

September 2025 Tender notification

29 September 2025

What we're doing

Pharmac is announcing recent decisions from its annual tender process. This notification includes:

- decisions on medicines following our additional round of consultation, for medicines where Pharmac was considering a possible brand change
- a summary of the feedback we received from the consultation.

Brand changes will begin to take effect from November 2025.

Pharmac's annual tender process allows suppliers to bid to be the main supplier of off-patent medicines. This year's tender is expected to free up between \$30 million and \$50 million, which will be reinvested into funding new treatments.

Following feedback from last year's brand changes, Pharmac introduced a new consultation step to better engage with stakeholders. We consulted on the impact of potential brand changes and this feedback helped shape our decisions. Over 30 individuals and groups responded, highlighting the importance of clear communication and support during transitions between brands.

The table below summarises the outcome for each medicine included in the May and July consultation.

Medicine	What medicine is used for	Outcome
Amoxicillin cap 500 mg	A penicillin antibiotic that is used to treat bacterial infections.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Amphotericin B Liposomal inj 50 mg	used for the treatment and prophylaxis of serious systemic fungal infections.	Brand change notified in August 2025
Bisacodyl tab 5 mg	for short-term relief of constipation.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Bortezomib inj 3.5 mg	used to treat multiple myeloma	Still under consideration
Calcitriol cap 0.25 mcg	A form of vitamin D, used for people with severe kidney disease to lower their parathyroid hormone (PTH) levels.	Still under consideration
Calcitriol cap 0.5 mcg		Still under consideration
Calcium Gluconate Inj 10%	Used to treat acute hypocalcaemia; hypocalcaemic tetany; hyperkalaemia with secondary cardiac toxicity; and hypermagnesaemia.	Still under consideration
Carmustine inj 100 mg vial	used to treat multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphomas, and brain tumours	Still under consideration
Cefalexin monohydrate cap 250 mg	A cephalosporin antibiotic used to treat a variety of bacterial infections.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Cefalexin monohydrate cap 500 mg		Brand change notified in July 2025

Cefalexin monohydrate grans for oral liq 25 mg per ml, and 50 mg per ml		Brand change notified in August 2025
Cefalexin monohydrate grans for oral liq 50 mg per ml		Brand change notified in August 2025
Celecoxib cap 200 mg	A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) medicine used to relieve pain and inflammation.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Chloramphenicol eye drops 0.5%	used to treat bacterial eye infections	Brand change notified in July 2025
Citalopram hydrobromide tab 20 mg	A selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) medicine which is used to treat depression.	Still under consideration
Colchicine tab 500 mcg	used to treat and prevent gout attacks and other inflammatory conditions.	Still under consideration
Compound electrolytes with glucose [dextrose]	used to treat dehydration, electrolyte imbalances, and provide a source of calories.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Cyclizine Lactate inj 50 mg per ml, 1 ml	used for nausea or vomiting caused by motion sickness, vertigo or Meniere's disease.	Still under consideration
Daptomycin inj 350 mg – 500 mg	a lipopeptide antibiotic used to treat serious bacterial infections.	Still under consideration
Dexamethasone phosphate inj 4 mg per ml, 1 ml	a corticosteroid used to reduce inflammation and suppress the immune system.	Brand change notified in August 2025
Dexamethasone phosphate inj 4 mg per ml, 2 ml		Brand change notified in August 2025
Dimethicone crm 5% (pack size greater than 100 g)	is used as a barrier to protect the skin against nappy rash, bedsores and urinary incontinence.	Brand change
Dimethicone lotn – head lice suffocant	used to treat head lice.	No brand change.
Docusate sodium with sennosides tab 50 mg with sennosides 8 mg	used to treat constipation.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Droperidol inj 2.5 mg per ml, 1 ml	used to prevent nausea and vomiting that may occur after surgery or diagnostic procedures.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Enalapril tab 5 mg	An angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitor. It's used to treat high blood pressure (hypertension) and heart failure.	Brand change notified in July 2025

