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Make a contribution to this newsletter! To contribute, please e-mail Elaine Tan.

### Newsletter from the Victorian Therapeutics Advisory Group

## Renew your VicTAG Membership 2012/2013

VicTAG membership renewal forms have already been forwarded to all VicTAG hospitals.

### A 10% discount will be provided for payments received by 31 August 2012.

VicTAG membership allows exclusive privileges such as VicTAG website member access, PROMPT access, access to useful information and resources relating to quality use of medicines, and entitles members to attend VicTAG meetings and contribute to discussions.

If payment for VicTAG membership is not made by 30 September 2012, all VicTAG privileges will be withdrawn.

For membership enquiries, contact the VicTAG Professional Officer, Dr Elaine Tan by e-mailing [professionalofficer@victag.org.au](mailto:professionalofficer@victag.org.au).

## Invited Speakers at VicTAG Full Meetings

Commencing in 2012, speakers will be invited to present at VicTAG full meetings.

Presentations so far have included:

- the results from the review of the Register of Emergency and Life Saving Drugs by Chris McKenzie and Janet Browning, Austin Hospital
- outcome measures for off-label rituximab use in haematology by Professor Harshal Nandurkar, St Vincent's Hospital.

The slides for these presentations are available on the VicTAG website under 'members section' → 'invited speaker presentations'.

## Call for Suggestions for Invited Speakers

Is there someone from your hospital you can think of that would make a great invited speaker at a VicTAG full meeting? Is there someone who can speak on a topic of interest to VicTAG members, e.g. quality use of medicines, issues relevant to drug and therapeutics committees, etc?

Speakers are required to present for no more than 1/2 an hour plus 5-10 minutes of question time.

VicTAG would like your suggestions and input. Please forward suggestions to the VicTAG Professional Officer, Dr Elaine Tan by e-mailing [professionalofficer@victag.org.au](mailto:professionalofficer@victag.org.au). Please also indicate whether or not you would be able to invite the speaker (on behalf of VicTAG) to present.

## QUM/Medication Safety Group Meetings

The VicTAG QUM group meet on the 3rd Thursday of every second (even) month during the period from February to December. Quality use of medicines/medication safety-related topics proposed by QUM group members are discussed at the meetings. In between meetings, QUM group members post questions via e-mail to each other. A summary of hospital responses to the questions is available to VicTAG members on the VicTAG website under 'QUM/medication safety' → 'information summaries'.

For further information or to join the QUM group, please contact Melita van de Vreede on [Melita.VandeVreede@easternhealth.org.au](mailto:Melita.VandeVreede@easternhealth.org.au).

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[www.victag.org.au](http://www.victag.org.au)

### **Register of Emergency and Life Saving Drugs**

An updated version (dated April 2012) of the Register has been loaded onto the website: [www.victag.org.au](http://www.victag.org.au)

Any amendments should be forwarded to [judy@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:judy@barwonhealth.org.au)

Please note the Register of Emergency and Life Saving Drugs is currently under review.

**VicTAG**  
Victorian Therapeutics Advisory Group  
[www.victag.org.au](http://www.victag.org.au) ABN: 27224983348

## Newsletter from the Victorian Therapeutics Advisory Group

### Review of the VicTAG Register of Emergency and Life Saving Drugs

**A new VicTAG Register of Emergency and Life Saving Drugs has been developed. Victorian Hospital Pharmacy Directors have been emailed an abbreviated version of the new Register spreadsheet with their hospital's individual details. Could you please assist by filling out your hospital's stock levels and emailing the worksheet back to the investigators as soon as possible? Once all the information has been collated and added to the new Register, it will be up and running on the VicTAG website. Please direct any questions or comments to: [victagelsd@gmail.com](mailto:victagelsd@gmail.com)**

The Register has for many years been a useful tool for staff at Victoria's hospitals, particularly for hospital pharmacists. It has been provided by and maintained under the auspices of VicTAG. The Register exists to aid access to certain drugs in times of emergency. These drugs are rarely used, of high cost or difficult to obtain quickly.

A major review of both the content and presentation of the Register has been carried out at the request of VicTAG.

To inform this review the investigators have looked at equivalent systems/documents from other states of Australia and from New Zealand, United States and United Kingdom. The investigators have compared and contrasted the list of drugs on this Register with those on other Registers and have reviewed the list in light of this comparison. Consultation has been wide to enable thorough review of the Register to make it more informative and useful.

The utility of the Register was reviewed by surveying Victorian metropolitan and rural hospitals, specifically pharmacists, emergency physicians and rural and regional nursing managers.

A comprehensive review of antidotes and their use and dosage recommendations was carried out with regard to current best clinical practice.

The new Register is presented as an interactive spreadsheet with links from an index page to either drug or hospital. The new Register is informative and it will assist hospitals in reviewing their individual needs. An individual hospital's risk/vulnerability assessment will help determine which drugs and in what quantities that hospital should stock.

Once a hospital decides to stock a certain drug, the Register will be able to provide advice on drug presentation, indication, initial dose and recommended stock levels to treat a patient for 24 hrs. If a hospital does not stock a certain drug, or needs a further supply, then the Register will be able to advise where to access a supply in an emergency situation.

Please direct any questions or comments to: [victagelsd@gmail.com](mailto:victagelsd@gmail.com)

*Written by Christine McKenzie and Janet Browning, Austin Hospital*