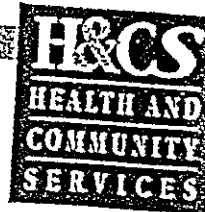


Circular



Circular No: 43/93
Date: 24 September 1993
Subject: Highly Specialised Drugs Program

Contact: Regional Office
Distribution: Public Hospitals

Purpose

The purpose of this circular is to advise hospitals of the starting date and prices for four new drugs that will be funded by the Commonwealth Government under the Highly Specialised Drugs Program, section 100 of the *National Health Act 1953*.

On 30 August 1993, the Department of Health, Housing, Local Government and Community Services advised the State that the Commonwealth would be funding the following drugs as of 1 September 1993:

- Filgrastim (Neupogen);
- Clozapine;
- Interferon Alpha - 2B; and
- Zalcitabine.

Details of drug strengths, pack size, agreed prices and PBAC clinical indications and other restrictions are listed below:

- Filgrastim (Neupogen)

injection 300mcg per ml, 1ml, (10)	\$1,583.00
injection 300mcg per ml, 1.6ml, (10)	\$2,546.00

For use in adult patients with non-myeloid malignancies receiving marrow-ablative therapy and subsequent bone marrow transplantation.

For use in adult patients being treated aggressive chemotherapy with the intent of achieving cure or substantial remission of the following malignancies:

Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma (intermediate & high grade)

Relapsed Hodgkin's Disease

Germ cell tumours

Acute Lymphoblastic leukaemia

- Clozapine

Tablet 25mg, (100)	\$ 72.00
Tablet 100mg, (100)	\$270.00

Hospital must be participating in the National Clozapine Patient Monitoring System (based at the Mental Health Research Institute of Victoria)

For the treatment of Schizophrenia in patients who are non-responsive to, or intolerant of, classic neuroleptic agents.

- **Interferon Alpha - 2B**

Injection 3 million units per vial, (5)	\$ 194.40
Injection 5 " " " " , (5)	\$ 324.00
Injection 10, " " " " , (5)	\$ 648.00

For use in patients who are:

- 1) *E antigen positive and have had chronic active hepatitis B for at least 6 months;*
- 2) *have had a liver biopsy carried out which shows chronic active hepatitis;*
- 3) *have had a ALT of greater than 120;*
- 4) *would be able and likely to attend regularly for treatment and follow up;*
- 5) *are NOT a person*
 - a) *with child's class B or C cirrhosis (ascites, variceal bleeding, encephalopathy, albumin < 30, bilirubin > 30);*
 - b) *who are pregnant, lactating or not practicing an adequate form of birth control;*
 - c) *who have a concurrent liver disease due to hepatitis C, D et*

- **Zalcitabine**

Tablet 375mcg, (100)	\$ 193.75
Tablet 750mcg, (100)	\$ 242.18

For use as monotherapy in adult patients with CDC stage IV HIV (including AIDS) and CD4 count less than 300 cells/mm³ who are intolerant of or resistant to Zidovudine.

For use in combination with Zidovudine in persons with advanced HIV infection and CD4 counts of equal to or less than 200 cells/mm³, who have received no Zidovudine or less than 12 months therapy with Zidovudine.

You should note that the patient co-payment which applies to other drugs on the program will apply to these new drugs. Furthermore, the audit and certification process outlined in the *Commonwealth/State Highly Specialised Drugs Program Guidelines, June 1993 (Publication No: 92/0353)* will also apply to these drugs.

Please note that updated appendices for the *Program Guidelines*, noted above, will be forwarded to those hospitals participating in the Highly Specialised Drugs Program.



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