

PHARMAC

Pharmaceutical Management Agency

Media release

PUBLIC INFORMED ON ALL AT ONCE DISPENSING

Information telling people about the partial return to all-at-once dispensing is being distributed this week.

The information will be in the form of posters and brochures distributed to doctors' surgeries and pharmacies, while advertisements will also run in medical and general publications.

PHARMAC Chief Executive Wayne McNee says the information is designed to raise peoples' awareness ahead of the change in dispensing rules from 1 October 2003.

"It's important people understand what is happening and why it is happening," Wayne McNee says.

"The changes will see 71 percent of prescriptions dispensed all-at-once, this will be more convenient for many patients. In addition, it will give District Health Boards \$132 million over the next five years to invest in priority healthcare."

"Prescribers have the ability to change the frequency of dispensing so if people have concerns about receiving all their medicine all-at-once they should discuss it with the prescriber."

The information includes posters and leaflets published in English, Maori and Pacific languages, and tear-off pads for prescribers. Broadcast-quality audio CDs are also being provided to Maori and Pacific peoples' radio services.

Wayne McNee says PHARMAC has been providing information to pharmacists, wholesalers, pharmaceutical suppliers and medical software providers to enable a smooth transition to all-at-once dispensing. Some drugs had been removed from the initial three-monthly list after suppliers indicated there might be initial problems with three-month supply.

The new rules will be reviewed within the next 12 months and changes made if necessary.

ENDS

More information: 021 863 342