

Safer management of Neuromuscular Blocking Agents (NMBAs)

- Neuromuscular Blocking Agents (NMBA) are **HIGH RISK MEDICINES**.
- Inadvertent administration of an NMBA can cause catastrophic patient harm.
- A collaboration between VicTAG, NSWTAG, ANZCA and ACQSHC, the TGA and industry that led to the **mandatory NMBA labelling** of
- labelling improvement is critical, but only one safeguard.
- **A VicTAG grant supported the development of the ‘NMBA safer practice advisory tool’.**



NMBA Safer Practice Advisory Tool for Victorian Hospitals

- 25 risk reduction strategies aligned with the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHSS) medication management process, defined by :
 1. Purchasing, 2. Supply, 3. Storage, 4. Prescribing, 5. Administration 6. Disposal and 7. Clinical Governance
- Completion with input from multidisciplinary stakeholders, every 3 years.
- Assist staff take an active approach to reduce the risk of NMBA inadvertent administration.

Strategies within the Medication Management Process (Applicable NSQHS standards: 4.2 & 4.15)

Scoring key						
A	Implemented					
B	Partially implemented					
C	Not implemented					
D	Considered but not implemented					

2. Purchasing						
Risk reduction strategy	A	B	C	D	Action(s) / Comment(s)	Action(s) completed by
2.1 Safe medication procurement practices are in place within the organisation. (4) Before an NMBA brand change, a consultative process involving pharmacy and end users (such as anaesthetists and intensivists) occurs to minimise the risk of look-alike packaging. (3, 4, 6, 11, 13, 14)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	¶ ¶ ¶ ¶ ¶	/.../

Advisory Tool Development

Timeline 2018

Mar	April	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Stage 1 Victorian NMBA Advisory group set-up.		Stage 3 Vic NMBA advisory group meeting		Stage 4. Development of the advisory tool through the Advisory group.			Stage 5. Advisory tool endorsed by VicTAG QUM and the Management Committee		
Stage 2 Literature & NMBA incident review									

Timeline 2019

Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Stage 6. Approval o to Pilot the advisory tool..		Stage 7. Pilot Recruitment of 14 Victorian & Tasmanian healthcare services.				Stage 8 Collation of pilot results.		Stage 10 Write up final report.
						Stage 9 Update advisory tool and obtain final endorsement		

Pilot results

Fourteen rural and metropolitan VicTAG healthcare services from Vic and Tas piloted the advisory tool.

Key results

- all healthcare services reported:

- the tool was useful in identifying opportunities for safer handling of NMBA's and will be used as evidence for NSQHSS Standard 4 accreditation.
 - 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the tool's layout and design was easy to use.
 - plan to repeat the tool, eight plan to repeat in 3 years' and six in 1-2 years' time.
 - recommend the tool be available to all Australian Hospitals.
- **Completion time:** nine took 45 mins – 1 hour 15 mins to complete the tool, four took 2 hours or more (including follow-up and individual stakeholder consultation).
- **Risk Reduction Strategies:** On average nine (range 2-24) new NMBA risk reduction strategies were identified to introduce within the healthcare services. Most popular was 'storage' featuring the the red warning statement **WARNING: Paralysing Agent** in front of NMBA stock.

Conclusion

- The pilot demonstrated:
 - Usefulness of the tool for healthcare services to identify risk reduction strategies.
 - a strong recommendation is for the tool to be available nationally.
 - invaluable feedback obtained to improve the advisory tool further.
- Fourteen VicTAG hospitals have integrated the tool into their Standard 4 NSQHSS accreditation process!
- The NMBA safer practice advisory tool will complement the mandatory NMBA labelling from September 2020. It has the opportunity to improve NMBA safety in all Australian healthcare services.
- The tool will be available through VicTAG.



Amy McRae, Senior Pharmacist – Clinical Informatics,
Alfred Health. Email: a.mcrae@alfred.org.au

