Information Circular

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Phone number: (08) 9222 2277
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Subject: TAMIFLU (Oseltamivir) PANDEMIC EMERGENCY STOCKPILE

Tamiflu
- Tamiflu (oseltamivir) is a neuraminidase inhibitor indicated for the treatment and prevention of influenza A and B. Tamiflu provides greatest benefit if commenced within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms.

- In healthy individuals, it provides an average reduction of symptom duration of one day. It may reduce complications in those with risk factors for poor outcomes and should be considered, in particular, for treatment of patients who are: immunosuppressed; suffer a chronic disease; residents of aged care facilities; elderly; very young; Indigenous; pregnant; or morbidly obese.

- Annual vaccination is the recommended method of influenza prevention for health staff and at-risk patients.

Commonwealth Stockpile
- In the wake of the 2009 influenza pandemic, the Commonwealth Government retained stocks of Tamiflu in each State and Territory to allow for rapid distribution in response to a significant influenza outbreak or influenza pandemic.

- In Western Australia, these stocks are stored in one location under the care of the Department of Health. This stock is not further prepositioned around the State.

- Tamiflu stocks remain the property of the Commonwealth Government and release of Tamiflu from this stockpile can only be authorised by the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer.

- The Department of Health has no discretionary power to access or release this stock.

State Emergency Cache
- WA Health maintains a State emergency cache of Tamiflu, which is under the management of the Disaster Preparedness and Management Unit (DPMU).

- The function of the cache is to provide for rapid response and distribution in the event of an outbreak (or potential outbreak) of influenza of public health concern, and to maintain both Health and non-Health emergency personnel and critical services during an epidemic or pandemic until Commonwealth emergency plans are enacted.
• Release of the stocks from this cache are authorised by the Western Australian State Health Coordinator (SHC) or delegate, on the advice of the Director, Communicable Disease Control Directorate.

**Supply to Hospitals and Residential Aged Care Facilities in Non-pandemic Seasons**

• During normal influenza seasons, there may be the need to utilise Tamiflu in the management of isolated outbreaks in small to medium-sized cohorts of patients, staff and carers in health and aged care facilities, and possibly among groups in other residential settings.

• These situations may exceed locally available supplies or logistics capacity such that it may not be possible to provide courses of Tamiflu for treatment or prophylaxis in a timely manner.

• In these circumstances, Tamiflu can be requested from the State cache for use in clinical management and outbreak control in public or private hospitals, residential aged care facilities and possibly other residential settings, where indicated on public health grounds.

• Requests should in the first instance be directed to the appropriate regional Public Health Unit (PHU). PHUs will assess the information provided and determine if the situation meets criteria for an outbreak (e.g. [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-flu-guidelines.htm](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-flu-guidelines.htm)) and provide advice on appropriate management. If the PHU recommends use of Tamiflu as treatment and/or prophylaxis in accordance with guidelines for influenza outbreak management, and supplies cannot be readily sourced through stock on hand (e.g. for outbreaks in public hospitals) or in private pharmacies or pharmaceutical wholesalers (e.g. for outbreaks in private hospitals or residential aged care facilities), the PHU can request the SHC to release the required stock from the State cache.

• Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If authorised, provision of stocks from the cache for these purposes will be on a replacement or cost recovery basis to the health service or private facility, including the cost of the supplied Tamiflu and transport. DPMU will provide an indication of these costs and the method of reimbursement at the time supply is being arranged.

• All requests must be directed by the authorising PHU, or the Communicable Disease Control Directorate, to the Disaster Preparedness and Management Unit:
  - Telephone In hours 08 9222 2277  
    After hours 08 9328 0553

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This information is available in alternative formats upon request.