

The ACM advised that there is a valid and important role for SSRIs and SNRIs in treating certain psychiatric and developmental disorders in children and adolescents in Australia, supported by professional evidence-based guidelines rather than TGA approved indications and Product Information documents (PI). However, the ACM also expressed concern that the use of antidepressants in children is increasing and identified a need for further prescriber education to support safe prescribing in paediatric and adolescent populations, especially regarding appropriate starting dosage and dose titration.

This need is especially relevant in general practice, where patients may often be independently managed by their GP for many months whilst awaiting specialist psychiatric or paediatric review.

The ACM noted that there is currently no clinical guidance on the RACGP website on the appropriate use of antidepressants in children and adolescents. The ACM advised that the development of joint clinical guidance by the RANZCP, RACP and RACGP would support the safe and effective prescribing of antidepressants in this population.

The TGA accepts the advice of the ACM and I therefore request that the RACP, together with RANZCP and RACGP, consider working together to develop new clinical guidance or revise the previous joint 2005 *Clinical Guidance on the use of Antidepressant Medications in Children and Adolescents* to better reflect the current evidence and provide additional guidance on appropriate starting dosage and dose titration, for use particularly in the primary care setting.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information.

Yours sincerely



Adj. Professor John Skerritt
Health Products Regulation Group
7 October 2020