



Update on the Review of the Board's Excessive Price Guidelines

On behalf of my colleagues, I wish to thank stakeholders who have participated in the Board's consultations on its Excessive Price Guidelines and the *Patented Medicines Regulations*, since the review was initiated in May of 2006.

With the release of the January 2008 Discussion Paper on possible options to amend its Guidelines and the Regulations, and the feedback received from a wide range of stakeholders, the Board has moved towards meeting its goal of ensuring that the Guidelines are relevant and appropriate in today's health care environment.

At its March 6 and 7 meeting, the Board reviewed and discussed the submissions received, met with the working groups on *Therapeutic Improvement* and on *International Therapeutic Class Comparison* and discussed their preliminary findings. It also finalized the terms of reference of the working group on *Price Tests*. The Board is sensitive to the considerable ongoing variability among key stakeholder groups regarding the merits of the various scenarios and options presented in the Discussion Paper. As a result, it has directed staff to undertake further analysis of the significance of the underlying problems these options were designed to address, and to develop further details as to how the options might be implemented.

While it continues the in-depth analysis of the submissions, the Board is pleased with its progress towards determining next steps. It is set to share its preliminary responses to the submissions in the upcoming release of the NEWSletter on April 30, along with the direction that has been established to meet its commitment of completing the review of the Guidelines this fall. To that end, it will concentrate its efforts on developing a comprehensive package of proposed changes to the Guidelines for consultation during the summer.

The issue of regulatory amendments remains a preoccupation, which will require further consideration on the part of the Board over the next several weeks. As with the Guidelines, the Board will address the issue of the Regulations in the April NEWSletter.

I take this opportunity to thank those who have participated in this important review and the Board looks forward to your continued input.

Regards,
Brien G. Benoit, MD
Chairperson