PHARMAC
TE PĀTAKA WHAIORANGA

Summary of consultation feedback on the comprehensive list of medical devices

June 2025

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Overview of the consultation

During February and March 2025, Pharmac consulted on a comprehensive list of hospital medical devices.

The aim of this consultation was to help finalise a national list of medical devices currently used by Health New Zealand hospitals. This included reviewing a proposed list of additional devices identified through recent purchasing data - sourced from the Health System Catalogue (HSC) and Health NZ spend data – to show items bought over the past two years.

We have made significant progress with this work, which represents a big step forward. The new comprehensive list provides a clear picture of the medical devices currently funded and used by all public hospitals. Although a few gaps remain, we will be actively engaging with stakeholders over the coming months to address these issues.

Establishing the comprehensive list will not only support better planning and investment decisions - it will help identify funding priorities and guide future purchasing. Ultimately, this comprehensive list lays the foundation for a single national list from which public hospitals will select their medical devices, ensuring the best possible health outcomes for New Zealanders.

We appreciated the time and effort taken by everyone who reviewed the information and provided feedback. Your insights have been invaluable in helping ensure the list is as accurate and representative as possible.

Why a comprehensive list matters

This comprehensive list provides a clear, up-to-date picture of the medical devices currently funded and used in public hospitals, as well as those medical devices provided by hospital services for use in people's homes.

This list enhances transparency by making it easier to see which devices are in use or available for use across the country. It also supports greater consistency, helping ensure equitable access to medical devices no matter where someone receives care.

Engagement Approach

To ensure we reached the right people with this consultation, we focused our communications to people who use, buy, sell, or manage hospital medical devices. This included hospital staff, suppliers, and individuals who may use medical devices in their homes. This included the following activities:

Before the consultation opened, we sent advance emails to raise awareness. These were shared with:

- Key contacts within Health New Zealand
- Professional healthcare and consumer advocacy groups
- Supplier networks, including the Medical Technology Association of New Zealand (MTANZ)
- Individual suppliers via direct email
- Subscribers to Device Advice, our bi-monthly online newsletter
- We also hosted a supplier webinar in late 2024 to outline the proposed approach and answer early questions.

Once the consultation launched, we distributed the consultation documents via email to all identified stakeholders. Consultation information included specific guidance for suppliers, Health NZ, and consumers/other interested parties on how to submit their feedback. This was followed by a series of reminder emails to encourage participation and help ensure the information reached the right people.

At the close of the consultation, we sent a final email to confirm its conclusion. To complete the process we prepared this summary document which has been shared with everyone who received previous communications about this consultation as well as being available on our website.

Consultation questions and responses

During the seven-week consultation period (11 February – 31 March 2025), we received over 400 queries. We appreciated the time people took to ask questions.

By the close of the consultation, we received 165 formal responses, representing a wide range of perspectives:

- 151 from suppliers, distributors, or manufacturers of medical devices
- eight from Health New Zealand, across various hospitals and roles
- five from professional healthcare organisations
- one from a consumer advocacy group.

This strong level of engagement reflects the sector's interest in shaping how medical devices are managed in public hospitals. We're grateful for the thoughtful and constructive feedback shared.

Consultation questions and answers - the table below provides a summary of the questions received and our commentary in response to these.

Consultation question themes	***Commentary response from Pharmac***
What will the difference be between contracted and uncontracted items on the Pharmaceutical Schedule?"	• We are adding hospital medical devices to the Hospital Medical Devices List (on the Pharmaceutical Schedule) and will continue to negotiate contracts as we go. • Health New Zealand hospitals' preference will be to purchase products with contracted terms for pricing and supply chain security so having a contract in place would be more advantageous to suppliers.

	• Non-contracted items will be listed without a price. • You can view our website to see which categories have been contracted and which categories are yet to contracted. Go to https://www.pharmac.govt.nz/hospital-devices/whats-happening-in-each-category
What it means to be on the Health System Catalogue (HSC) versus the Pharmac list (Pharmaceutical Schedule)	• The HSC is a standardised information set that records all items a supplier markets in New Zealand, and the Pharmaceutical Schedule describes what products are funded and used by public hospitals. Pharmac makes use of the HSC and encourages suppliers to participate in this work. • The HSC will make providing information to Pharmac easier, as we use it as a reference point for product level information. • For example, those suppliers that had information in the HSC prior to the consultation only needed to provide us the product codes, GTINs and level of sales for this consultation, and we could source all other product information from the HSC. We expect to make use of the HSC more and more as a reference source for product details, allowing more efficient exchange of information with suppliers.
What about the connectivity of all our data across Pharmac and Health NZ eg Financial, Procurement, and Information Management (FPIM), HSC	• The Pharmac list reflects what will be available for Health NZ to purchase. We share our listing information regularly with Health NZ, and it is integrated into Health NZ's finance system to support purchasing activity.

