

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Generic medicines ancillary label here to stay**

The new ancillary label designed as part of the *Generic medicines are an equal choice* campaign is to be included as an alternate label 15 in the 21st edition of the Australian Pharmaceutical Formulary and Handbook.

The label was designed in consultation with the PSA, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, practicing community pharmacists and consumers as part of the 2008 NPS *Generic Medicines are an Equal Choice* campaign. The APF Editorial Board has agreed to include it in the 21st edition of the APF handbook, which is due out in early 2009.

"The label will provide a reminder for consumers to know the active ingredient name of the medicines they take and will provide a trigger to seek advice from their pharmacist. The APF is pleased to include this additional label as a tool to support effective communication with consumers regarding the quality use of medicines," Lloyd Sansom Chair Editorial Board of the APF-21, said.

To increase readability and understanding for consumers the new label includes an area to write the name of the active ingredient of the medicine and is larger than the existing 15b label. It also gives pharmacists another tool to use when having discussions about generic medicines and active ingredient names with their patients.

"The label supports best practice in community pharmacies when discussing generic medicines with consumers. We encourage pharmacists and their staff to point out the active ingredient name on the label and/or medicine packaging when talking to consumers," NPS CEO, Dr Lynn Weekes said.

"By knowing the active ingredient, consumers can be confident that they are receiving the correct medicine and ensure they aren't doubling up on their medicines should they switch brands."

Best practice includes only offering a generic brand at the prescription intake point when it is safe and appropriate to do so. Brand substitution should only occur if the 'no substitution' box on the script remains unchecked and the patient has given their consent.

Pharmacists are also reminded they can train staff on generic medicines using the PSA Pharmacy Self Care storyboard or materials from the NPS website.

To order more prescription intake forms, ancillary labels or repeat folders (which can be overprinted with your pharmacy details) from the pharmacy tool kit phone Stirling Fildes on 1300 651 118.

Should you have any feedback regarding any of the products in the pharmacy tool kit, please send your comments to [info@nps.org.au](mailto:info@nps.org.au).

**ENDS**

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