

Pharmaceutical Management Agency

# Clinicians' Newsletter



*“Make life easier,  
always think generically”*

May 2012

## Diabetes Proposals

The consultation for two PHARMAC proposals relating to the funding of insulin pumps and blood glucose test strips and meters has closed. We received approximately 2,700 responses, which is a high level of interest for a funding proposal. The comments we receive through consultation are a very important part of PHARMAC's decision-making process. At present we are taking the time to carefully work through the detail of the feedback we have received. At the same time, we are continuing our dialogue with diabetes patient and other representative groups and clinicians to seek input and advice.

We acknowledge the high public interest in these proposals and that you may be receiving an increased number of enquiries from patients. At this stage, no decision has been made and our timeline for making a decision will be led by the need to consider the issues raised, and the time needed to make any changes to the proposals that are considered necessary. We are committed to keeping you informed and should you wish to read further information about the proposals, please check our website at

[www.pharmac.govt.nz/patients/haveyoursay/diabetesproductsproposals](http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/patients/haveyoursay/diabetesproductsproposals).

## Possible changes to the Stat list

PHARMAC is in the process of reviewing the list of medicines that pharmacists dispense all-at-once or Stat. These changes are likely to come into effect from 1 June 2012. This means that some of the medicines that are automatically dispensed in monthly lots, will then be dispensed all-at-once (that is, all three months at once). The list is likely to include about 35 medicines that will move from monthly dispensing to Stat dispensing. To view the final list of medicines added, please refer to the upcoming copy of the June 2012 Update. For medicines where the first dispensing has occurred before 1 June, then the balance of the prescription will be dispensed all-at-once; it will not be dispensed in monthly lots. If you have prescribed weekly Close Control, the balance will continue to be dispensed weekly.

The June newsletter will identify the medicines affected, but you do not need to do anything unless you are particularly concerned about your patient being dispensed more than a month at a time. These changes are in line with the new pharmacy contracts and will be discussed in more detail next month.

## New Listings

### Propylthiouracil

From 1 May 2012, propylthiouracil 50 mg tablets will be fully funded subject to Special Authority criteria for patients with hyperthyroidism who are intolerant of carbimazole or where carbimazole is contraindicated. The PTU brand, supplied by AFT Pharmaceuticals is not currently registered with Medsafe and therefore must be supplied and prescribed in accordance with the provisions of Section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981.

### Sodium Chloride Oral Liquid

From 1 May 2012, a Standard Formulae for sodium chloride oral liquid will be added to Section C of the Pharmaceutical Schedule. This formulation will be funded for the treatment of hyponatraemia.

## New brands or brand changes

### Brand name change for Optium glucose

Abbott Diabetes Care and Medica Limited have re-named existing Optium products (meters, blood glucose and ketone test strips) as FreeStyle Optium meters, blood glucose and ketone test strips. The brand change is for name and packaging only and all components will be compatible with existing meters. Therefore, all FreeStyle Optium and Optium Xceed products are compatible.

### Brand name change for Vicrom sodium cromoglycate aerosol inhaler

Sanofi has renamed Vicrom (sodium cromoglycate) aerosol inhaler 5 mg dose to Intal Forte CFC Free. The Pharmacode for this product remains the same.

### Removal of Section 29 status for Gemcitabine Actavis

Gemcitabine-Actavis 200 mg and 1000 mg injections were listed on 1 March 2012 to provide an alternative supply of gemcitabine. The registration of the Actavis products has now been updated and they are no longer required to be supplied in accordance with the requirements of section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981. The brand names for the products have been updated to Gemcitabine-Actavis 200 and Gemcitabine-Actavis 1000.

## New brands or brand changes

### Metoprolol

The Metoprolol-AFT CR brand of metoprolol succinate long acting tablets will be the sole subsidised brand from 1 September 2012.

Reference pricing for all strengths (23.75 mg, 47.5 mg, 95 mg and 190 mg) of the Betaloc CR and Myloc CR brands of metoprolol succinate long acting will occur from 1 June 2012. This will mean that patients who specifically request Betaloc or Myloc by name will incur a part charge.

The ideal is to prescribe these medicines by their generic name but if you don't the pharmacist has the right to substitute the fully funded option at their discretion.

Patient information for this change will be available from [www.pharmaonline.co.nz](http://www.pharmaonline.co.nz).

### Ethinylestradiol 30 mcg with levonorgestrel 150 mcg tablets

From the 1 April 2012 a new brand of oral contraceptive, Ava ED (ethinylestradiol 30 mcg with levonorgestrel 150 mcg and 7 inert tablets) was listed on the Pharmaceutical Schedule. This is the result of a tender agreement and from 1 June 2012 there may be a part charge on Levlen ED and Monofeme and an increase in the part charge currently applying to Nordette 28 and Microgynon 30 ED.

