing an undue financial burden on public funds.

Flufenamic Acid (Arlef)

Flufenamic acid was recommended to be available under the Drug Tariff only when used for the treatment of dysmenorrhoea.

Prazosin Hydrochloride (Minipress)

Attention is drawn to the sudden loss of consciousness which may occur in some patients during the initial period of therapy or during subsequent dose titration steps. This response appears to be dose related and can usually be avoided by a low initial dose and cautious increases during early treatment. Patients should be warned accordingly.

Amphetamines

Following the decision to remove anorectics from the Drug Tariff the Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee has recommended that amphetamines be available as pharmaceutical benefits only for the treatment of a limited number of conditions, the main ones being narcolepsy and confirmed amphetamine dependency. The committee realised, however, that there may be other rare conditions for which an amphetamine would be regarded as the treatment of choice, but was reluctant to suggest a restricted list of specific conditions. Therefore the committee also advised that the conditions for which supplies should be authorised as pharmaceutical benefits should be at the discretion of the Department of Health with, in certain circumstances, the right of the department to request a specialist recommendation. The Minister

of Health has delegated to the Division of Clinical Services his power to approve, in particular cases, supply from hospital pharmacies of amphetamine sulphate tablets, dexamphetamine sulphate tablets and long-acting capsules, and methylamphetamine hydrochloride tablets.

As from 1 December 1976 prescriptions for the supply of these medicines will be subject to a discretionary approval in every case, but an approval may be granted for an extended period. Applications for approval should be made by the medical practitioner to the Director, Division of Clinical Services, and include the following particulars:

- (a) The full name and address of the patient.
- (b) The name of the medicine and dosage.
- (c) The condition for which the patient is undergoing treatment, including clinical details.
- (d) The name of the hospital pharmacy which will be requested to supply the medicine.

If a supply is authorised, the approval will be sent to the nominated hospital pharmacy with a copy to the applicant practitioner.

Drug Tariff 1974, Amendment No. 8: Effective 1 December 1976

This Clinical Services Letter will be the only record most will have of the present changes to the Tariff. As it is not a cumulative list, it is suggested that this Letter, along with earlier Clinical Services Letters, should be retained for reference purposes.

A full list of medicines with restricted availability under the Tariff is included at the end of this Letter.

1. To be available from a retail pharmacy:

Additions

Biperiden lactate injection (Akineton injection).
Bisacodyl solution in extemporaneously compounded preparations.
Calcium carbonate with aminoacetic acid and dimethicone tablets (Titralac-Sil).
Clobetasone butyrate cream and ointment (Molivate).
Dothiepin hydrochloride capsules (Prothiaden).
Hexoprenaline sulphate aerosol inhaler, injection, solution, and tablets (Ipradol).
Oxprenolol hydrochloride long-acting tablets (Slow Trasicor).
Salbutamol sulphate injection (Ventolin injection).
Urea 10 percent proprietary cream (Aquacare HP).

Changed Availability

Prazosin hydrochloride (Minipress).

2. To be available from a retail pharmacy on the prescription or recommendation of a specialist:

Addition

Adrenaline acid tartrate with pilocarpine hydrochloride eye drops (E. Carpine).

3. To be available from a hospital pharmacy:

Additions

Flufenamic acid capsules (Arlef).
Naproxen tablets (Naprosyn).

4. To be available from a hospital pharmacy on the prescription or recommendation of a specialist:

Changed Availability

Kanamycin sulphate.

5. Deleted from the Drug Tariff:

Diethylpropion hydrochloride long-acting tablets (Tenuate Dospan).
Fenfluramine hydrochloride tablets (Ponderax).
Phentermine and its hydrochloride as long-acting capsules (Duromine, Umine).
Sodium fluoride, with the exception of tablets.

Part Charges: Antihistamines

The Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee is reviewing the costs of individual medicines within each therapeutic group. This review will, in many cases, result in part charges to the patient for dearer preparations if the manufacturers are unable to reduce their prices.

The first group to be affected are the antihistamines. A list of those which remain a full charge and those which will carry a part charge from 1 February 1977 is shown on page 6.

