

SATAG

Quality use of medicine for a healthier South Australia



South Australian Therapeutics Advisory Group

Annual Report

2007/2008

Chairman's Report



I am pleased to bring you the inaugural annual report for the South Australian Therapeutics Advisory Group (SATAG). Over the past 10 years SATAG, and its predecessor, the South Australian Drug Usage Advisory Group (SADUAG), have played an important role in addressing issues relating to the quality use of medicines.

SATAG is a forum for stakeholders to share innovations and raise concerns regarding quality use of medicines. In addition, SATAG provides a conduit for stakeholders to open dialogue with the Department of Health on issues affecting the provision of safe, appropriate and cost effective use of medicines in South Australia.

2007/2008 was a productive year with ongoing development of well researched position documents on issues such as complementary and alternative medicines, the use of samples, relationships with the pharmaceutical industry, product familiarisation programs and the statewide evaluation of high cost drugs.

In testament to the quality of materials produced by SATAG, the complementary and alternative medicines and product familiarisation programs position papers have been taken up by the national body, Council of Australian Therapeutic Advisory Groups (CATAG), as the basis for the development of national position papers. The relationships with the pharmaceutical industry position paper was requested by NSW TAG when they were developing their associated guidance document. The South Australian Department of Health requested the SATAG paper on statewide evaluation of high cost drugs in the development of a departmental directive.

SATAG is looking forward to the challenges and opportunities in the year ahead. Chief amongst these is the development of a web presence to facilitate communications between SATAG and its stakeholders. We are also looking forward to our continuing role in the collection and analysis of medicine usage data in South Australia, assessment of the impact of medicines on the quality of patient care and the ongoing development of guidelines for the quality use of medicines.

In closing, I thank the South Australian Department of Health for their ongoing commitment to SATAG. The work of SATAG would not be possible without the support of the Department. I would also like to thank the SATAG members for their enthusiasm and professionalism. Their robust participation in SATAG activities is integral to our success.

Emeritus Professor Lloyd Sansom AO, Chairman

Overview

The South Australian Therapeutics Advisory Group (SATAG) promotes and provides advice on the safe, appropriate and cost effective use of medicines in South Australia.

The principle functions of the group are to:

- foster cooperation and encourage the exchange of information and ideas relating to the therapeutic, administrative and financial aspects of medicine usage
- assess the impact of medicines on the quality of patient care
- develop guidelines for the quality use of medicines, whilst taking into account the particular clinical needs of individual hospitals/patients
- collect and analyse data on medicine usage, especially in relation to medicine usage guidelines
- promote consistency in the development of and compliance with guidelines and strategies relating to the quality use of medicines
- promote equity of access to medicines for patients of South Australian hospitals
- advise on the role and cost/benefit of high cost medicines
- collaborate and liaise with appropriate relevant state and federal agencies and groups.

Activity Report

Meetings

SATAG met on four occasions during 2007/2008. Member attendance is shown in Appendix 1.

Committee membership remains very stable, with one change in membership occurring in 2007/2008. In March 2008, the Executive Officer, Ms Helen Ho left to pursue professional and personal aspirations overseas. Helen has been replaced as Executive Officer by Dr Merric Edgar-Hughes, who was appointed in May 2008.

High Cost Drug Evaluations

SATAG completed a review of cinacalcet and received two additional requests to assess high cost drug submissions for alemtuzumab and natalizumab during 2007/2008. The outcome of the applications are as shown in the table below.

Drug	Outcome
cinacalcet	The working party developed a recommendation for cinacalcet and a protocol for its use and monitoring. This drug was PBS listed prior to the presentation of the recommendation to the Department of Health.
alemtuzumab	The evaluation of this drug did not proceed due to little or no usage recorded in 2007/2008.
natalizumab	The evaluation of this drug was deferred pending PBS listing.

Policies, Guidances and Recommendations

SATAG continued to review a number of issues in 2007/2008.

Issue	Outcome
Purchase and Dispensing of Pharmaceuticals	The Department of Health provided Administrative Circular 1.2 (1991) to SATAG for review and comment. SATAG continued its review of this document. Resulting from the review, SATAG has developed a position paper on the provision of medicines to patients on discharge.
Use of Samples	A SATAG guidance document was finalised. This document is intended for use by Hospital Drug and Therapeutics Committees as a tool and basis for the development of their own hospital policies.
Relationships with Pharmaceutical Industry	A SATAG policy document was finalised and forwarded to the Department of Health for consideration for adoption as a Departmental Policy. This document was also forwarded to NSW TAG for their use during the development of their policy document.
Complementary and Alternative Medicines	A SATAG policy document was developed. The national Council of Therapeutics Advisory Groups, CATAG, agreed to use this document as the basis for the development of a national guidance document. Finalisation of the SATAG policy was deferred until a national position statement is produced.
Product Familiarisation Programs	SATAG continued to develop a policy on this issue. The draft document was used as the basis for the development of a national guidance document by CATAG.
The Handling of Cytotoxic Drugs and Monoclonal Antibodies	SATAG sent a recommendation to the Department of Health advising that the current Department policy (published 1993) requires updating.
High Cost Drugs	SATAG developed a position paper on the need for a statewide approach to the evaluation of high cost drugs. Included in the position paper was an algorithm for the evaluation of high cost drugs. This document was provided to the Department of Health for consideration.
Medication Safety Self Assessment Tool	SATAG considered the <i>Medication Safety Self Assessment® for Australian Hospitals (MSSA)</i> and the <i>Medication Safety Self Assessment® for Antithrombotic Therapy in Australian Hospitals (MSSA-AT)</i> . The self assessment tools, originally developed by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) in the United States, were adapted for use in Australia by the NSW Therapeutic Advisory Group (NSW TAG). SATAG advised the General Managers at the hospitals and Safety and Quality at the Department of Health about these tools and suggested they consider their use in the assessment of medication safety and implementation of safe medication practices.

National Activities

SATAG was represented by the Chairman and Executive Officer at the Joint Therapeutic Advisory Groups (TAGs) meeting held in March 2008.

The Joint TAGs agreed that the SATAG draft policy documents on Complementary and Alternative Medicines, the algorithm for the evaluation for high cost drugs and Product Familiarisation Programs would be used as the basis for the development of national guiding principles.

SATAG supported the proposal to form the Council of Australian Therapeutic Advisory Groups (CATAG).

SATAG Meeting Attendance

Members	26 Jul 07	20 Sep 07	15 Nov 07	20 Mar 08
Emeritus Professor Lloyd Sansom AO (Chairman)	✓			✓
A/Prof Chris Alderman	✓	(proxy)	(proxy)	(proxy)
Dr Chris Beare		✓		✓
Naomi Burgess				
Dr Peter Chapman		✓		
A/Prof Kingsley Coulthard	(proxy)	✓		✓
A/Prof Chris Doecke	(proxy)		✓	✓
Vaughn Eaton	✓	✓		✓
Dr Stephen Hedger		✓		✓
Liz Hender	✓	✓		✓
Dr Catherine Hill	✓	✓		
Denise Jeffs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr Richard Kelly				
Vanessa Maloney		✓		✓
Dr Chris Pearson		✓	✓	
Dr Sepehr Shakib				
Onno Van Der Wel				✓
Kevin Williams	✓	✓	✓	✓
Helen Ho, Executive Officer	✓	✓	✓	✓