Dear Andrew,

Discussion document: Propofol supply in DHBs

Thank you for the invitation to provide feedback on the above discussion document. We support Pharmac’s Propofol supply plans as outlined in your Consultation proposal to award sole supply of propofol in DHB hospitals.

About NZSA

The New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists Inc., (NZSA) is a professional medical education society established in 1948. We represent 500 medical anaesthetists in New Zealand and work to foster education and research into anaesthesia, and support the professional interests of its members. Our members include specialist anaesthetists in public and private practice, and trainee anaesthetists. NZSA is a member society of the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists (WFSA).

Feedback

Our interest in this consultation process is around the availability, surety and consistency of supply and product quality. Propofol is by far the leading anaesthetic induction drug in NZ and has a significant and increasing market share for the maintenance of anaesthesia as issues regarding side effects of inhalation agents are investigated in current research. Accordingly price and surety of supply are key considerations and we applaud the excellent price that Pharmac has negotiated. We also support the vial presentation in preference to ampoules.

We would recommend that communication with other suppliers be maintained in the event of difficulties with one company and strongly support the continued availability of both Fresofol and Provive in NZ hospitals. An additional comment is that we agree strongly, in the interests of patient safety, with the Medsafe directive that this drug remains an anaesthetist-only medication. “Diprivan should be administered only by persons trained in the administration of General Anaesthesia and not involved in the conduct of the surgical/diagnostic procedure. Fresofol should be given by those trained in Anaesthesia (or where appropriate doctors trained in the care of patients in Intensive Care). The pitfalls of non-anaesthetic provider use have been very well illustrated and publicized overseas.
Best Regards,

David McDonald

President NZSA