What are Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs)	• GTINs are globally unique identifiers used to identify products, including medical devices, in a standardised way. They are part of the GS1 system of standards, which is widely used in healthcare to improve supply chain efficiency, traceability, and patient safety. GTINs are a key requirement for:
	  ○ Product identification in the health and disability system
	  ○ Listing on the Pharmaceutical Schedule (as managed by Pharmac)
	  ○ Compliance with Health NZ's supply chain standards.
	• Pharmac can, for now, list items on the Pharmaceutical Schedule without GTINs as there are still some items that don't easily fit with the data standards (e.g. custom products).

	• Our preference is that all items that can have GTINs should have them, and over 70% of items on the Schedule currently have GTINs. • You can find more information or start the registration process at GS1 New Zealand's website or follow up with Health NZ.
About having all sizes of a range included even if they haven't got sales	• This consultation focused on what has been in use by hospitals during the last two years. • Pharmac's contract process would consider the broader context of your portfolio (i.e. range extensions and other additional items can be considered for listing as part of contracting with us). • Suppliers who already have relevant medical device agreements with Pharmac can apply to have their range extensions listed through their Pharmac contract manager at any time. We would want to understand the benefits the wider range could provide and the commercial implications.
What are the medical devices in scope for Pharmac	• We use the term 'medical devices' to cover a range of things that are used by public hospitals or provided by a hospital service for people to use at home. • Medical devices are products, equipment and consumables that are used to diagnose, monitor, treat, modify, prevent or support a health need. • This includes things like clinical diagnostic instruments, implants (such as pacemakers), hospital beds, software, robotic surgery machines, surgical products and more. Items such as bandages, continence support products and rehabilitation equipment are also included.
How the list will be maintained	• The list of hospital medical devices within the Pharmaceutical Schedule is updated monthly. This work includes updates and changes to product details, listing additional devices and removing items no longer in use. • Around 60,000 changes to the list were made in the last 12 months (this does not include the non-contracted listings), and there are established processes for managing changes relating to contracted products. • We are building on the above, with the addition of the non-contracted items. Further processes are being developed and we are planning to consult more on this in the coming months.

How a ‘closed list’ environment would work – including the importance for transparent assessment processes for adding/removing listed devices which gives appropriate clinical input	• Once the comprehensive list is live on 1July 2025 we will continue to progress the medical device programme and work towards a future where there is a single national list from which public hospitals will select their medical devices. • This single national list will clearly set out what is available for use in public hospitals, ensuring consistent access, reduce duplication, and promoting equity. • We have sometimes referred to this as a ’closed list’ to describe moving the list to a more controlled environment for the devices used by Health NZ. This list will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of patients, consumers and the sector, while also supporting cost management. • This national list will always be dynamic and updated to reflect changes in medical technology and evolving public needs. • We will need to implement new procedures for receiving and assessing requests for new medical device technology, obtaining expert advice, and managing applications, exceptions, and the ongoing monitoring of purchasing activities. • Importantly, we will not move to this ‘closed list’ environment until the above policies and processes have been established. This developmental work will happen in close collaboration with all key stakeholders, with clear milestones and timelines in place to ensure all operational and regulatory requirements are met.
Suppliers awaiting responses to previous Pharmac RFP processes	• We expect to continue to engage with suppliers where we know there are gaps.
Concern about the health and safety of the use of some devices	• Medsafe is the medicines and medical device regulator. Any questions or concerns relating to the safety of a device should be raised with Medsafe. • Medical devices need to be WAND notified to be able to sell into NZ. NZ representation requirements will be dependent on the type of tech and their associated support requirements. • We are aware that Health NZ have their own internal processes for reporting safety issues or concerns.
How were the relevant key agencies and users included in the consultation	• We undertook a broad range of communications. This included sending information to key contacts within Health NZ

	and Ministry of Health, emailing our list of professional healthcare and consumer advocacy groups. Hosting a webinar and emailing suppliers, and updates into Device Advice, our bi-monthly online newsletter. • We encouraged people we shared the consultation with to share it any other stakeholders that may be interested that we may have missed.

