

## **Reclassification strategy: therapeutic categories potentially suitable for reclassification from POM to P**

Within the NHS Plan the government aims by 2002 to make more medicines available over the counter to widen access and patient choice. This also fits within the objective of making greater use of pharmacists and their expertise to help patients manage minor ailments and chronic conditions.

At the beginning of last year as part of the MCA's reclassification project a group of stakeholders produced a consensus statement for taking forward three streams of work. The MCA itself looked at the policy and process relating to reclassification. The organisations represented were the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain together with the Proprietary Association of Great Britain, the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, the Royal College of General Practitioners, the Long Term Medical Conditions Alliance, and the MCA itself.

The Society led a stream of work that identified therapeutic categories considered potentially suitable for consideration for reclassification. The associated professional implications, including the development of practice guidance, were also considered.

The PAGB led a further stream that considered information and training issues associated with reclassification. The British Medical Association and the Royal College of Nursing were involved in this stream of the work in addition to the organisations listed above.

The result of the work stream led by the Society has been the production, by a working group, of the list of therapeutic categories on which views are now sought. The list identifies potential candidates for consideration for reclassification from POM to P and is open for comment from all parties. It is presented as a discussion document only, to elicit views from interested individuals and organisations about the suggestions made and the concepts within it.

The working group which contributed to the list was broadly based and included a spectrum of views. The suggestions made by the group members do not necessarily represent the views of their stakeholder organisations and inclusion or exclusion from the list should not be assumed to prejudice any future consideration of particular applications for reclassification.

The list should be read alongside the accompanying document which outlines the information and training considerations necessary to accompany any reclassification application. All requests for reclassification will be accompanied by a full supportive application to the MCA and current safeguards remain in place to ensure that wider availability only occurs when it is safe to do so. The MCA anticipates that its new streamlined process for achieving reclassification changes will be in place from 1 April.

Views are sought on the suggestions contained in the list in order to identify if there is a broad consensus around the types of therapeutic categories that might be appropriate for reclassification in the right circumstances, without prejudice to particular applications.

The closing date for comments is **Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup> 2002**.

Comments should be addressed to:

JANET FLINT  
ROYAL PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY  
1 LAMBETH HIGH STREET  
LONDON SE1 7JN  
e-mail: [jflint@rpsgb.org.uk](mailto:jflint@rpsgb.org.uk)