Behind the Scenes at the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP)

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Common Drug Review Update

As mentioned in a previous issue, the Common Drug Review (CDR) is a common advisory process for assessing new drugs for potential coverage by federal/provincial/territorial drug plans in Canada (except Quebec). The CDR consists of a critical appraisal of the best available clinical and pharmacoeconomic evidence, and a listing recommendation made by the Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee (CEDAC).

The transition from the Atlantic Common Drug Review (ACDR) to the National Common Drug Review (CDR) was expected to take place in the Fall of 2003. The first CDR drug submission reviews went to CEDAC on April 28, 2004 for five drugs (Axert, Combigan, Evra, Iressa and Reyataz).

The CDR has received five other drug submissions, in addition to the five reviewed at the April 28th CEDAC meeting:

- Replagal, Fabrazyme and Viread are scheduled for the June16/04 CEDAC meeting,
- Neulasta will be reviewed at the July 21/04 meeting,
- Adderall XR is slated for the August 18/04 meeting.

The recommendations for the five drugs reviewed on Apr28/04 have not been released to date. They are in an embargo period, which means the recommendations and reasons for recommendations are to be held in confidence and not acted upon until after the CDR Directorate has issued the notice of final recommendation. Detailed Submission Status reports for each submission, and the CEDAC meeting schedule for the remainder of 2004, are available on **www.ccohta.ca**.

Task Group on Oxycontin: Education Event

On December 15, 2003, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced the establishment of a task force to assess the extent of the abuse of Oxycontin in the province and develop a comprehensive plan to deal with the issue. The task force includes representatives from the justice, education, and health and community services sectors. The final report is expected to be released the end of June/04.

As part of its mandate, the task force has sought the assistance of Purdue Pharma, the manufacturer of Oxycontin, to enhance education and awareness and work with our partners in the justice, medical and pharmaceutical fields to curtail the inappropriate use of the drug.

As a result, a multidisciplinary education session for health professionals has been developed, " Chronic and Non-Malignant Pain, Opioids and Addiction: Assessment and Management". This is a three hour accredited learning activity which was presented on May26, 2004 in St. John's. Presentation dates for central and western NL will be announced when finalized. The presenters include Jackie Butt of Addiction Services, Dr. Bob Miller and Dr. David Ruggles.

New categories in The Newfoundland and Labrador Interchangeable Formulary:

- Amoxicillin/Clavulanic Acid 875mg/125mg Tablets
- Ipratropium Bromide/Salbutamol UDV
- Ketorolac Tromethamine 0.5% Ophthalmic Solution
- Ciprofloxacin 250mg, 500mg and 750mg Tablets
- Trimebutine Maleate 100mg Tablets
- Flunarizine Hydrochloride 5mg Capsules
- Pimozide 2mg and 4mg Tablets
- Estradiol Transdermal Patch 50ug, 75ug, 100ug
- Hydroxychloroquine Sulfate 200mg Tablets
- Mometasone Furoate 0.1% Ointment
- Nitroglycerin Sublingual Spray 0.4mg/metered dose
- Oxycodone-Acetaminophen 5mg/325mg Tablets

Additions to the Benefit listing:

- Lumigan Opth. Sol
- Sabex-Tobramycin 40mg/ml Injection