

17 December 2009

Proposal for Diclax SR (diclofenac sodium long-acting tablets) approved

PHARMAC is pleased to announce the approval of an agreement with Douglas Pharmaceuticals Limited for the supply of Diclax SR (diclofenac sodium long-acting 75 mg and 100 mg tablets). This was the subject of a consultation letter dated 23 November 2009. The effect of the decision is that:

- Ongoing supply of Diclax SR in a 500-tab pack size has been secured from 1 April 2010 at the following prices and subsidies (ex-manufacturer, excluding GST):

Pharmaceutical	Form and Strength	Brand	Pack Size	Price and subsidy
Diclofenac sodium	Tab long-acting 75 mg	Diclax SR	500	\$32.80
Diclofenac sodium	Tab long-acting 100 mg	Diclax SR	500	\$63.22

- Diclax SR will have protection from delisting and subsidy reduction until 1 April 2012.

This decision follows other recent decisions to list various strengths and pack sizes of Diclax SR and the Voltaren SR brand of diclofenac sodium long-acting tablets in the Pharmaceutical Schedule. These listings were made to cover an out-of-stock situation on Apotex's brand of diclofenac sodium 75 mg and 100 mg long-acting tablets (Apo-Diclo SR). Those listings were intended to be temporary, with stock expected to last until about April 2010, and all but Diclax SR in the 500-tab pack size are due to be delisted as soon as stock is exhausted.

Feedback received

We appreciate all of the feedback that we received and acknowledge the time people took to respond. All consultation responses received by 7 December 2009 were considered in their entirety in making a decision on the proposed changes. Responders commented on the possibility of patient confusion from the recent and proposed changes to the listings of diclofenac sodium long-acting 75 mg and 100 mg tablets, and the possibility that pharmacies would be left with unsold stock of the various brands and pack sizes if they were delisted too soon.

We understand the confusion that can arise from changes in brand names but in this case there is little choice because the previously funded brand (Apo-Diclo SR) is no longer available. We will work closely with the relevant suppliers of the various brands of diclofenac sodium long-acting tablets and with pharmacies to help ensure that pharmacies can sell through the temporary listings stock.

More information

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