As a general principle the amount to be paid from public funds is based on the maximum promoted daily dosage. The committee has taken into account the availability free of charge of a sufficient range of preparations which are considered to provide adequate treatment in the majority of cases.

Again, where essential, supplies of those preparations carrying a part charge may be obtained as supplementary pharmaceutical benefits.

Other part charges still arise. As advised in Clinical Services Letter No. 160 these can usually be avoided by prescribing by generic names.

Barbiturates

It is clear that the use of barbiturates as hypnotics and sedatives has serious drawbacks and can rarely be justified. Clinical Services Letter No. 143 highlighted the issues involved.

Barbiturate use involves dangers of misuse and abuse greater than with alternative medicines and the high risk of serious accidental or suicidal overdosage is demonstrated clearly in the latest poisoning statistics. Non-medical use is also becoming more common. A reduction in the prescribing of barbiturates would make them less accessible for these purposes.

Barbiturates, with the exception of phenobarbitone, have been excluded from the latest edition of the *British National Formulary*.

Phenobarbitone and phenobarbitone sodium, barbiturates used in anaesthesia, and tablets containing a barbiturate in combination with other medicines remain available under the Drug Tariff from retail pharmacies. The availability of other barbiturates has been limited to supply from a hospital pharmacy. This restriction will apply from 1 February 1977.

As with all medicines restricted to hospital supply, prescriptions for barbiturates should be written on separate prescription forms.

D. A. Andrews

(D. A. Andrews)
Director,

A. G. Scott

(A. G. Scott)
Deputy Director,

Division of Clinical Services.

Antihistamines

The following will remain a full charge under the Drug Tariff:

Chlorpheniramine maleate tablets 4 mg (Allergex, Piriton).
Chlorpheniramine maleate long-acting tablets 8 mg (Chlortrimeton Repetabs, Histafen).
Chlorpheniramine maleate long-acting tablets 12 mg (Chlortrimeton Repetabs, Histafen).
Chlorpheniramine maleate syrup (Histafen, Piriton).
Chlorcyclizine hydrochloride tablets 50 mg (Diparalene).
Dextrochlorpheniramine maleate syrup (Polaramine).
Isothipendyl hydrochloride long-acting tablets (Nilerdex S.A.).
Methdilazine hydrochloride syrup (Dilosyn, Tacaryl).
Pheniramine aminosalicylate tablets 50 mg (Avil).
Pheniramine maleate syrup (Avil).
Promethazine hydrochloride tablets 10 mg and 25 mg (Phenergan).
Triprolidine hydrochloride elixir (Actidil).
Triprolidine hydrochloride long-acting tablets 10 mg (Pro-Actidil.)

The following will carry a part charge:

Bromodiphenhydramine maleate capsules 25 mg (Ambodryl).
Brompheniramine maleate tablets 4 mg (Dimetane).
Brompheniramine maleate long-acting tablets 12 mg (Dimetane L.A.).
Brompheniramine maleate elixir (Dimetane).
Chlorpheniramine maleate tablets 4 mg (Chlortrimeton).
Chlorpheniramine maleate long-acting tablets 8 mg (Piriton Duolets, Teledrin Spansules).
Chlorpheniramine maleate long-acting tablets 12 mg (Teledrin Spansules).
Chlorpheniramine maleate syrup (Chlortrimeton).
Cyproheptadine hydrochloride tablets 4 mg (Periactin).
Cyproheptadine hydrochloride syrup (Periactin).
Dextrochlorpheniramine maleate tablets 2 mg (Polaramine).
Dextrochlorpheniramine maleate long-acting tablets 6 mg (Polaramine Repetabs).
Diphenhydramine hydrochloride capsules 50 mg (Benadryl).
Diphenhydramine hydrochloride elixir (Benadryl).
Diphenylpyraline hydrochloride long-acting tablets and capsules 5 mg (Histalert S.R., Histryl).
Diphenylpyraline hydrochloride syrup (Histalert).
Mebhydrolin napadisylate tablets 50 mg (Fabahistin).
Mebhydrolin napadisylate long-acting tablets 150 mg (Fabahistin Time Release).
Mebhydrolin napadisylate suspension (Fabahistin).
Mepyramine maleate tablets 50 mg and 100 mg (Anthisan).
Mepyramine maleate elixir (Anthisan).
Methdilazine hydrochloride tablets 4 mg (Tacaryl).

