

14th February 2008

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“IVIg Criteria”

We have received official notice that the new IVIg Guidelines (*Criteria for the Clinical Use of Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIg) in Australia*) (apparently commonly known as the Criteria) has been approved by the health ministers and will be phased in beginning 3 March 2008 over a six month period. This document will replace the current guidelines commonly known as the AHMAC 2000 guidelines.

Our current understanding is that all PID's will fall under the new categories of Chapter 5 and 6. This means that all those who currently receive IVIg will still be eligible to receive IVIg under the present funding arrangements ie (it is free to Australians under the National Blood Arrangements).

However it was stated in the letter that the Criteria will set out a much more detailed description for the qualifying conditions and it has been stated that a small number of patients may no longer qualify under these criteria.

As yet we have not received the final copy of the Criteria but I can quote from a letter from Dr Chris Brook in his position as the Chair of the Jurisdictional Blood Committee IVIg Working Group, dated 4 February 2008 that:

"For your information, an electronic version of the Criteria will be made available from early February at www.nba.gov.au. Free copies of the Criteria and a Quick Reference Guide will be distributed early in March as well as being made available by request. Prior to the implementation date of March 3 2008, additional information regarding the Criteria will be made available on NBA's website, including frequently asked questions (FAQs) and how to request a free copy. To further assist with the implementation of the Criteria, a time-limited National IVIg Criteria Reference Group will be established to assist with standardising interpretation of Criteria across Australia. More information regarding this group will be made available on NBA's website closer to the implementation date."

We will examine the Criteria as soon as we can get a copy. We would encourage people to visit the NBA website and also to discuss the situation with their clinician.

Please contact me on 0432 282 729 if you have any questions.

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