



Strategy and Sustainability Division
MINISTRY FOR HEALTH, THE ELDERLY AND COMMUNITY CARE

DH CIRCULAR No. 154/2010

DH 2508/2010

9th July 2010

Attention all Consultants
Medical Officers
Pharmacists
Pharmacy Technicians
Nurses

Re: Sodium Bicarbonate 8.4% 10mL Ampoules for use with Diclofenac Injections for IV infusions

Please note that a new formulation of 8.4% Sodium Bicarbonate **10mL ampoules** (J849) is available for use with diclofenac injections. The diclofenac injections available on the Government Formulary List are licensed for use either by intramuscular injection, or via an intravenous infusion.

For the preparation of the IV infusion, indicated in the treatment or prevention of post operative pain in a hospital environment, one ampoule should be diluted with 100 - 500mL of either sodium chloride solution (0.9%) or glucose solution (5%). Both solutions should be buffered first with **0.5mL of 8.4% sodium bicarbonate solution**, under aseptic conditions according to the (SPC) Summary of Product Characteristics. Infusions should be freshly prepared and used immediately and should not be administered as an intravenous bolus. Sodium bicarbonate reduces the risk of precipitation since diclofenac is only sparingly soluble. Infusions should not be administered for more than two days.

The other formulations of the 8.4% Sodium Bicarbonate including the **prefilled syringes** in volumes of 10mL, 50mL and 200mL should **not** be used.

For your attention please.

Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat
Director General

“PALAZZO CASTELLANIA” 15, MERCHANTS STREET, VALLETTA, VLT 03

Tel. Nos. +00356 21224071/ 2299 2232

Fax no. +00356 2299 2663

e-mail: dgss.mhec@gov.mt