



16 January 2017

Australian & New Zealand College of Anaesthetists
ANZCA House
630 St Kilda Road
Melbourne VIC 3004
AUSTRALIA
email: profdocs@anzca.edu.au

Dear Professor A. Scott

Re: ANZCA professional document PS51 Guidelines for the Safe Management and Use of Medications in Anaesthesia

The New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists (NZSA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above consultation relating to all aspects of safety associated with use of medications involved in anaesthesia, sedation, and local analgesia.

The document is reasonable but is not inclusive of the current New Zealand situation.

Comments

5.1.1 Purchasing decisions on anaesthetic drugs

In the New Zealand context PHARMAC makes decisions on drug purchasing and we refer you to the document link below for more information on PHARMAC's role and process.

www.pharmac.govt.nz/about/your-guide-to-pharmac/fact-sheet-03-our-place-in-the-health-system

5.1.3 Labelling and Packaging

Please find enclosed the NZSA submission of 3 August 2015 Establishment of Pharmac Labelling Preferences which provides information on the New Zealand situation regarding labelling.

5.3 Labels

5.3.1 At present there is only an Australian Standard. Dr John Barnard has formed a committee to look at the introduction of the Australian National Standards to New Zealand. We would encourage ANZCA to support this. We are supportive of New Zealand adopting the Australian standards.

5.8 Maintenance of Accurate Records

5.8.1 An accurate record of every drug administration including the drug name written in full, units preferably written in full to reduce confusion with mg and ug in handwritten records and the route and time of administration. The anaesthetic record must be signed by the administering anaesthetist and include the name written in full. The NZSA notes that electronic anaesthetic records improve legibility and can improve accuracy of the record.

5.9.3 Intravenous Infusion of Medications

New Zealand does not yet comply with the Australian Standards for labelling of infusions but should hopefully do so in 2017.

The wording regarding inhaled anaesthetics is fraught and may have unintended adverse consequences. We would suggest alternative wording such as “as volatile anaesthetics are highly potent and potentially lethal drugs, especially in liquid form, it is important...” We appreciate that dangerous agents and those of potential abuse should be handled in a safe manner and if they are to be locked away they need to be immediately accessible otherwise patient safety will be compromised. We think that this should be stated explicitly in the document.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this review.

I am happy to discuss our comments and can be contacted at president@anaesthesia.org.nz.

Yours sincerely



David Kibblewhite
President