

12 August 2010

## Removal of Special Authority for clopidogrel

PHARMAC is pleased to announce that the PHARMAC Board has approved a proposal to remove the Special Authority for funded access to clopidogrel 75 mg tablets. This was the subject of a consultation letter dated 2 July 2010<sup>1</sup>.

This will mean that from 1 September 2010 all patients prescribed clopidogrel 75 mg tablets will be subsidised and that Special Authority approvals will no longer be required.

This decision will address all outstanding funding applications to widen access to clopidogrel 75 mg tablets as follows:

- Aspirin intolerant patients (despite the use of proton pump inhibitor therapy);
- Extended treatment (12 months) for patients following a revascularization procedure (including stent insertion or coronary artery bypass grafting) or acute coronary syndrome; and
- Stroke and transient ischaemic attack patients as an alternative to aspirin and dipyridamole combination therapy.

### Feedback received

We appreciate all of the feedback that we received and acknowledge the time people took to respond. All consultation responses received by 16 July 2010 were considered in their entirety in making a decision on the proposed changes.

There was wide support for the proposal, highlighting that it would reduce Special Authority administration and would provide a subsidy for clopidogrel when it is used for aspirin-intolerant, stroke and TIA patients.

Some responders suggested that education on anti-platelet prescribing would be needed to avoid potential misuse and over-prescribing. PHARMAC intends to discuss the provision of educational programmes with BPAC (Best Practice Advocacy Centre) and will consider using the PHARMAC seminar series as a mechanism to deliver education.

### 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.

1. <http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/2010/07/02/>