

PHARMAC

Pharmaceutical Management Agency

Media release

PHARMAC REMINDS COMPANIES OF SUPPLY OBLIGATIONS

Pharmaceutical companies are being reminded of their obligation to supply medicines for patients and will be closely monitored to ensure they comply with their contracts.

PHARMAC chief executive Wayne McNee says it is frustrating that companies are continuing to run out of stocks of some medicines despite PHARMAC raising concerns about the same issue in past years.

Companies who have out of stock medicines have been contacted again to remind them that they have a responsibility to carry sufficient stocks of medicines.

“We appreciate that there can be a number of reasons why drug supplies are difficult to obtain, these include worldwide shortages or production problems overseas. However, I am concerned that the safety of New Zealanders who need these medicines may be compromised if this situation continues and PHARMAC continues to seek ways to ensure continuous supply of subsidised medicines,” Wayne McNee says.

The Government drug funding agency has compiled a list of out of stock pharmaceuticals and will be updating it regularly and continuing to ensure companies pay any additional costs when they fail to supply.

PHARMAC will continue to require companies to pay any additional costs when supply is interrupted, but Wayne McNee says the best solution would be if companies improved the way they supplied New Zealand patients.

One way of reducing supply problem would be for suppliers, pharmacists or wholesalers to hold more stock, so that if a supply shortage emerged there would be sufficient stock on hand.

Wayne McNee says another solution the Government could consider would be to change the law to allow parallel importing of medicines.

“This would require an amendment to the Medicines Act, and would enable the Government to secure medicines from other countries in the exceptional circumstances of it running out in New Zealand,” Wayne McNee says.

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