

24 April 1961.

CLINICAL SERVICES LETTER No. 21

TO MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

(Copy for information to chemists)

Dear Doctor,

CHANGES IN THE DRUG TARIFF

Enclosed is a copy of Amendment No. 2 to the Drug Tariff 1960. This incorporates Amendment No. 1 (issued last October) so that the drug tariff, plus this latest amendment, gives the complete picture up to date. This principle will be followed with all future issues.

Tablets of vitamin B12 with intrinsic factor are deleted from the tariff from 1 May. This has been done on therapeutic grounds, because of recent evidence of the unreliability of this preparation in long-term treatment.

A considerable number of additions have been made to the schedule of drugs available. The trade names of all those included for the first time will be found in the explanatory note at the end of the enclosed amendment, which comes into force on 1 May. Hydrocortisone for use as an enema will also be available from that date through public hospital dispensaries.

ORAL DIURETICS

There appears to be little difference in therapeutic value between the various oral diuretics now in common use, except in duration of action. Comparative prices of tablets in approximately equivalent dosage are as follows*:

	Tablet Size mg.	Approx. Retail Cost per Tablet s. d.
Cyclopentiazide (Navidrex)	0.5	0 4 ³ / ₄
Methyclothiazide (Enduron)	4	0 4 ³ / ₄
Bendroflumazide (Aprinox, Neo-NaClex, Pluryle-Leo)	5	0 5 ³ / ₄
Hydroflumethiazide (Di-Ademil, Hydrenox, NaClex, Rontyl)	50	0 5 ³ / ₄
Trichlormethiazide (Fluitran)	4	0 5 ³ / ₄
Chlorothiazide (Chlotride)	500	0 10 ¹ / ₂
Hydrochlorothiazide (Dichlotride, Direma, Esidrex)	50	1 0

*It should be noted, however, that tablets of half the strengths quoted here are available in most cases. As these will often produce near maximum effects, they might well be tried initially.

P.T.O.

THYROID PREPARATIONS

In general, thyroid tablets do not keep well, and thyroxine sodium should normally be prescribed in preference. Its advantages outweigh the increased expense. (0.1 mg. thyroxine sodium is equivalent in therapeutic activity to 1 gr. thyroid. Costs per 100 tablets are 5s. 6d. and 2s. 10d. respectively.)

GRISEOFULVIN (Fulcin, Grisovin)

It is essential that the diagnosis of fungus infection be confirmed by laboratory tests before griseofulvin is used. This is all the more important because treatment may have to be continued for a long time. This preparation is expensive, and once treatment has commenced it may be impossible to check the diagnosis.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS' SUPPLY ORDERS

These supply orders should not be used as a basis for dispensing drugs to patients other than in emergency. They are intended to cover immediate treatment before supplies can be obtained in the ordinary way. They may also be used to obtain materials for personal administration to a patient, such as injections, etc.

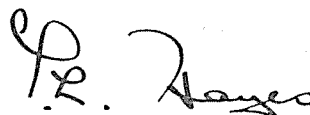
Needless to say, supplies of drugs left with patients should be properly labelled, and this applies particularly to dangerous drugs.

Items for use in the consulting room, such as diagnostic materials, disinfectants, solutions for the storage of instruments, etc., are obviously not acceptable as a charge on the fund. In accordance with the tariff, supply orders are subject to scrutiny by the Department.

Yours faithfully,



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Director,



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