Enalapril tab 10 mg		Brand change notified in July 2025
Enalapril tab 20 mg		Brand change notified in July 2025
Ethinylestradiol with levonorgestrel tab 20 mcg with levonorgestrel 100 mcg and 7 inert tabs	A combination hormonal contraceptive used to prevent pregnancy.	Supplier change. Brand remains the same.
Ethinylestradiol with levonorgestrel tab 30 mcg with levonorgestrel 150 mcg		Still under consideration
Ethinylestradiol with levonorgestrel tab 30 mcg with levonorgestrel 150 mcg and 7 inert tabs		Supplier change. Brand remains the same.
Ferrous Sulphate tab long-acting 325 mg	An iron supplement used to treat and prevent iron deficiency.	Declined.
Ferrous Sulphate oral liq 30 mg (6 mg elemental) per ml		Brand change notified in July 2025
Fluoxetine hydrochloride cap 20 mg	used to treat various mental health conditions like major depressive disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), bulimia nervosa, panic disorder, and premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD).	No brand change notified in July 2025
Fulvestrant inj 50 mg per ml, 5 ml	A chemotherapy medicine used to treat certain types of breast cancer.	Still under consideration
Furosemide [Frusemide] inj 10 mg per ml, 2 ml	used to treat fluid retention and high blood pressure.	Brand change notified in August 2025
Glycopyrronium bromide inj 0.2 mg per ml, 1 ml	used to reduce secretions like saliva and mucus.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Heparin Sodium inj 5,000 iu per ml, 5 ml	an anticoagulant medicine used to prevent and treat blood clots.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Icatibant inj 10 mg per ml, 3 ml prefilled syringe	used to relieve acute attacks of hereditary angioedema (HAE) in patients with C1-esterase inhibitor deficiency	Still under consideration
Iron (as Ferric Carboxymaltose) inj 50 mg per ml, 10 ml vial	an iron infusion used to treat iron-deficiency or anemia.	Still under consideration
Ivermectin tab 3 mg	used to treat certain types of parasite infections, and for scabies when other treatments have not worked well.	Still under consideration

Levonorgestrel tab 1.5 mg	a hormonal medicine used for emergency contraception to prevent pregnancy.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Lidocaine [lignocaine] hydrochloride oral [gel] 2%	a local anaesthetic and antiarrhythmic drug. It's used to numb specific areas of the body during minor surgical procedures, dental work, or other medical procedures.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Liquid paraffin with white soft paraffin oint (pack size 100 g or less)	used as an emollient to manage dry skin conditions like eczema and psoriasis.	Brand change notified in August 2025
Liquid paraffin with white soft paraffin oint (pack size greater than 100 g)		Brand change notified in August 2025
Loratadine tab 10 mg	an antihistamine used to treat and prevent allergies such as hay fever	Brand change notified in August 2025
Losartan with hydrochlorothiazide tab 50 mg with hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg	used to treat high blood pressure (hypertension).	Brand change notified in July 2025
Methadone hydrochloride tab 5 mg	used for the relief of moderate to severe pain, for example pain caused by a terminal illness such as cancer.	Still under consideration
Methenamine (hexamine) Hippurate tab 1 g	used to prevent urinary tract infections (UTIs).	Still under consideration
Metoclopramide hydrochloride inj 5 mg per ml, 2 ml	used to help with certain stomach and digestive issues.	Brand change notified in July 2025
Mitomycin C inj 5 mg vial	a chemotherapy medicine used to treat cancers such as upper gastrointestinal cancers (like esophageal cancer), anal cancer, breast cancer and superficial bladder tumours	Declined
Mitomycin C inj 20 mg vial		No brand change.
Nilotinib cap 150 mg	used to treat newly diagnosed chronic phase Philadelphia chromosome-positive chronic myeloid leukaemia, chronic or accelerated phase Philadelphia chromosome-positive	Still under consideration

