



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

**National Health Service in Scotland
Management Executive**

**NHS :
MEL(1994)30**

5397

St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Dear Colleague

Telephone 031-244
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**THE USE OF MEDICINES BEYOND THEIR LABELLED
EXPIRY DATE**

Summary

1. The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance to hospital medical, pharmaceutical, dental and nursing staff on the use of medicines and clinical trial medicines/materials beyond their labelled expiry date.

Action

2. Health Boards and NHS Trusts are asked to review their procedures.

3. Copies of this letter should be distributed to appropriate hospital staff. Bulk supplies are being sent under separate cover.

Anne Machead

pp W SCOTT

7 September 1994

Addresses

For action:

General Managers,
Health Boards
General Manager,
Common Services Agency

General Manager,
State Hospital

Chief Executives and
Chief Executives
Designate,
NHS Trusts

Medical Directors,
NHS Trusts
Directors of Nursing,
NHS Trusts
Chief Pharmacists, NHS
Trusts
Directors of
Dentistry, NHS Trusts

To be copied to CAMO's
CAPO's CADO's and
CANO's Unit General
Managers for
information

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ANNEX TO NHS MEL (1994)30

THE USE OF MEDICINES BEYOND THEIR LABELLED EXPIRY DATE

1. Medicines must not be used beyond their labelled expiry date. The guidelines for the Safe and Secure Handling of Medicines* recommend that all out of date medicines be returned to the hospital pharmacy for disposal or destruction.

2. In exceptional circumstances, it is appreciated that clinical need may require the use of a product outwith its labelled expiry date. In these cases the clinician should seek the advice of the hospital pharmacist, and if possible, the permission of the manufacturer should be obtained before the medicine is administered.

3. At no time should clinical trial material that is date expired be used without the authorisation of the manufacturer.

SOHHD
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
7 September 1994

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* Department of Health, September 1988. NHS Circular No 1988(GEN)33