We also received and responded to all the questions that were specific to individual supplier products, or questions related to a parallel contracting process we were undertaking with suppliers. We believe we have now answered all queries, however if you have not yet had a response, please email devices@pharmac.govt.nz.

Data cleaning and finalisation of medical device listings

How we assessed the data

Pharmac staff carefully reviewed all feedback received during the consultation process. We contacted many suppliers to validate data, confirm which medical devices have been added to the list, and explain why others have not.

Submitted information was reviewed against clear criteria. Medical devices were considered for inclusion if they:

- Had documented use in Health NZ hospitals within the past two years
- Fell within Pharmac's scope for our medical devices work
- Were listed under the appropriate product category.

Medical devices not added

In most cases, medical devices were not added at this time where there was no evidence of sales to Health NZ hospitals.

Some medical devices that met the above criteria were still excluded. This was primarily where long-term funding decisions have not yet been made and usage is not widespread. Examples include:

- Surgical robotic systems
- Transcatheter mitral valve repair medical devices
- Left atrial appendage occlusion medical devices.

Ongoing data gaps

We are aware that gaps remain in the comprehensive list and we continue engaging with suppliers to address these gaps.

Publishing the comprehensive medical device list

As a result of this consultation process, over **26,000 medical devices** have been added to the comprehensive list.

The updated list is available on our website from 16 June but is effective from 1 July 2025 at pharmac.govt.nz/hospital-devices/devices-list**.**

We will continue to refine the list as we engage with more suppliers and prepare for the next phase of the medical device management work.

Themes from the participant survey

Following the consultation, we invited participants to complete a short survey to understand how useful they found the information provided and how we could improve future consultations. We received 30 responses.

Clarity and Usefulness of Information

Around three-quarters of respondents found the consultation clear and easy to understand. However, some noted confusion around the parallel process for adding devices to existing contracts. Similarly, most respondents felt the information provided was helpful in preparing their responses. A few suggested that a guided walkthrough by a Pharmac staff member would have made the process even clearer.

Positive Feedback

Respondents highlighted several aspects that contributed to a positive experience:

- Clear and consistent communication
- An intuitive and easy-to-navigate webpage
- A generous timeline for completing tasks
- Responsive email support and timely reminders.

These comments suggest the consultation was well-organised and accessible, helping stakeholders engage effectively.

Areas for improvement

Some respondents felt the timeline was too short, particularly for suppliers with large product ranges or those new to working with Pharmac. There were also suggestions to expand the comprehensive product list to include all available sizes, not just those sold in the past two years, to better reflect the full range of offerings.

A few participants recommended hosting a seminar or demonstration to clarify expectations and support participation.

Suggestions for future consultations

Several respondents asked for greater clarity on next steps, including how new devices will be added and how the list will be finalised. Some felt the consultation was too one-directional - focused on data collection without inviting input on future decisions. One Health NZ staff member also noted that not all relevant colleagues received the consultation, suggesting a need to broaden our distribution channels.

Closing Summary

We want to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who took the time to engage with this consultation. Whether you provided feedback, asked questions, or shared the consultation with others, your input has been incredibly valuable.

Your insights have helped us better understand the medical devices in use by public hospitals and have highlighted important considerations for how we manage and plan for these devices in the future.

We will be providing an update soon on the next steps in this work as we continue to develop and refine the future of medical devices. This includes gathering input on key operational aspects, such as how requests for new medical device technology will be received and assessed, the role of expert advice, and the ongoing maintenance and monitoring of purchasing activities. Stakeholder input is vital in shaping a practical and inclusive approach, ensuring that any new processes effectively meet the needs of those who use, supply, and manage medical devices.

We look forward to continuing this important conversation with you.

Staying in touch

- Sign up to Device Advice – our bi-monthly online newsletter (you can subscribe here: pharmac.govt.nz/hospital-devices/device-advice)
- Email us your questions, thoughts and feedback at devices@pharmac.govt.nz