Nilotinib cap 200 mg	chronic myeloid leukaemia resistant or intolerant to previous therapy	Still under consideration
Noradrenaline inj 1 mg per ml, 4 ml ampoule	used in emergency situations to increase and maintain blood pressure in patients with severe low blood pressure (hypotension).	Brand change notified in July 2025
Pantoprazole tab EC 20 mg	used to treat problems affecting the stomach and gut, such as indigestion, reflux and ulcers.	Still under consideration
Pantoprazole tab EC 40 mg	used to treat problems affecting the stomach and gut, such as indigestion, reflux and ulcers.	Still under consideration
Paracetamol oral liq 120 mg per 5 ml	used to treat mild to moderate pain, such as headaches, toothaches, muscle aches, and to reduce fever.	Still under consideration
Paracetamol oral liq 250 mg per 5 ml		Still under consideration
Phenoxymethylpenicillin (penicillin V) grans for oral liq 125 mg per 5 ml	an antibiotic used to treat various bacterial infections.	No brand change notified in July 2025
Phenoxymethylpenicillin (penicillin V) grans for oral liq 250 mg per 5 ml		No brand change notified in July 2025
Pirfenidone tab 267 mg	used to treat idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, a condition in which the lungs become scarred and stiff, making it hard to breathe.	Brand change
Pirfenidone tab 801 mg		Brand change
Plerixafor inj 20 mg per ml	used for the mobilisation of haematopoietic stem cells to peripheral blood for collection and subsequent autologous or allogenic transplantation in patients with lymphoma or multiple myeloma.	Still under consideration
Raltegravir potassium tab 600 mg	used for the treatment of HIV-1 infection in combination with other antiretroviral drugs.	Still under consideration
Rocuronium bromide inj 10 mg per ml, 5 ml	used as a muscle relaxant during surgery and other medical procedures.	Brand change notified in July 2025

Sertraline tab 50 mg	for various mental health conditions like major depressive disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), social anxiety disorder (SAD), and premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD).	No brand change.
Sertraline tab 100 mg		No brand change.
Sodium chloride inj 0.9%, 3 ml, prefilled syringe	used to flush intravenous lines to prevent blockages and reduce the risk of infection.	Brand change
Sodium chloride inj 0.9%, 5 ml, prefilled syringe		Brand change
Sodium chloride inj 0.9%, 10 ml, prefilled syringe		Brand change
Sunscreens, propriety SPF 50+ or greater	used to help protect your skin from the sun's damaging ultraviolet (UV) light when outdoors	Still under consideration
Teriparatide inj 250 mcg per ml	used to treat osteoporosis (bone loss)	Still under consideration
Testosterone undecanoate inj 250 mg per ml	Long-acting form of testosterone that helps increase testosterone levels in the body.	Still under consideration
Thiamine hydrochloride tab 50 mg	used for the treatment and prophylaxis of vitamin B1 deficiency states including beriberi and Wernicke's encephalopathy.	Still under consideration
Varenicline tab 0.5 mg x 11 and 1 mg x 42	helps adults stop smoking.	Brand change
Varenicline tab 1 mg		Brand change

Water for injection purified for inj, 20 ml	Used to dissolve or dilute medicines which may then be injected. It can also be used for washing and cleaning purposes during minor surgical procedures, and to clean wounds.	Still under consideration
Water for injection purified for inj, 500 ml bag		Still under consideration
Xylometazoline nasal spray 0.1%	used to help nasal congestion.	Still under consideration

You can see the full technical details of the tender decisions in the Tender Results section [\[link\]](#).

How your feedback helped

The feedback received was considered as part of the decision-making process. It has also informed how Pharmac will support people through the upcoming brand changes. We want to thank everyone who took the time to share their feedback. We heard from a range of people including healthcare professionals, advocacy groups and users of medicines. You provided feedback about:

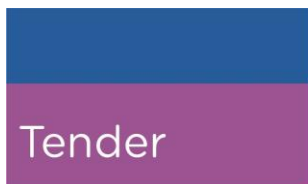
- packaging and labelling considerations
- the resources and communications needed to support a brand change
- the people who may need additional support when undergoing a brand change

Your feedback has helped to inform our implementation plans to support any brand changes.