Methdilazine hydrochloride tablets 8 mg (Dilosyn, Tacaryl).
 Phenindamine tartrate tablets 25 mg (Thephorin).
 Pheniramine aminosalicylate tablets 10 mg (Avilettes).
 Pheniramine maleate long-acting tablets 75 mg (Avil Retard).
 Promethazine hydrochloride elixir (Phenergan).
 Trimeprazine tartrate tablets 10 mg (Vallergan).
 Trimeprazine tartrate syrup (Vallergan, Vallergan Forte).

**DRUGS AVAILABLE UNDER THE DRUG TARIFF FROM
 HOSPITAL PHARMACIES WITHOUT FURTHER RESTRICTION
 AS AT 1 DECEMBER 1976**

Official Name	Trade Names
Amphetamine sulphate	Atasorb-N
Attapulgit with neomycin sulphate	Nydrane
Beclamide	Pyopen
Carbenicillin, sodium salt, injection	Ceporex, Keflex
Cephalexin monohydrate	Ceporan
Cephaloridine	Keflin
Cephalothin sodium	Velosef
Cephradine	Lamprene
Clofazimine	Acthar
Corticotrophin	Cortrophin ZN
Corticotrophin zinc	Acthar Gel, Cortico-Gel
Corticotrophin gelatin	Desferal
Desferrioxamine B mesylate	
Dexamphetamine sulphate	
Dexamphetamine sulphate long-acting capsules	
Flufenamic acid	Arlef
Framycetin sulphate injection and tablets	Soframycin
Framycetin sulphate with kaolin	Enterfram
Gentamicin sulphate injection	Cidomycin, Garamycin
Gentamicin sulphate eye drops	Garamycin
Hydroxyzine hydrochloride	Atarax
Kaolin with neomycin sulphate and pectin	Kaomycin
Ketoprofen capsules	Orudis
Lactulose	Duphalac
Mefenamic acid capsules	Ponstan
Methaqualone hydrochloride	Melsedin
Methaqualone with diphenhydramine hydrochloride	Mandrax
Methicillin sodium	Celbenin
Methylamphetamine hydrochloride	

Official Name	Trade Names
Methylphenidate hydrochloride ..	Ritalin
Naproxen	Naprosyn
Neomycin for oral use ..	Mycifradin, Neomin
Penicillamine hydrochloride ..	Penicillamine
Pentazocine injection and tablets ..	Fortral
Quinidine bisulphate long-acting capsules and tablets	Kinidin Durules, Quiditard
Tetracosactrin	Synacthen
Tetracosactrin long-acting	Cortrosyn Depot, Synacthen Depot
Thiambutosine	
Vancomycin hydrochloride	Vancocin

**DRUGS AVAILABLE UNDER THE DRUG TARIFF FROM
HOSPITAL PHARMACIES ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF A
SPECIALIST AS AT 1 DECEMBER 1976**

Official Name	Trade Names
Aminocaproic acid	Amicar
Amphotericin vials	Fungizone for Infusion
Aprotinin	Trasylol
Baclofen	Lioresal
Betamethasone disodium phosphate tablets	Betnesol, Celestone
Calcitonin injection	Calcitare
Calcium folinate	Leucovorin
Carbenoxolone sodium	Biogastrone
Carbidopa with levodopa	Sinemet
Chloramphenicol	Chlomin, Chloramex, Chloromycetin
Chloramphenicol palmitate	Chloramex, Chloromycetin
Chloramphenicol sodium succinate injection	Chloromycetin Succinate injection
Chymotrypsin injection	Chymar, Chymo-Trypure Novo, Chymotase, Zonulysin, Zolyse
Clindamycin hydrochloride	Dalacin-C
Colistin and its salts and esters ..	Colymycin
Dexamethasone and its salts and esters not included elsewhere in the Drug Tariff ..	Decadron, Dexacortisyl
Dipyridamole	Persantin
Disopyramide	Rythmodan
Dydrogesterone	Duphaston
Flucytosine	Alcobon
Frusemide infusion 250 mg and tablets exceeding 40 mg strength	Lasix

