

26 March 2009

Proposal to list an 80 mg strength tablet of atorvastatin (Lipitor)

PHARMAC is seeking feedback on a proposal to list Pfizer New Zealand Limited's brand of the cholesterol treatment atorvastatin (Lipitor) in a 80 mg tablet strength. The proposal has arisen from a provisional contract that we have entered into with Pfizer.

Details of the proposal

Pfizer's brand of atorvastatin 80 mg (Lipitor) would:

- be listed in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 May 2009 at a price of \$110.50 per 30 tablet pack
- be fully funded for patients who qualify under the current atorvastatin Special Authority criteria (for these patients the subsidy would be \$110.50)
- have a subsidy of \$16.28 for patients who do not qualify under the current atorvastatin Special Authority criteria (these patients would have a surcharge).

A rebate arrangement would apply to Lipitor 80 mg. The rebate arrangement would have the effect of reducing the price of the 80 mg tablet to less than the price of two 40 mg atorvastatin tablets.

Feedback sought

We would welcome your feedback on this proposal. To provide feedback please submit an email, fax or letter by **4 pm, Wednesday 8th of April 2009** to:

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All feedback received before the closing date will be considered by PHARMAC's Board (or Chief Executive acting under delegated authority) prior to making a decision on this proposal.

Background

Atorvastatin is a lipid lowering agent which is available via Special Authority for patients who cannot tolerate simvastatin or who have not reached their LDL target on the maximal simvastatin dose. Currently the 10 mg, 20 mg and 40 mg strengths of atorvastatin (Lipitor) are subsidised via the Pharmaceutical Schedule. A number of patients currently take two 40mg tablets each day. This proposal would mean that a 80 mg strength would be available for these patients.