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Media release

## **Increased condoms range a win-win – PHARMAC**

Funding a wider range of condoms saves taxpayers money, increases choice and promotes better sexual health practices, PHARMAC says.

Responding to comments on its decision to fund a wider range of condoms including textured, coloured and flavoured condoms, PHARMAC's Acting Medical Director Dr Dilky Rasiah says the decision has a number of benefits.

“Overall the decision is about getting better health outcomes through a greater use of condoms, and increasing choice for a lower price. This is a win-win for New Zealanders.”

“New Zealand has quite high rates of unplanned pregnancies, terminations and sexually transmitted diseases,” she says. “Improving sexual health is a Government health priority so increasing the range of condoms available can only be good in terms of encouraging safe sex practices.”

Each year New Zealand prescribers issue some 9 million condoms, which cost the taxpayer less than \$1 million of the \$635 million pharmaceutical budget. Under the latest decision, the price will reduce by 10%.

“This isn't about “finding” money to fund condoms, as some have commented,” she adds. “Condoms are already funded and always have been. This decision sees a 10% price reduction for all condoms, which frees up funds that can be used to purchase other new medicines.

“We need to make savings on all medicines where we can, so that more money is available for other new drugs for cancer, heart disease or diabetes that New Zealanders want.”

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