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Date

5 MAY 83



PARAQUAT : EMETIC POLICY

Your note dated 3 May refers. In Section 2, page 2, may I propose the following amendment to your draft text?

Statistical evidence of the efficacy of the emetic in reducing the numbers of paraquat poisoning deaths due to accidents remains elusive, because the number of accidental poisoning cases is small; it is unlikely that such statistical evidence will become available in the immediate future. However, it is clear that the emetic reliably leads to the rapid onset of vomiting in people who have drunk emeticised product. The presence of the emetic is not contra-indicated. Therefore while drinking accidents continue to occur, albeit with a low frequency, the addition of emetic to paraquat remains a worthwhile and practical step.

The PSRG position is one of favouring the introduction of colour and stench universally. We are less persuaded about the value of including the emetic but we still support your proposed action for the reasons given above.

Incidentally, "Bolivia" was not spelled correctly in your draft.

Geoff