

*Acute Health Division*

*Hospital Circular*

Human  
Services



Peoplefirst

**Distribution:** Public Hospitals

**Subject:** Highly Specialised Drugs Program -  
Restriction of use of Ribavirin in combination with  
Interferon Alfa 2b

**Purpose:** The purpose of this circular is to advise hospitals involved with the Highly Specialised Drugs Program of the Commonwealth position on combination therapy involving ribavirin.

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We have had recent advice from the Commonwealth that there have been reports of the use of ribavirin to enhance compliance to qualify for ongoing treatment of Hepatitis C with Interferon Alfa 2b.

The Commonwealth have advised that the use of ribavirin with interferon alfa for the above purpose is an inappropriate practice and **will not be funded** under the Highly Specialised Drugs Program. Furthermore, patients receiving interferon under these circumstances should be made aware that the use of interferon for this purpose will therefore be outside the Hepatitis C Program subsidy and at the expense of the patient.

All hospitals that have a Hepatitis C treatment Centre should ensure that clinicians are aware of this restriction on the use of ribavirin in combination with interferon alfa.

**DR C W BROOK**  
ACTING DIRECTOR  
ACUTE HEALTH