



Media Release

Paracetamol most prescribed – PHARMAC

Paracetamol is the most prescribed medicine in New Zealand.

Figures just released by PHARMAC in its Annual Review show that more than 1.1 million prescriptions were written for the pain reliever last year.

That's an increase of 49 thousand prescriptions over the previous year, without taking into account paracetamol paid for the patient.

Second on the most-prescribed list is omeprazole used to treat symptoms like heartburn (727,667 prescriptions) then the cholesterol-lowering drug simvastatin (663,664 prescriptions).

Treatments for infections are also high on the most prescribed list. There were 648,605 prescriptions for Amoxicillin last year and 638,714 for the broad spectrum form of the antibiotic, Amoxicillin Clavulanate.

In the past year, PHARMAC reports that medicines used to treat stomach ulcers continued to be the biggest area of expenditure for PHARMAC at over \$60 million (before rebates).

Another area of high expenditure was mental health and PHARMAC reports this is growing. Last year antipsychotics and antidepressants were among the top expenditure groups.

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Contact Simon England 021 863 342