Official Name	Trade Names
Fusidic acid and its salts and esters (except gel and ointment)	Fucidin
Hydrocortisone and its acetate not included elsewhere in the Drug Tariff	
Kanamycin sulphate	Kanasig, Kano, Kantrex
Levodopa	Laradopa, Eldopar
Methandriol	
Methotrexate	Amethopterin
Methotrexate sodium	
Methoxsalen	Oxsoralen
Methylprednisolone and its salts and esters	Medrol, Solu-Medrol
Methysergide dimaleate	Deseril
Metyrapone	Metopirone
Mitomycins	
Pancreatin proprietary preparations as approved by the Director-General ..	Combizym, Cotazym, Cotazym B, Combizym Compositum, Viokase
Pentagastrin injection	Peptavlon
Pimozide	Orap
Potassium para-aminobenzoate	Potaba
Prednisolone and its salts and esters not included elsewhere in the Drug Tariff ..	
Prednisolone pivalate	
Sodium polystyrene sulphonate	Resonium-A
Spectinomycin	Trobicin
Tamoxifen citrate	Nolvadex
Thioguanine	Janvis
Thiopropazine mesylate	Majeptil
Thiothixene oral concentrate and tablets 30 mg	Navane
Triamcinolone and its salts and esters not included elsewhere in the Drug Tariff ..	Kenacort
Trifluoperidol hydrochloride	Triperidol
Verapamil injection	Isoptin

DRUGS AVAILABLE UNDER THE DRUG TARIFF FROM RETAIL PHARMACIES ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF A SPECIALIST AS AT 1 DECEMBER 1976

Official Name	Trade Names
Adrenaline acid tartrate eye drops ..	Lyophrin
Adrenaline acid tartrate with pilocarpine hydrochloride eye drops	E Carpine
Adrenaline eye drops, neutral, B.P.C. ..	Eppy
Amantadine hydrochloride	Symmetrel

Official Name	Trade Names
Aminosalicylic acid, its salts and derivatives	
Amyl dimethylaminobenzoate	Block Out, Phiasol AS, Spectra- ban
Asathioprine	Imuran
Beclomethasone dipropionate cream exceed- ing 0.025 percent strength	Propaderm Forte
Busulphan	Myleran
Capreomycin injection	Caprocin
Carbachol eye drops	Isopto Carbachol
Chlorambucil	Leukeran
Chlorotrianisene	TACE
Cholestyramine resin	Cuemid, Questran
Clofibrate	Atromid-S
Clomiphene citrate	Clomid
Cyclophosphamide	Endoxan-Asta
Cycloserine	D-Cycloserine
Cytarabine	Cytosar
Demecarium bromide	Tosmilen
Dexamethasone as proprietary eye drops ..	Maxidex
Dexamethasone with neomycin sulphate and polymyxin B sulphate as proprietary eye drops	Maxitrol
Drostanolone propionate	Masteril
Ecothiopate iodide	Phospholine Iodide
Ethambutol	Myambutol
Ethambutol with isoniazid	Mynah
Ethionamide	Trescatyl
Ethionamide with isoniazid	Trescazide
Ethylestrenol	Orabolin
Eye preparations containing a cortico- steroid	Chlorocort, Hycor, Neo-Cortef, Neo-Hycor, Blephamide, Codelsol-N, Pred Mild, Pred Forte, Sofradex
Fluocinolone acetonide cream exceeding 0.025 percent strength	Synalar Forte
Fluorometholone	FML
Fluorometholone with neomycin sulphate ..	FML-Neo
Fluorouracil topical preparations	Fluoroplex, Efudix
Fluorouracil injection	Fluorouracil
Fluoxymesterone	Androl, Halotestin
Fluphenazine decanoate	Modecate
Fluphenazine enanthate	Anatensol
Idoxuridine eye drops	Herplex, Stoxil
Isoniazid	
Isoniazid and aminosalicylic acid and its salts	