Summary of feedback received [\[link\]](#)

Who may be most interested

- People who use funded medicines
- Healthcare professionals
- Advocacy groups
- Suppliers



Tender results

Pharmac has resolved to award tenders for Principal Supply Status for some medicines included in the 2024/25 Invitation to Tender dated 31 October 2024.

For decisions that will result in brand changes, some of the Pharmaceuticals that will be delisted when the period of Principal Supply Status commences may be subject to existing listing contracts with Pharmac. Suppliers of Pharmaceuticals that are subject to such contracts should continue to supply their Pharmaceutical under those contracts. Pharmac will continue to subsidise those Pharmaceuticals accordingly until such time as those Pharmaceuticals are delisted.

Notification of Product Changes (NOPC) forms

Please note that for any changes (price change, pack size change, new listing etc) to be effective in the Pharmaceutical Schedule (including Section H), suppliers are required to submit a Notification of Product Changes (NOPC) form to Pharmac, the Pharmacy Guild and the NZULM by:

- **For new listings**, by 4 pm on the 12th of October 2025 or the 5th of the month prior to listing, whichever is earlier
- **For price changes**, by 4 pm on the 12th of the month prior to the date of subsidy change

Pharmac cannot list a product (and Pharmacies cannot claim) without this information. More information about this process, and a copy of the NOPC form can be found on our website – <https://pharmac.govt.nz/medicine-funding-and-supply/make-an-application/pharmconnect-make-a-medicine-funding-application/process-for-notification-of-product-changes/>

Suppliers are required to ensure that a Pharmacode has been obtained from the Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (<http://www.pgnz.org.nz/about-us-1/Pharmacode>) and that a CTPP code has been obtained from the New Zealand Universal List of Medicines (<http://www.nzulm.org.nz/sponsors>). Pharmacodes and CTPP codes must be provided to Pharmac by the 5th of the month prior to the date of listing, or 10 business days following the market notification date (whichever is earliest). Pharmac cannot list a product (and Pharmacies cannot claim) without the correct Pharmacode.

2024/25 Tender – Principal Supply Status applies until 30 June 2028

Community Pharmaceutical tenders – Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule

The decisions were as follows:

1. *Tenders awarded to currently listed pharmaceuticals where no other brand is listed (no brand change).*

Chemical name	Presentation; Pack size and type	Current pack price	New pack price	Principal Supply brand (Supplier)	Date of subsidy change	Principal Supply date
Dimethicone	Lotn 4%; 200 ml OP	\$4.25	\$4.60	healthE Dimethicone 4% Lotion (Jaychem)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026
Ethinylloestradiol with levonorgestrel	Tab 20 mcg with levonorgestrel 100 mcg and 7 inert tabs; 84 tablet blister pack	\$1.50	\$2.00	Lo-Oralcon 20 ED (Maple Healthcare)	1 November 2025	1 April 2026
Ethinylloestradiol with levonorgestrel	Tab 30 mcg with levonorgestrel 150 mcg and 7 inert tabs; 84 tablet blister pack	\$1.50	\$2.30	Oralcon 30 ED (Maple Healthcare)	1 November 2025	1 April 2026
Mitomycin C ¹	Inj 20 mg vial; 1 vial	\$1,250.00	\$1,129.94	Teva (Teva)	1 December 2025	1 May 2026
Sertraline	Tab 50 mg; 30 tablet blister pack	\$0.99	\$1.24	Setrona (Douglas)	1 November 2025	1 April 2026
Sertraline	Tab 100 mg; 30 tablet blister pack	\$1.74	\$2.00	Setrona (Douglas)	1 November 2025	1 April 2026

¹This product will be supplied at the Price from the 1st day of the month prior to the listing date, as per Schedule 4 clause 2.3(c)(ii) of the 2024/25 Invitation to Tender.

