

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
P.O. BOX 5013,
WELLINGTON.

17 June 1968.

CLINICAL SERVICES LETTER NO. 80

TO MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

(Copy to Chemists)

Dear Doctor,

VISITING PRACTITIONER: DR H. D. LAW

Dr H. D. Law has now commenced duty as Visiting Practitioner, based on Auckland. He is a member of the staff of the Clinical Services Division, and will visit doctors in the northern part of the North Island. (Dr Peter McKinlay will continue to visit in the South Island and the southern portion of the North Island.)

Dr Law is aged 54. He has been in general practice with a partner in New Plymouth since 1946. Before that he was in solo practice in a country area for four years.

This appointment continues the policy of staffing the Clinical Services Division, so far as practicable, with doctors who have had recent and extensive experience in general practice. During visits to doctors, Dr Law will discuss prescribing problems, recent advances in therapy, and drug costs. He will endeavour to improve relationships between private practice and the Department, by inviting comment and suggestions about the functioning of the Clinical Services Division. He will interest himself in the problems of the general practitioner under varying conditions of practice, and discuss possible solutions.

Dr Law will attend meetings of the Pharmacology and Therapeutics Committee, and will have access to the latest information about new drugs.

No Disciplinary Function

The visiting practitioner has no disciplinary function, and will not be involved in inquiries into doctors whose prescribing is under scrutiny because of cost; although his advice and assistance will be available to such doctors, if desired.

His address is Dr H. D. Law, District Health Office, P.O. Box 5442, Auckland, telephone 49-290.

P.T.O.

PENICILLIN ALLERGY AND PURIFIED PENICILLIN (PURAPEN G)

Under the above heading, the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin dated 2 February 1968 contains an important review of the present situation, the conclusions of which may be summarised as follows:

- No reliable method of identifying patients allergic to penicillin has yet been found.
- A history of penicillin allergy must be respected, for it has proved more helpful than tests.
- Purified benzylpenicillin for injection (for example, Purapen G, Beecham) has not yet been proved less likely to cause allergic reactions than other forms of the drug.
- It should not be given to persons known or suspected to be allergic to penicillin.
- Penicillin for injection should invariably be freshly made up and used at once.

SUBSTITUTION

Several instances of substitution by chemists have been reported to the Department recently. There have been cases where the chemist has substituted another brand of drug to avoid an extra charge to the patient. If a doctor prescribes a branded preparation he is entitled to have this dispensed, and the chemist must comply, unless he is authorised by the doctor to do otherwise. Any such change should be endorsed on the prescription.

Practitioners are requested to communicate with the Department if cases of this nature come to their notice.

DRUG AND THERAPEUTICS BULLETIN

A New Zealand edition of this excellent publication is now available. Apart from necessary alterations in brand names and prices, this edition is identical with that published in the United Kingdom. It is strongly recommended both to doctors and chemists.

The cost of 24 copies a year, post free, is \$4.50. Subscriptions should be forwarded to the Consumer Institute, Private Bag, Te Aro, Wellington.

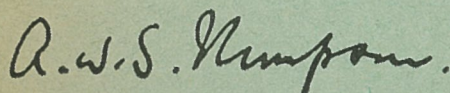
PART CHARGES

The following will probably carry a part charge to the patient from 1 August 1968:

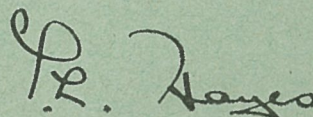
Bicillin, Sequens, Serial 28, Volidan 21

A further announcement will be issued later.

Yours faithfully,



(A. W. S. Thompson)
Director,



(T. L. Hayes)
Assistant Director,

Division of Clinical Services.