From 1 September 2012, Levlen ED, Monofeme, Nordette 28 and Microgynon 30 ED will no longer be subsidised and anyone asking specifically for these brands will have to pay the full price.

From the 1 July 2012 there will be a 20mcg ethinylestradiol with 150mcgs of levonorgestrel available fully funded; however until this date it will only be part funded.

Patient information for this change is available from [www.pharmaonline.co.nz](http://www.pharmaonline.co.nz).

### Rizatriptan

From 1 March 2012 a new brand of rizatriptan, Rizamelt has been listed and fully funded. By 1 August 2012 it will be the only funded brand. Again, prescribing by generic name will avoid disruption for your patients.

Patient information for this change will be available from [www.pharmaonline.co.nz](http://www.pharmaonline.co.nz).

## Stock Shortage

### Update on stock shortage of Cefaclor monohydrate capsules

There continues to be stock supply issues with cefaclor monohydrate capsules 250 mg. We have been informed that further supplies of the capsules will be available; however continuity of supply may remain an issue until about August 2012. Clinicians are being asked to consider alternatives to cefaclor and where appropriate prescribe other antibiotics. If there is no suitable alternative, then cefaclor suspension may be prescribed.

### Ultraproct out of stock

PHARMAC has been advised by CSL that Ultraproct ointment will be out of stock until early June 2012. Proctosedyl ointment is a fully funded alternative. Please note that prescriptions will need to be endorsed by the prescriber if the change is to be made as Ultraproct and Proctosedyl are not interchangeable.

## Special Authority Changes (widening of access)

### Pulmozyme

From 1 May 2012, the Entry and Stopping Criteria for treatment applying to dornase alpha will be amended to widen access for cystic fibrosis patients. Application details may be obtained from PHARMAC's website [www.pharmac.govt.nz](http://www.pharmac.govt.nz)

### Amendment to access to Sutent

From 1 May 2012, the Special Authority criteria applying to all strengths of sunitinib (Sutent) will be amended. Patients with metastatic renal cell carcinoma (mRCC) will have access to one line of funded TKI treatment; either pazopanib or sunitinib. Patients who experience early intolerance to funded pazopanib treatment will be able to access funded sunitinib so long as their disease had not progressed. Sunitinib will also be funded for treatment naïve patients and patients who have received prior cytokine therapy or other alternative first line treatments in clinical trials.

### Changes to restrictions on some eye preparations

From 1 May 2012, the Prescribing Guidelines will be removed from all glaucoma preparations. We understand that the guidelines no longer reflect current practice and their removal is considered to be clinically appropriate.

In addition bimatoprost, latanoprost, travoprost, brinzolamide and brimonidine tartrate with timolol maleate eye drops will move to stat dispensing from 1 May 2012. These preparations have been reviewed and dispensed stat repeats for these products should be dispensed stat unless the clinician close controls the repeat dispensings.



## PHARMAC Seminar Series - 2012

The PHARMAC Seminar Series provides high quality educational seminars for a range of health professionals. The seminars are held in Wellington and the cost to attend is \$100 + GST. PHARMAC covers the cost of travel, including flights, to and from the seminar and provides catering on the day.

<http://seminarseries.pharmac.govt.nz/>



Date	Topic	Description
18 May 2012	<b>Cardiovascular Polypharmacy</b>	General practitioners, pharmacists and nurses working with patients on complex medication regimens.
11 June 2012	<b>Clinical Pharmacology for Nurses (repeat)</b>	Nurses involved in patient medication management and those looking to update their knowledge and understanding on how drugs work. (Repeat of 20 Feb 2012 seminar).
14 June 2012	<b>Health and Well Being for Health Practitioners</b>	GP's, primary care nurses and other members of the primary health team.
21 June 2012	<b>Adolescent Health</b>	All health workers involved in caring for young people, but especially relevant for GP's, practice nurses and counsellors working in the community.
26 June 2012	<b>Improving Cardiac Patient Management Across the Primary Secondary Interface</b>	Primary Care Practitioners

## inPharmation

PHARMAC publishes a quarterly email newsletter, inPharmation, that includes news and updates on developments around PHARMAC and pharmaceutical issues. If you would like to receive inPharmation, contact [Jessica@pharmac.govt.nz](mailto:Jessica@pharmac.govt.nz).



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Special Authority Queries: 0800 243 666

General Questions: 0800 66 00 50 (9am – 5pm Monday to Friday)

Online version of Prescriber newsletter:

<http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/healthpros/CliniciansNews>

InPharmation newsletter:

<http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/patients/ourviews/inpharmation>.

Newsletter feedback: email [rochelle.harker@pharmac.govt.nz](mailto:rochelle.harker@pharmac.govt.nz)

Please note this is not a complete reference to all changes occurring from 1 May 2012, for the full reference; please consult your Update to the Pharmaceutical Schedule.