2. *Tenders awarded to pharmaceuticals where at least one other brand is listed (the funded brand will change).*

Chemical name	Presentation; Pack size and type	Current pack price	New pack price	Principal Supply brand (Supplier)	Date of subsidy change	Principal Supply date	Brand (Supplier) affected by delisting
Dimethicone	Crm 5% pump bottle; 460 g OP	\$4.30	\$4.14	HydraLock (Pauling Industries)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026	healthE Dimethicone 5% (Jaychem)
Pirfenidone	Tab 267 mg; 90 tablet bottle pack	\$1,215.00	\$145.80	Pirfenidone Sandoz (Sandoz)	1 May 2026	1 October 2026	Esbriet (Roche)
Pirfenidone	Tab 801 mg; 90 tablet bottle pack	\$3,645.00	\$437.40	Pirfenidone Sandoz (Sandoz)	1 May 2026	1 October 2026	Esbriet (Roche)
Varenicline tartrate	Tab 0.5 mg x 11 and 1 mg x 42; 53 tablet bottle pack	\$16.67	\$15.99	Pharmacor Varenicline (Pharmacor)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026	Champix (Pfizer)
Varenicline tartrate	Tab 1 mg; 53 tablet bottle pack	\$17.62	\$10.99	Pharmacor Varenicline (Pharmacor)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026	Champix (Pfizer)

Hospital Pharmaceutical tenders – Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule

The decisions were as follows:

3. *Tenders awarded to currently listed pharmaceuticals where no other brand is listed (no brand change).*

Chemical name	Presentation; Pack size and type	Current pack price	New pack price	Principal Supply brand (Supplier)	Date of subsidy change	Principal Supply date
Dimethicone	Crm 5% tube; 100 g	\$1.47	\$1.52	healthE Dimethicone 5% (Jaychem)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026
Dimethicone	Lotn 4%; 200 ml	\$4.25	\$4.60	healthE Dimethicone 4% Lotion (Jaychem)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026

Chemical name	Presentation; Pack size and type	Current pack price	New pack price	Principal Supply brand (Supplier)	Date of subsidy change	Principal Supply date
Ethinylestradiol with levonorgestrel	Tab 20 mcg with levonorgestrel 100 mcg and 7 inert tabs; 84 tablet blister pack	\$1.50	\$2.00	Lo-Oralcon 20 ED (Maple Healthcare)	1 November 2025	1 April 2026
Ethinylestradiol with levonorgestrel	Tab 30 mcg with levonorgestrel 150 mcg and 7 inert tabs; 84 tablet blister pack	\$1.50	\$2.30	Oralcon 30 ED (Maple Healthcare)	1 November 2025	1 April 2026
Mitomycin C ¹	Inj 20 mg vial; 1 vial	\$1,250.00	\$1,129.94	Teva (Teva)	1 December 2025	1 May 2026
Sertraline	Tab 50 mg; 30 tablet blister pack	\$0.99	\$1.24	Setrona (Douglas)	1 November 2025	1 April 2026
Sertraline	Tab 100 mg; 30 tablet blister pack	\$1.74	\$2.00	Setrona (Douglas)	1 November 2025	1 April 2026
¹ This product will be supplied at the Price from the 1 st day of the month prior to the listing date, as per Schedule 4 clause 2.3(c)(ii) of the 2024/25 Invitation to Tender.						

5. Tenders awarded to pharmaceuticals where at least one other brand is listed (the funded brand will change).

Chemical name	Presentation; Pack size and type	Current pack price	New pack price	Principal Supply brand (Supplier)	Date of subsidy change	Principal Supply date	Brand (Supplier) affected by delisting
Dimethicone	Crm 5% pump bottle; 460 g	\$4.30	\$4.14	HydraLock (Pauling Industries)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026	healthE Dimethicone 5% (Jaychem)
Pirfenidone	Tab 267 mg; 90 tablet bottle pack	\$1,215.00	\$145.80	Pirfenidone Sandoz (Sandoz)	1 May 2026	1 October 2026	Esbriet (Roche)
Pirfenidone	Tab 801 mg; 90 tablet bottle pack	\$3,645.00	\$437.40	Pirfenidone Sandoz (Sandoz)	1 May 2026	1 October 2026	Esbriet (Roche)

