NDSS Changes PBS de-listing of Blood Glucose Test Strips PHC Remote Pharmacist Communiqué

Raised by: Diabetes Educators – PHC Outreach CAHS / TEHS

Background: As of the 1st July 2016, changes to the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) mean that blood glucose test strips have been removed from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). Prior to this, remote health centres accessed these strips through their contracted S100 pharmacy. A new supply arrangement is required to ensure client access to test strips.

Discussion: Test strips and needles will only be available through NDSS Access Points, which require clients to be individually registered. NDSS Access Points in the NT are community pharmacies and Healthy Living NT (HLNT). Additionally the Commonwealth changed the NDSS scheme so that Access Points are no longer allowed to post products to Registrants and charge the NDSS. Due to the need for Access Points to post products to remote communities, the Commonwealth has separately allowed HLNT to distribute into Remote Area Aboriginal Health Service (RAAHS) approved centres at no cost to the health centre. To access free NDSS products, a RAAHS approved health centre can place a bulk order on a monthly basis and submit to HLNT. The stock supplied will be used for all clients.

The new ordering process for test strips and needles will be as follows:

- Health centres order directly from HLNT (Darwin Office) using the NDSS Product Order Form: Approved RAAHS Clinics and State Government Rural and Remote Clinics

- HLNT will supply the ordered products:
  - Central Australia: to CAHS regional stores to distribute to health centres
  - Top End: directly to the health centre

The HLNT order form has a list of all NDSS products that can be ordered. The ONLY products that are for use in remote health centres and that can be ordered are:

- Freestyle Optium test strips (NDSS code: 27)
  ~ If the health centre has Registrants who use other brands of meters, strips can be ordered using the appropriate NDSS code on the back of the bulk order form

- Needles: 5mm B-D brand (NDSS code: 97) or 6mm NovoFine (NDSS code: 150)

The Diabetes Educators – PHC Outreach CAHS / TEHS have ensured current clients on insulin are registered with NDSS and a list provided to HLNT.

Consultation: Healthy Living NT; Danila Dilba; AMSANT; Executive Director of Medicines Management; Pharmaceutical Access Branch, Pharmaceutical Benefits Division (DoHA); NT DoH Strategy and Reform Unit; CAHS / TEHS Senior PHC Pharmacists; CAHS / TEHS PHC Directors of Medical Services; S100 pharmacies

### Outcome:

- Take note of the new ordering process and advise staff of change
- Bulk orders will be placed monthly with HLNT and stock used for all clients requiring blood glucose monitoring
- Medical Practitioners to remove test strips from all rural prescriptions
- **Ensure all clients with Diabetes are registered with NDSS**
- Ensure any client commencing on **insulin or Byetta® or with a new diagnosis of diabetes is registered with the NDSS**. NDSS registration number must be recorded on PCIS or EACS in the alternate ID field. This is a once only registration.
- Notify HLNT when a client is **commenced on insulin or Byetta® or when a new NDSS registration is completed**. The [Standard Drug List](#) will indicate the appropriate category in the 'Location' column. The SDL may be sorted by the category column to provide a list of medicines by category.