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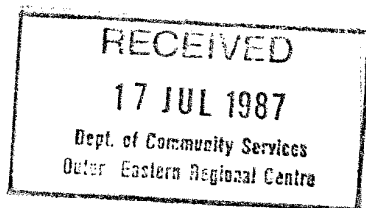
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16 Jul 87



Dr Pam Sheil
Senior Medical Officer
Family Health & Support Branch
Community Services Victoria
6th Floor
555 Collins Street
MELBOURNE 3000

Dear Dr Sheil

I received, on 7 July 1987, the meeting Minutes of the CSV (Family Health & Support Branch) Depo Provera Working Party held on 26 June 1987. Item 5 on p.3 of these Minutes (Strategies for Action) requests "input from Eileen Slack for the draft interim report on Depo Provera". At my request, my secretary, Mrs Jill Dwyer, phoned you and was told that I should write "a report on my findings as far as Depo is concerned regarding the fact that it is not approved for use as a contraceptive". Input follows:

During 1977 I sought an understanding and clarification from supervisors in CSV about the use of Depo Provera with wards of state living in Winlaton Youth Training Centre. At that time I was aware that this contraceptive injection was prohibited in the United States. Through the ensuing months of 1977, and into June of '79, I often received verbal confirmation of my hesitation about this contraceptive injection through American health journals. In June '79, I asked our Charge Sister at the time, Sr Margaret Donagan, to write to Dr Warner V Slack, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Warner is my brother-in-law and a competent research physician. He wrote back to Sr Donagan (see Attachment "A" dated 3.7.79).

On 16.8.79 I put in writing to the Director of Family & Adolescent Services (Attention Mr Bruce Anderson, Supervisor of Institutions, CSV) that "I felt the need to state in writing that I did not endorse the use of Depo Provera as a contraceptive". (Please see Attachment "B" dated 16.8.79).

During the ensuing years to date, I have encouraged the CSV staff in our Winlaton medical clinic to stay in contact with our medical officers (supervised by the Victorian Health Department) and have participated in running seminars to share information on this contraceptive, in each instance maintaining my objections to its use.

During most of these years I have also received information from the US Department of Health & Human Services' Public Board of Inquiry on Depo Provera. In '85 this Board of Inquiry concluded that data available on the long term risks of DMPA (Depo Provera) are insufficient and inadequate to provide a basis for a decision whether the benefits of the drug as a contraceptive outweigh the disadvantages under conditions of general marketing in the USA. This FDA Board of Inquiry decided not to approve Depo Provera in the US.

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I have also continued to seek the information supplied by the Public Citizen Health Research Group. Their address in the USA is 2000 P Street, North West, Washington, D.C., 20036, USA. The following papers are available from this Research Group:

DEPO-PROVERA - See also ESTROGENS; HORMONES, SEX; BIRTH CONTROL PILL.

Item #284 Testimony at FDA meeting on the lack of safety of Depo Provera as an injectable female contraceptive. (4/75) 7pp. \$1.40.

Item #878 Testimony at the Public Board of Inquiry on Depo Provera and why it should not be approved as a female contraceptive. (1/83) 25pp. \$5.00.

Item #920 Letter to Connecticut Depo Provera Task Force, objecting to the practice of treating sex offenders with Depo Provera and detailing the safety risks and questionable effectiveness of the drug. (10/83) 9pp. \$1.80.

Item #978 Statement on the FDA's Board of Inquiry decision not to approve Depo Provera in the U.S. (10/84) 6pp. \$1.20.

My suggestion is that the Depo Provera Working Party contact this Research Group and ask them directly for the USFDA (Food & Drug Administration) point of view in July 1987.

I asked Warner in May '87 if he knew whether the situation with the ban on this contraceptive had changed and he said he knew of no change.

Through these years I have written yearly to the Assistant Secretary, Therapeutic Goods Branch, Department of Health, P.O. Box 100, Woden, ACT, 2606 regarding Depo Provera as an injectable contraceptive. This Assistant Secretary has told me each year since 22.11.82 "no injectable contraceptives are approved for use in this country". (Please see Attachments "C" & "D" enclosed).

On 10.7.87 I enquired from Winlato's medical Charge Sister, Sr Chris Jolly, as to whether Winlato has ever used Depo Provera as either a sexual depressant or for menstrual management. Sr Jolly replied "Never - the use of Depo Provera as a sexual depressant is usually in males and we have never used it for menstrual management".

I submit this information to you for its use with your Working Party.

Best Wishes. I'll see you at the next Depo Meeting on 27 July '87 at 10.00 am.



DR EILEEN N SLACK
MANAGER

cc: Ms Liz Prideaux, CSV, Family Health & Support Branch
Mr L Owen, Regional Manager, Outer East
Dr J Murray, Supervisor of Institutions, CSV
Sr C Jolly, Charge Sister, Winlato
Dr H Manning, Childrens Court Clinic