

The logo for Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) is on the left, featuring the letters 'R', 'C', and 'H' in a stylized, overlapping arrangement. To the right of the logo, the title 'Keeping Tabs' is written in a large, bold, red serif font. The background behind the title consists of several overlapping, light grey rectangular shapes that resemble a stack of papers or tabs.

# Keeping Tabs

A Newsletter From The Pharmacy Department, Royal Children's Hospital

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## Medication Incident Review Committee: Review and Redesign of Medication Ordering at RCH

At RCH, 60% of reported incidents are medication related. A contributing factor is that there are **over 40** different forms on which medications can be ordered. This provides a huge potential for medication errors from duplicated and/or missed orders. The Medication Incident Review Committee is undertaking a project to review all the charts in the hospital on which medications can be ordered, thus reducing the hazards associated with medication use by reducing the number of charts used.

A new medication ordering system will be developed to ensure accurate documentation of inpatient and outpatient medications. Before any changes to prescribing systems are made, all interested parties will be consulted. An additional aim of this project is to assist the design and implementation of electronic prescribing and drug administration in the future.

For further information or to make any suggestions about the project, please contact Danielle Deidun via e-mail ([deidund@cryptic.rch.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:deidund@cryptic.rch.unimelb.edu.au)) or extension 5492.

## Monthly Antibiotic Snapshot

The Drug Usage Evaluation (DUE) team, consisting of clinicians from the Pharmacy and Clinical Pharmacology departments and the Infectious diseases unit, have been conducting antibiotic snapshots since October 2001. A "snapshot" records what antibiotics are being prescribed in the hospital on a specific day. Snapshots are done on the first Monday of every month, and will be done for 12 months.

The three snapshots which were completed in October, November and December 2001 have shown pleasing results.

The use of third generation cephalosporins and more expensive antibiotics such as vancomycin, ciprofloxacin and meropenem has been minimal. Gentamicin has been the most commonly prescribed antibiotic each month.

### Opening Hours Reminder.....

Mon-Fri: 8.30 am -5.30 pm

Sat: 9.00 am-1.00 pm, Sun: 10.00 am-12 noon

After hours contact the on-call pharmacist  
by paging the Nursing Supervisor

*Coming soon.....*

## Paediatric Pharmacopoeia 13th ed

A new edition book, and for the first time an electronic version, will be available soon. The extensive experience and resources from some 60 medical consultants, specialists and pharmacists from within RCH and around the nation have contributed to make the text an essential reference. This 13<sup>th</sup> edition features more than 50 new drug monographs and will be an invaluable reference for any health professional involved in prescribing or administering medication to neonates, infants, and children.

*E-pharmacopoeia:*

The e-publication will be a web-based reference which will vastly improve accessibility to the text. This is an exciting initiative for the pharmacy department to undertake.

The book will be launched within the next few months. More detailed information will be provided on the hospital bulletin closer to the launch date.

## News.... from the Drug Usage Committee (DUC)

The Department of Nephrology has changed protocol for the treatment of anaemia requiring transfusion associated with chronic renal failure, to include the use of darbepoetin. It is Section 100 listed for this indication. For more information refer to the specific article on this page.

Remifentanyl, a rapidly metabolised opiate, has recently been approved for use by consultant anaesthetist staff for 4 specific indications where rapid recovery is desirable.

The DUC restricted drug list has been updated and is available via the Clinical Guidelines Intranet site at <http://perseus.rch.unimelb.edu.au/intranet/genmed/newindex.htm>



A catchy pamphlet designed to make medication giving and taking a positive experience for both the patient and carer.

### How to Give Medications to Children

This pamphlet includes age specific advice and practical tips.. Oral, rectal, inhaled and nasal routes are covered, as well as instillation of eye and ear medication.

Ask for a copy now from the pharmacy, or refer your patients to us for one.

## Darbepoetin Alfa (Aranesp)

Aranesp (by Amgen) is a new erythropoiesis stimulating protein indicated for the treatment of anaemia associated with chronic renal failure. Anaresp stimulates red blood cell production by the same mechanism as recombinant human erythropoetin (rHuEPO), but due to its increased sialic acid containing carbohydrate content, has an approximately three-fold longer terminal half life and thus increased in vivo biologic activity.

For correction of anaemia, initial dosing starts at 0.45 microgram/kg body weight as a single injection once weekly. Dosing is via the subcutaneous or intravenous route.

When converting from r-HuEPO:

- \* Patients receiving r-HuEPO 2-3 times a week may change to once weekly Aranesp,
- \* Patients receiving r-HuEPO once weekly may change to Aranesp administered once every two weeks,

Aranesp doses should be based on the patient's r-HuEPO dose at the time of substitution, and the same route of administration should be used.

Aranesp was well tolerated in clinical studies, with most adverse events correlating with those reported for r-HuEPO. However, injection site pain was more prominent at the application site of Aranesp when compared with r-HuEPO.

It is presented in packs of 4 pre-filled syringes in the following strengths:

10 mcg/0.4 mL, 20 mcg/0.5 mL, 30 mcg/0.3 mL, 40 mcg/0.4 mL, 50 mcg/0.5 mL, 60 mcg/0.3 mL, 100 mcg/0.5 mL

Refer to Aranesp product information for further details

## Nappy-Goo

During 2002 the pharmacy department will be launching a new commercial product – our famous nappy rash cream: Nappy-Goo®!

Nappy-Goo® has been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration and has been listed on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods. The product name has been trade-marked without opposition, and work is underway determining labelling requirements and designing packaging.

Once released, the product will be available in all pharmacies nationally, for over-the-counter sale.