Chemical name	Presentation; Pack size and type	Current pack price	New pack price	Principal Supply brand (Supplier)	Date of subsidy change	Principal Supply date	Brand (Supplier) affected by delisting
Sodium chloride	Inj 0.9%, 3 ml syringe, non-sterile pack; 30 prefilled syringes	\$12.00	\$12.60	Polyflush (Aria Healthcare)	1 February 2026	1 July 2026	BD PosiFlush (Becton Dickinson)
Sodium chloride	Inj 0.9%, 5 ml syringe, non-sterile pack; 30 prefilled syringes	\$12.00	\$12.60	Polyflush (Aria Healthcare)	1 February 2026	1 July 2026	BD PosiFlush (Becton Dickinson)
Sodium chloride	Inj 0.9%, 10 ml syringe, non-sterile pack; 30 prefilled syringes	\$11.70	\$12.60	Polyflush (Aria Healthcare)	1 February 2026	1 July 2026	BD PosiFlush (Becton Dickinson)
Varenicline tartrate	Tab 0.5 mg x 11 and 1 mg x 42; 53 tablet bottle pack	\$16.67	\$15.99	Pharmacor Varenicline (Pharmacor)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026	Champix (Pfizer)
Varenicline tartrate	Tab 1 mg; 53 tablet bottle pack	\$17.62	\$10.99	Pharmacor Varenicline (Pharmacor)	1 January 2026	1 June 2026	Champix (Pfizer)

Tender declines – Products where no tender is to be awarded for Principal Supply Status

Pharmac has resolved not to award tenders for Principal Supply Status for the following products listed in the 2023/24 Invitation to Tender, dated 31 October 2023.

Chemical Name	Line Item
Dapsone	Tab 25 mg
Dapsone	Tab 100 mg
Cetirizine hydrochloride	Oral liq 1 mg per ml

Pharmac has resolved not to award tenders for Principal Supply Status for the following products listed in the 2024/25 Invitation to Tender, dated 31 October 2024.

Chemical Name	Line Item
Ferrous sulfate	Tab long-acting 325 mg
Ranitidine	Tab 150 mg
Ranitidine	Tab 300 mg
Mirtazapine	Tab 15 mg
Mitomycin C	Inj 2 -5 mg
Pirfenidone (widened access)	Tab 267 mg
Pirfenidone (widened access)	Tab 801 mg
Testosterone undecanoate	Cap 40 mg
Varenicline (widened access)	Tab 0.5 mg x 11 and 1 mg x 42
Varenicline (widened access)	Tab 1 mg

For products included in the 2023/24 and 2024/25 Invitation to Tender where no announcement has yet been made, a decision is still pending subject to Pharmac Board (or its delegate) approval. We will keep you informed of any updates regarding such tender products as decisions are made.

If you have any queries regarding this notification, please contact Pharmac on 0800 66 00 50.

What you told us

Please see [the July 2025 Tender Notification II](#) for a summary of the key themes identified in the feedback received across both consultations.

In addition to the key themes identified, the table below outlines the additional themes identified in the feedback received for each specific medicine included in this notification.

Theme	Pharmac Comment
Dimethicone crm 5%	
Respondents emphasised the importance of maintaining pump packaging to reduce the risk of contamination.	Thank you for this feedback. We acknowledge and appreciate the importance of appropriate packaging in ensuring the safe and effective use of medicines. A pump bottle for both dimethicone crm 5% 100 g and 500 g will continue to be funded.
Dimethicone lotn 4%	
Respondents emphasised that packaging should continue to contain detailed instructions for use appropriate for general sale.	Thank you for this feedback. We acknowledge and appreciate the importance of appropriate packaging in ensuring the safe and effective use of medicines. There is no brand change for dimethicone lotn 4%, and the current instructions for use will continue to be supplied.
Ethinylloestradiol with levonorgestrel with inert tablets	
We did not receive any feedback specific to ethinylloestradiol with levonorgestrel with inert tablets that raised new themes beyond those already outlined in the July 2025 Tender Notification.	Key themes from both rounds of consultation, including general, and specific, brand change considerations, have been taken into account for this brand change.
Mitomycin inj	
Respondents highlighted that for people with critical conditions - brand changes in this group are at higher clinical risk due to potential variability in absorption, formulation, excipients and bioavailability between products. Precise dosing is essential due to their narrow therapeutic margins and any	Thank you for this feedback. We appreciate and acknowledge this concern, especially for oncology patients who may be more vulnerable during brand changes. Medsafe is New Zealand's medicines regulatory authority and they assess information submitted by companies to support a product's quality, safety and efficacy, before deciding whether to grant approval for supply. Medsafe assesses whether generic medicines are bioequivalent to the New Zealand innovator or other suitable reference product, which helps provide assurance that any approved generic medicine Pharmac lists is suitable for use in Aotearoa. This assessment does not include a recommendation on whether patients can switch between

