

13 October 2009

## Proposal regarding Sigma's brands of furosemide tablets (Urex Forte), ethambutol tablets (Myambutol) and atropine eye drops (Atropt)

PHARMAC is seeking feedback on a provisional agreement with Sigma Pharmaceuticals (Australia) Pty Ltd regarding furosemide 500 mg tablets, ethambutol 100 mg and 400 mg tablets and atropine 1% eye drops.

In summary, this agreement would result in Urex Forte (furosemide) 500 mg tablets and Myambutol (ethambutol) 100 mg tablets being listed in Section B and in Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 December 2009.

These pharmaceuticals are currently undergoing Medsafe registration and would be supplied under Section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981 until they are registered.

In addition:

- the price and subsidy for Atropt (atropine) 1% eye drops would increase from 1 December 2009;
- the price and subsidy for Urex Forte and Myambutol would decrease once they have gained Medsafe registration; and
- Urex Forte, Atropt and Myambutol would have subsidy and delisting protection until 1 December 2012.

Further details and background to the proposal can be found on the next page.

### Feedback sought

PHARMAC welcomes feedback on this proposal. To provide feedback, please submit it in writing by **Wednesday, 28 October 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.

## Details of the proposal

Sigma Pharmaceuticals (Australia) Pty Ltd's Urex Forte, Myambutol and Atropt would be listed in Sections B and H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule at the following prices and subsidies (ex-manufacturer and exclusive of GST) from 1 December 2009:

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack Size	Current price and subsidy	Proposed price and subsidy
Atropine	1% eye drop	Atropt	15 ml	\$4.40	\$17.36
Ethambutol	100 mg tablet	Myambutol	56 tablets	N/A	\$57.81
Furosemide	500 mg tablet	Urex Forte	50 tablets	N/A	\$50.00

Upon gaining registration the prices and subsidies (ex-manufacturer and exclusive of GST) for Urex Forte and Myambutol (including the already listed 400 mg tablet) would reduce as follows:

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack Size	Current/proposed price and subsidy	New proposed price and subsidy
Ethambutol	100 mg tablet	Myambutol	56 tablets	\$57.81	\$48.01
Ethambutol	400 mg tablet	Myambutol	56 tablets	\$56.84	\$49.34
Furosemide	500 mg tablet	Urex Forte	50 tablets	\$50.00	\$25.00

## Background

Mylan New Zealand Ltd is discontinuing supply of furosemide 500 mg (Diurin 500) tablets from 1 December 2009. The proposed listing of Sigma's brand of furosemide would ensure continued subsidised supply in New Zealand. Furosemide 500 mg is used in the treatment of patients with severely impaired renal function.

Ethambutol is indicated for the treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis. Currently, only the 400 mg tablet is listed on the Pharmaceutical Schedule (supplied under section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981). Clinicians prescribing the 100 mg strength of ethambutol need to apply for Exceptional Circumstances approval to access funding. The listing of a 100 mg strength tablet would remove this need.

Atropine eye drops are used to dilate the pupil and to induce cycloplegia by paralysing the ciliary muscles (paralyse accommodation)