

Queensland Codeine Reschedule Communique` Working Group Outcomes

Meeting held 4 May 2017

Issue #1

On 20 December 2016, the Commonwealth Department of Health, through the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) announced the final decision that over the counter medicines containing codeine will become prescription only products from 1 February 2018. These changes are expected to have impacts on consumers as well as a range of primary care providers including general medical practices, pain clinics, alcohol and drug treatment services and pharmacies.

To coordinate the implementation of the codeine rescheduling decision in Queensland, the Queensland Health has formed a Working Group tasked with guiding communication efforts that will raise awareness of the changes among health professionals and provide further information and ongoing support to consumers. The first meeting of the Working Group was held on Thursday 4 May, 2017.

Membership

The Working Group initially consisted of the following members, however following discussions at the meeting, a number of other representatives from the rural health, dentistry and acute pain sectors will be invited to future meetings. Additional consumer representative groups will also be identified and invited to participate.

Attendees

- Australian College of Nurse Practitioners
- Australian Medical Association – Queensland
- Australian Pain Management Association
- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia - Queensland
- Queensland Ambulance Service
- Queensland Health
 - Chief Medical Officer and Healthcare Regulation Branch
 - Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs
 - Healthcare Legislation Improvement Unit
 - Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs
 - Public Health Units
 - Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Advisory Panel
 - 13Health Contact Centre
 - Pain Network
 - Integrated Communications
- Queensland Nurses and Midwives Union
- Queensland Police Service
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
- Society of Hospital Pharmacists Australia

Information only

- Private Hospital Association Queensland
- Health Consumers Queensland
- Queensland Aboriginal & Islander Health Council
- Check-Up Australia

Terms of Reference

The Working Group discussed the draft Terms of Reference and agreed on a number of changes. These will be endorsed at the second meeting. Broadly, the Terms of Reference outline that the Working Group will:

- Consider the TGAs communication strategy and how best to implement it in Queensland.
- Consider the needs of consumers and actions required to support patient access to necessary care.
- Consider strategies to manage increased demand on services.
- Work together to proactively distribute targeted messaging amongst networks and facilitate implementation.
- Lead implementation activities for the relevant sector and provide access to information where possible.

Outcomes

- Secretariat to seek further advice from the TGA in regards to stockpiling, federal importation laws and TGA representation at the Queensland meeting.
- Secretariat to seek further advice on any updated clinical indications for the use of codeine.
- Secretariat to identify additional Working Group membership, as per discussions.
- Members to obtain data on codeine use, addiction and distribution to inform future discussions and enable better targeting of key messages.
- Queensland Communication Strategy, milestones and timeframes to be discussed at the next meeting.

Meeting schedule

The Working Group will meet on an as needs basis, with the next meeting to be scheduled for June 2017.

Further information

Health professionals and consumers can access more information about the changes to codeine access on the TGA website: www.tga.gov.au

If you would like more information about the Working Group or if you would like to suggest additional representatives, please contact the Healthcare Legislation Improvement Unit:

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