variability may compromise treatment efficacy or increase the risk of toxicity. Excipient tolerability is critical in oncology patients with heightened sensitivity.	different brands during treatment (more information can be found here: https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/profs/PUArticles/June2024/A-reminder-generic-medicines-bioequivalence-switchability.html). While there is no brand change to Mitomycin inj, and the formulation and excipients will remain the same, this feedback will be valuable for informing future decisions.
Respondents highlighted that if the brand of mitomycin inj did change, there should be the ability to return to the existing medicine with no restrictions of additional costs.	Thank you for this feedback. We appreciate and acknowledge that newly funded brands may not work for everyone. While there is no brand change for mitomycin inj, an alternative brand allowance (ABA) of 5% is in place to allow Pharmac to consider applications for an alternative brand via the Exceptional Circumstances Framework should the funded brand be clinically unsuitable for some individuals.
Respondents highlighted that a preservative free/no excipient formulation preferred for use in ophthalmology. It was also highlighted that stability data is required for external manufacturers/compounders.	Thank you for this feedback. There is no change to the funded brand of mitomycin inj. There is one excipient in the currently funded brand, mannitol. Stability data is also available for external manufacturers/compounders
Pirfenidone	
Respondents highlighted that for people with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis - brand changes in this group are at higher clinical risk due to potential variability in absorption, formulation, excipients and bioavailability between products. Stable and reliable dosing is critical to slowing disease progression.	Thank you for this feedback. As mentioned above Medsafe assesses whether generic medicines are bioequivalent to the New Zealand innovator or other suitable reference product, which helps provide assurance that any approved generic medicine Pharmac lists is suitable for use in Aotearoa. An alternative brand allowance (ABA) of 5% is in place to allow Pharmac to consider applications for an alternative brand via the Exceptional Circumstances Framework should the newly funded brand be clinically unsuitable for some individuals.
Sertraline	
Respondents emphasised a need for access to free medication in a formulation suitable for tapering on and off eg in easily broken tablets and/or in tablets that are in a smaller dosage.	Thank you for this feedback. These factors are all considered by our Tender Clinical Advisory Committee (TCAC) when evaluating whether the proposed brands of medicines are suitable to be awarded Principal Supply Status (PSS). TCAC is made up of a range of healthcare professionals including pharmacists,

	nurses and doctors who have hands-on experience with medicines and understand the practical implications of different product characteristics. TCAC reviewed all of the proposed brands and considered all of them to be suitable to be the main funded brand of medicine in New Zealand. Sertraline is available as a 50 mg tablet and as a 100 mg tablet. Both the 50 mg and 100 mg tablet can be halved. There is no brand change for sertraline.
Sodium Chloride	
Responses highlighted importance of professional education and clinical support to support safe and effective transitions during brand changes. Responses also emphasised the need to test any new brand in a clinical setting and provide timely, clear, and multi-channel communication.	Thank you for this feedback. We acknowledge that providing a range of informative resources is important to support the healthcare professionals prescribing, administering, and dispensing the medicines. We acknowledge the importance of clearly communicating the key differences between old and new brands using a range of different formats. We have used your feedback to inform the development of our implementation plans to support brand changes.
Varenicline	
We did not receive any feedback specific to varenicline that raised new themes beyond those already outlined in the July 2025 Tender Notification.	Key themes from both rounds of consultation, including general, and specific, brand change considerations, have been taken into account for this brand change.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can email us at enquiry@pharmac.govt.nz; or call our toll free number (9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday) on 0800 660 050.