



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Dear Doctor

This letter is to bring to your attention information that may assist you in managing patients who took the antimalarial drug mefloquine (trade name Lariam) while serving in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and are concerned that it has affected their long term health.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) encourages general practitioners to review Defence Joint Health Command's Clinical Guidelines for providing appropriate care to ADF members concerned about having been prescribed Mefloquine (Version 2, 09 Jun 2016)

www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/Documents/160609_Mefloquine_management_guidelines.pdf

While there is no specific way to diagnose the long term effects of mefloquine and no specific treatment, these guidelines outline a common sense approach to the management of individuals who are concerned their current problems may be caused by mefloquine usage.

More information regarding malaria prevention in the ADF, including the use of anti-malarial medication and clinical trials, is available by contacting Joint Health Command at ADF.Malaria@defence.gov.au or by visiting: www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/default.asp

If you have a patient who believes their health has been affected by use of mefloquine while in the ADF, please encourage them to lodge a claim with DVA by calling 133 254 (or 1800 555 254 for regional callers).

DVA recognises mefloquine (and other anti-malarials) as being associated with several health conditions under the Statement of Principles regime that applies to treatment and compensation claims. Post-traumatic stress disorder is not one of these conditions.

Veterans can access free mental health treatment for a range of conditions, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, alcohol use disorder, and substance use disorder, without having to prove it is service related. If this is relevant to any of your patients, please encourage them to contact DVA.

Veterans who are in need of immediate mental health and wellbeing support can seek help from the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS). VVCS provides free, confidential, nation-wide counselling and support for veterans, eligible current and former ADF members and their families. The VVCS can be contacted 24/7 on 1800 011 046.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Gardner', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Dr Ian Gardner
Principal Medical Adviser
Department of Veterans' Affairs

30 September 2016