

Sophie Hibburd

From: TASMANIAN DOCTOR, NAME WITHHELD
Sent: Wednesday, 18 September 2013 1:09 AM
To: Sophie Hibburd
Subject: Medical samples

I write in absolute amazement that this stupid proposal is being taken seriously. Suddenly, a system that has served patients and practitioners for over fifty years is "unethical". I take huge offence at the suggestion that I and my colleagues use this service unethically.

There is now far less reward for pharmaceutical companies than at any time in history, thanks to the ability of retail pharmacists to substitute without asking the prescriber. This happens routinely, often without asking patients (supposedly a legal requirement), so there is no guarantee that Brand A on the prescription will be dispensed. The reason is that generic makers give the pharmacies better deals across a wide range of drugs. I suppose the proposers of change think that's OK? Well, I don't.

Patients presently gain most by not having to shell out for dispensed medicines that may result in side effects, be stopped after only a few doses, and end up in the bin. Legally, they MUST be so disposed of, as Commonwealth law prohibits any person consuming another's PBS medications.

I commonly give patients a sample together with a prescription for a new anti hypertensive, for example, and schedule the follow up visit for when the drug has stabilised it's effect.

Banning samples will just make the taxpayer the big loser, because prescriptions will take their place, at huge cost. Even the Socialist health minister in the 80s, Neal Blewett, blanched at the predicted cost blowout this would cause, after initially flirting with the idea. He seems to have had more sense than those proposing this device.

I suggest the worthy College members have already made fools of themselves and alienated most of the profession with their proposal.

Yours faithfully