

13 August 2010

Atorvastatin listing changes

PHARMAC has reached an agreement with Pfizer New Zealand Ltd to continue to fund its brand of atorvastatin (Lipitor). In summary, the effect of PHARMAC's decision is that from 1 September 2010, Lipitor will:

- remain fully funded until at least 31 August 2012; and
- no longer require a Special Authority for full subsidy.

Details of the decision

Lipitor will continue to be listed in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule and be subsidised at the currently listed prices from 1 September 2010, as follows:

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack size	Price and subsidy
Atorvastatin	Tab 10 mg	Lipitor	30	\$18.32
Atorvastatin	Tab 20 mg	Lipitor	30	\$26.70
Atorvastatin	Tab 40 mg	Lipitor	30	\$37.02
Atorvastatin	Tab 80 mg	Lipitor	30	\$110.50

Lipitor will also be listed in Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule at the above prices.

Lipitor will be subject to confidential rebates (which will reduce the net subsidies paid by DHBs) and will have subsidy and delisting protection from 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2012.

The Special Authority for atorvastatin will be removed from 1 September which means patients can access fully funded atorvastatin without restriction from that date.

The agreement with Pfizer is not for Sole Subsidised Supply or Hospital Supply Status, which means that other brands of atorvastatin could also be considered for listing.

Background

Mylan New Zealand's brand of atorvastatin (Lorstat) was to be the sole subsidised brand of atorvastatin in Section B and the Hospital Supply Status brand of atorvastatin in Section H from 1 December 2010 until 31 July 2012. Stock was not available from 26 July 2010 as initially notified, and the timing of availability was uncertain.

PHARMAC investigated options for confirming a continued supply of this widely-used cholesterol-lowering medicine. We have come to agreements with both Pfizer and Mylan which will see the incumbent Lipitor brand of atorvastatin remain listed and fully subsidised until at least 31 August 2012. Lorstat will no longer have Sole Supply Status or Hospital Supply Status and will be delisted from Section B and Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 September 2010.

The current Special Authority requirement was due to be removed from 1 September, and this change will still go ahead as previously notified.

Given the large number of people who are taking atorvastatin, we are aware that the uncertainty over the supply date of Lorstat will have caused disruption to patients, doctors and pharmacists. We regret that such disruptions occurred. We are pleased to have reached this agreement with Pfizer, which hopefully will resolve any such issues.

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.