



NEW ZEALAND MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

29 March 2010

Policy Unit
Health and Disability Systems Strategy Directorate
Ministry of Health
PO Box 5013
Wellington 6145

By email: medregs@moh.govt.nz

Consultation on Proposed Amendments to Regulations under the Medicines Act 1981

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter. We make comment on the following matters only:

Advertising of medicines (Para 1.3, Questions 6 and 7)

- It has been NZMA's longstanding position that Direct to Consumer Advertising (DTCA) of prescription medicines should be banned.

Enable Electronic Transmission of Prescriptions (Para 1.4)

We strongly support this proposal.

Align Prescribing Rights for Medical Practitioners, Dentists and Midwives (Para 1.5, Question 9)

It is not clear that the proposed amendment to limit prescribers to their scopes of practice will continue the requirement to prescribe only to patients under their direct care. We think that this would be a dangerous extension as it would allow (for example) a prescriber to prescribe for patients contacted over the internet. Although you may have intended to cover this by para 1.7 that section seems to apply only to medical practitioners and not to other prescribers.

Allow Sale of General Sale Medicine by Vending Machine (para 1.10)

Our only concern with this is the creation of yet another way to get access to medication on which to overdose. For example an overdose of paracetamol is

potentially lethal. This move exacerbates our continuing concern about the current ease with which potentially lethal medicines can be purchased over the counter.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Foley', written in a cursive style.

Dr Peter Foley
Chair, NZMA