

26 June 2009

Clarithromycin (Klamycin) 500 mg tablet funding approved

PHARMAC is pleased to announce the approval of a supply agreement with Mylan New Zealand Ltd for clarithromycin 500 mg tablets (Klamycin). Clarithromycin 500 mg tablets are currently funded in combination packs with amoxicillin and omeprazole (Losec Hp7 OAC), which are used for *Helicobacter pylori* eradication.

The supplier of Losec Hp7 OAC (AstraZeneca) has given notice of discontinuation and stock is expected to be depleted in May 2010. The approval of Klamycin will ensure that all of the separate components of Losec Hp7 OAC remain available following discontinuation of its supply.

Summary of the decision

Klamycin will be fully funded in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 October 2009 at a subsidy and price of \$23.30 per 14 tablets (ex-manufacturer, excluding GST).

Klamycin 500 mg tablets will be subject to the following endorsement:

Subsidy by endorsement

- a) Maximum of 14 tablets per prescription
- b) Subsidised only if prescribed for *Helicobacter pylori* eradication and prescription is endorsed accordingly."

Note: the prescription is considered endorsed if clarithromycin is prescribed in conjunction with a proton pump inhibitor and either amoxicillin or metronidazole.

The current Special Authority applying to clarithromycin 250 mg tablets for treatment of *H. pylori* eradication will be removed from 1 October 2009.

If you have any queries about this funding decision you can call our toll free number (9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday) on 0800 66 00 50.

What feedback was received?

We appreciate the feedback we received in response to consultation and acknowledge the time people took to respond. Responses were supportive towards the greater flexibility in *H. pylori* eradication treatment options (e.g. the ability to use metronidazole instead of amoxicillin for patients with a penicillin allergy).

A concern was raised about the potential for additional patient co-payments as a result of the change as there will be 3 dispensings (each with a co-payment) rather than the 1 that is associated with Losec Hp7 OAC. We note that the increased cost will not be ongoing, since the treatment is short term (unlike other treatments for chronic conditions for which multiple co-payments currently apply, e.g. diabetes).