March 2024

SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS
Official Group Of SAMA
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REGULATION BUSINESS UNIT REPORT

1. Clinician Impairment

Over the past six months, our unit has been actively managing a variety of cases related to clinician impairment, achieving outcomes that span the spectrum from successful full work reintegration to less favorable results. Despite the challenges, our commitment to supporting practitioners in distress remains steadfast. We continue to collaborate with Medical Protection Societies (MPS) and other key stakeholders to develop and refine a model plan aimed at assisting practitioners facing difficulties.

However, our efforts have been complicated by numerous legal obstacles, which include SASA members being reported for POPIA breaches and the like, that hinder our ability to provide the necessary assistance to clinicians. These legal challenges require us to navigate this sensitive space with utmost caution. In the last quarter, we have had two ongoing cases at various stages of progress, one dormant case, and one case awaiting medicolegal review.

2. Drug Labelling

The issue of unsafe drug labelling and packaging continues to be a priority for our unit. We engage actively with the industry through various forums, working in collaboration with the SASA Drug Safety Team. This process, although lengthy and challenging, is crucial for ensuring the safety and efficacy of pharmaceutical products. We have also had varying success here as we encounter varying levels of response from industry. In addition, SAHPRA remain uncontactable.

3. Blood Management

The RBU has recently undertaken the blood management initiative, which currently involves the dissemination of weekly newsletter educational pieces. Our goal is to enhance awareness and understanding of blood management practices among clinicians. We are committed to driving this initiative forward, ensuring its integration into clinical practice.

4. Epidural Catheter Management

Our engagement with the Western Cape Department of Health regarding epidural catheter management has yielded positive outcomes, with no further negative feedback received. This success underscores the importance of continuous dialogue and collaboration with health departments to improve clinical practices.

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5. Off-label Drug Usage

Discussions with Life Healthcare had been initiated as long as 18months ago, regarding the consenting process for off-label drug usage. Additionally, we have engaged in another dialogue with MPS to clarify the legal requirements surrounding consent for such practices. We aim to keep our membership informed of any further developments in this area as it develops.

6. Generic Drug Usage

To promote a more rational selection of generic drugs, we continue to utilize the DGMC template for generic drug usage and selection. This template has been made available to numerous members of the various drug management teams within SASA, supporting informed decision-making in drug selection.

7. Membership conduct

The RBU has managed one case of member misconduct toward the secretariat and this issue was resolved with no further need for escalation.

Conclusion

The SASA Regulation Business Unit remains dedicated to addressing the complex issues that impact the safety and effectiveness of healthcare delivery. Through ongoing efforts in clinician impairment management, drug labelling, blood management, and other key areas, we strive to uphold the highest standards of practice and patient care. We will continue to navigate the challenges that arise, working collaboratively with all stakeholders to achieve our objectives.