

## Sub 27

### Suggestion to improve safety in medication use by improving packaging

#### Current situation

Patients, or their families often find box full of medications in their homes, not knowing what the medications are for and whether they are out of date.

Pharmacies substitute generic brands when prescribing. It is not unusual for a patient to have several brand of the same medication in their hoard of medications, greatly adding to the confusion and increasing the chance of overdosing or wrong-dosing.

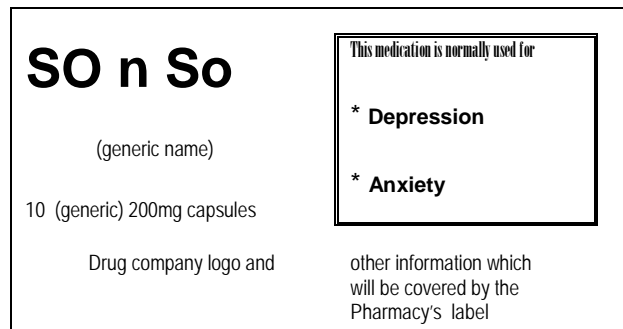
#### Reasons for the confusion

Medication boxes present only the brand names without any indication what the medication is used for. Use-by date is always on the opposite flap as the brand name. Thus, if a box of medication is stored on its side, it can be out of date but easily overlooked.

#### Solution

Legislate packaging of medications so that:

1. At the same position on each box or bottle, there is a square containing information which indicates the normal approved indication for this medication e.g:



2. Put the expiry date of the medication under the brand name on the end flap on both sides



These two simple measures will eliminate a lot of confusion, ingestion of out-dated, or wrong medication

The Editor  
Australian Prescriber  
3/2 Phipps Close  
Deakin ACT 2600