



ADDults with ADHD NSW Inc

Support and ADDvocacy

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NEWSLETTER

CHRISTMAS EDITION 2008

INSIDE:

MEMBER NEWS	P2
EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL	P3
ADHD – ALCOHOL & DRUG USE	P3
ADHD- QUIT SMOKING & SANTA GAVE UP SMOKING	P4
MEDIA REPORTING	P5
DAILY TELEGRAPH	P6
MEDICATION TIPS	P6
LAUGH IT OFF AND HOLIDAY BUDGETS	P7
WHAT'S ON	P8
INCLUDED THIS ISSUE:- PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL REPORTS	

NOTICE:
2009 Awareness Afternoons tba: March, June, Sept., and December.
At Sydney Inst. TAFE

NOTE:
VOLUNTEERS NEED TO CLOSE OUR OFFICE DURING SCHOOL HOLS. HOWEVER, EMAILS AND TELEPHONE ANSWER MACHINE WILL BE CLEARED REGULARLY.



Happy Christmas....

HERE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

Amoxetine Hydrochloride (Strattera) is classed as an anti-depressant and is used to treat ADHD. Due to the fact that Strattera is a non-stimulant, it has little to no known diversion potential, and is the first line treatment approach recommended in literature for individuals with chronic substance use disorders & forensic histories.

In addition, Strattera may also be appropriate as first line treatment for individuals with comorbid anxiety disorders, for example Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This is due to the fact that stimulant medication may increase symptoms of anxiety, therefore stressing the importance of the anxiety disorder being treated first with psychotherapy and a non-stimulant medication.

Historically, Strattera was not subsidised by the PBS, thus making the cost of the medication far beyond the affordability of most members of the community. However, six months ago, due to the lobbying of community members and specialist psychiatrists, Strattera was made available on the PBS, which allowed accessibility to a much needed treatment option.

BUT... in the past few weeks, Strattera has now been taken back off the PBS!

In our last issue, we acknowledged the support of the Federal government for children with ADHD through the PBS listings of long-acting stimulants and the non-stimulant medication Strattera. However, as we pointed out, these medications are not available on the PBS for those aged over 18yrs.

Adults were able to access Strattera on PBS when diagnosed over age of 18 yrs, if their psychiatrist provided correspondence stating that as ADHD is a life-long condition, their patient would have had significant ADHD symptomatology and met criteria as a child.

Inexplicably this loophole has now been closed, and once again those adults who are diagnosed over the age of 18 years, no longer have Strattera available to them on PBS.

The specific medication that suits an adult with ADHD is not a "want" but a "need". Taking away the only treatment option viable for adults with chronic substance use or anxiety disorders is nothing short of discriminatory. Particularly when such individuals are likely to be recently released from incarceration and struggling with relapse prevention, or individuals on limited income such as university students and/or low income families.

Removing necessary treatment options from the PBS would not occur for asthma, diabetes or heart disease – Why has this occurred with ADHD? Why are adults with ADHD discriminated against in such a fashion? Why are adults with ADHD not able to access the health care they entitled to?

ADHD is a condition that individuals are born with and in 70% experience symptoms that significantly affect their functioning throughout adulthood. It is absurd to say that just because a person reaches a certain age they should not be able to access their medication on PBS.

We have written to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, and the state and federal health ministers, in an attempt to have the situation rectified

Joy Toll, Secretary/Editor