



CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR DRAFT MEDICINES AND POISONS BILL 2006

In January 2001 the National Competition Review of Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Legislation Report, more generally known as the Galbally Review, was submitted to the Australian Health Minister's Conference. The Galbally Review contained 27 recommendations, including the adoption by jurisdictions of schedules of the Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Drugs and Poisons (the SUSDP).

In the ACT medicines and poisons are currently regulated under a number of different Acts, such as the *Poisons Act 1933*, the *Poisons and Drugs Act 1978* and the *Drugs of Dependence Act 1989*. Over time aspects of these Acts and supporting Regulations have become inconsistent, aspects of their application become unclear, or simply become out of date. The Medicines and Poisons Bill 2006 aims to give effect to the recommendations in the Galbally Review, and in doing so will consolidate the law relating to medicines and poisons by repealing and replacing all or parts of a number of existing pieces of legislation.

The objects of the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2006 are to promote and protect public health by minimising the risks of harm that medicines and poisons present through such things as poisonings, medicinal misadventure or abuse of the substances to which the SUSDP applies. To accomplish these objects, the Bill will regulate a range of medicines and poisons. Medicines include pharmacy medicines, pharmacist only medicines, controlled medicines and prescription only medicines. Poisons covered by the Bill will include those that are low harm, moderate harm and dangerous poisons.

The Medicines and Poisons Bill 2006 establishes a licensing framework for medicines and poisons, as well as grounds and powers for disciplinary action to be taken against authorised persons. The Bill also controls the way in which medicines and poisons are dealt with through a range of offences, imposing a range of potential penalties, including the imposition of terms of imprisonment where appropriate. Enforcement of the offences will be achieved through a comprehensive range of inspection and seizure powers, including the capacity to take and analyse samples.

The Bill will be supported by detailed regulations that are still in development. It is intended that the supporting Regulation will contain the authorisations necessary to maintain the status quo in regard to most medicines and poisons. This will ensure that health professionals will still be able to prescribe, administer and dispense medicines as they do at present. Once completed, stakeholder consultation will also be conducted regarding the supporting Regulation. This will ensure interested and affected stakeholder groups are provided with sufficient opportunity to review and make submissions on all of the proposed legislative framework for medicines and poisons. The Exposure Draft of the Bill can be accessed on the ACT Government Legislation Register (<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/>) or through the Health Protection Service within ACT Health.

Contact: Enquires about the proposed legislation can be made to either Ms Jane Strang on 02-6205-0961 or by email to jane.strang@act.gov.au, or Mr Brett Purdue on 02-6205-1010 or by email to brett.purdue@act.gov.au.

Submissions: Submissions should be forwarded to the Director, Health Protection Service, ACT Health, Locked Bag 5, Weston Creek, ACT 2611 by close of business **Monday, 12 February 2007**.



Health Protection Service

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