

## **DTC**

### **ECG Statement on haloperidol**

The SPCs for both haloperidol injection and oral haloperidol state that a baseline ECG is recommended prior to treatment in all patients. Patients commonly require treatment with haloperidol for immediate relief of critically disturbed behaviour or emotions. Although an ECG is recommended prior to treatment, the patient's condition, for which the haloperidol treatment is required, may of itself not allow an accurate ECG recording to be obtained. The Trust concurs with its clinicians that the competing requirements of maximal behavioural safety and maximal cardiac safety are, at times, substantially irreconcilable.

Under such circumstances the treating clinician will make a judgement whether the patient's interests are best served by administering haloperidol within its licensed terms even though an ECG is not available. The large and demonstrable beneficial effect of haloperidol on behavioural and emotional disturbance and the small and poorly quantified risk of cardiac abnormality may be taken into account. It is recognised that instances will arise where the patient's needs are best served by the urgent administration of haloperidol even in the absence of a pre-treatment ECG. This recognition does not however reduce the force of whatever other authoritative statements apply to the use of haloperidol outside critical care situations.

*January 2010*