

# PHARMAC

Pharmaceutical Management Agency

Media release 19 January 2007

## **PHARMAC doing all it can to help others with supplies of adrenalin**

PHARMAC is doing all it can to help with continued supply of emergency drug adrenaline.

These comments follow claims by the New Zealand Medical Association about concerns over adrenalin supply resulting from a manufacturing problem of a major international supplier (Mayne).

While Mayne is the only supplier of adrenalin to hospitals, the drug is not on a sole supply contract. Other pharmaceutical suppliers choose not to supply the product given the relatively small volume of this product – albeit critical when used – required in New Zealand.

Dr Dilky Rasiah says PHARMAC has been called in to help remedy the issues as it is well placed to do so.

“We are pulling out all stops. PHARMAC is working with DHBs, Medsafe, emergency services and pharmaceutical suppliers to rectify the supply shortage as quickly as possible.

She says this includes importation of stock not registered for use in New Zealand, but allowable in emergency situations using Section 29 of the Medicines Act.

PHARMAC is also working very closely with drug company AstraZeneca for supply of a substitute adrenalin product and good progress has been made, she says.

“PHARMAC is very optimistic of securing additional supplies of adrenalin shortly. An AstraZeneca product has just been approved by Medsafe. PHARMAC is now completing supply arrangements with AstraZeneca.”

Once PHARMAC has confirmation that stock is available for delivery to New Zealand, PHARMAC will issue a general advisory to a wide range of parties updating them of new supply arrangements.

In situations such as these, Dr Rasiah noted the importance of health professionals working well together, including to check information with relevant agencies, before issuing public comments that may raise concerns of New Zealanders unnecessarily.

“It is difficult to see how the NZMA comments – pointed negatively at PHARMAC – do anything to assist the adrenalin supply situation. It is easy and convenient to point the finger at PHARMAC, but wrong given the situation has nothing to do with PHARMAC’s policies.”

Adrenalin is an injectable medicine used in emergency treatment of anaphylaxis and cardiac arrest, and is a standard treatment included in the emergency bags of hospitals, ambulances and GPs.

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