Official Name	Trade Names
Isoniazid with rifampicin	Rifinah, Rimactazid
Laevo-adrenaline hydrochloride	Epifrin, Glaucon
Lithium carbonate	Camcolit, Lithicarb
Medroxyprogesterone acetate tablets exceeding 5 mg strength	Provera tablets 100 mg
Medrysone	H.M.S.
Melphalan	Alkeran
Mercaptopurine	Puri-Nethol
Mestanolone	
Mesterolone	Proviron
Methandienone	
Mexenone cream	Uvistat cream
Mustine, its salts and derivatives	
Mustine-N-oxide hydrochloride	Nitromin
Nandrolone decanoate injection	Deca-Durabolin
Nandrolone phenylpropionate injection	Durabolin
Oxymetholone	Adroyd, Anapolon
Petrolatum red with 2-ethoxyethyl-p-methoxycinnamate and zinc oxide ointment	R.V. Paque
Petrolatum red with titanium coated mica ointment	R.V. Plus
Polyestradiol phosphate	Estradurin
Procarbazine hydrochloride	Natulan
Prothionamide	Trevintix
Pyrazinamide	
Rifampicin for the treatment of tuberculosis	Rifadin, Rimactane
Sodium aminosalicylate and isoniazid cachets	
Sodium aminosalicylate and isoniazid granules, B.N.F.	
Sodium chloride, potassium chloride, calcium chloride, and magnesium chloride eye drops	Balanced Salt Solution
Sodium fluoride tablets exceeding 2.2 mg	Hi-Fluor
Spironolactone tablets exceeding 25 mg strength	Aldactone
Stanolone	Anabolex
Stilboestrol diphosphate	Honvan
Thiocarlide	Isoxyl
Thiotepa	
Vinblastine sulphate	Velbe
Vincristine sulphate	Oncovin
Viomycin and its salts	

LIST OF ITEMS THAT HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
OF HEALTH FOR PAYMENT UNDER THE DRUG TARIFF

Vitamin B complex injection. } Only on a bulk supply order of a private hospital.
Becosym. }

Alkaline compound tablets (milk-dextrin type).
Gastrobrom.

Allergy treatment sets.
Sets prepared by Smith-Biolab Ltd.,
Dr B. H. R. Hill, Dr L. H. V. Longmore and Dr R. B. Duncan.

Asprin, soluble, with codeine phosphate tablets.
Codis.

Bismuth subgallate suppos., compound.
Anusol.

Bismuth subgallate suppos., compound, with hydrocortisone.
Anusol H.C.

Dimethicone creams.
Silicoderm F, Siopel (all part charge) K.P. 555.

Electrolyte powder for solution for oral use.
Lytren.

Glucose-oxidase diagnostic strips and sticks.
Clinistix, Diastix, Tes-Tape.

Iron carbohydrate complex, intramuscular injection.
Imferon, Jectofer.

Liquorice extract dry, deglycyrrhizinised co. tablets.
Caved-S.

Magnesium trisilicate with aluminium hydroxide, gel, dried tablets.
Gelusil.

Mucilaginous laxatives, dry.
Granocol, Isogel, Normacol Special and Standard.

Ortho-tolidine, compound, diagnostic sticks.
Hemastix.

Pancreatin proprietary preparations (Hospital Board—specialist).
Combizym, Combizym Compositum, Cotazym, Cotazym B, Viokase.

Sulphonamides, dual and triple, mixtures and tablets.
Novotriad.

Tar, compound, bath emulsions
Balnetar, Ego Pinetarsol, Polytar Emollient.

Betamethasone—in the form of proprietary eye, ear or throat preparations.
Betnesol eye drops, ear drops, nasal drops, eye ointment, nasal spray.
Betnesol-N eye drops, ear drops, eye ointment.

Hydrocortisone—in the form of proprietary eye, ear, nasal or throat preparations.

Chlorocort ophthalmic
*Chlorocort eye ointment
*Hycor

*Neo-Cortef
Neo-Hycor

Eye preparations
only on the re-
commendation of
a specialist.

*Part Charge

Prednisolone—in the form of proprietary eye, ear, or throat preparations.
Blephamide
Pred Mild
Pred Forte