

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REFERENCES COMMITTEE

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Hearing into Forced Adoption Policies

28 September 2011

Question: 003

Topic: THE USE OF DIETHYLSTILBOESTROL (DES)

Hansard Page: 29

Senator Moore asked:

On notice, can we get when DES was first regarded by federal health authorities as dangerous to be used in association with childbirth as a lactation suppressant? My understanding is that that is the element on which there has been a finding. We would like to know when that was done and what happened then. Was the drug withdrawn? Was it registered as not to be used? What happens when that occurs?

Answer:

The TGA was not established at the time and does not have the records that would enable a response to the question.

Diethylstilbestrol is not registered on the ARTG and therefore cannot be supplied as a therapeutic good in Australia, except under one of the legislated provisions that allow access to unregistered medicines, such as the Special Access Scheme.

In 2004 the TGA published information about adverse effects in relation to DES in the Australian Adverse Drug Reactions Bulletin (<http://www.tga.gov.au/hp/aadrb-0406.htm#a1>) and in 2008, the TGA issued a safety alert in relation to DES (<http://www.tga.gov.au/safety/alerts-medicine-des-080423.htm>).

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Chair asked:

Do we know that DES was used in the same way that DES was used in Australia? Do we know that there were circumstances in other countries?

Answer:

The Department, TGA and NHMRC do not have information in relation to this question.