

## Travoprost – reference pricing

From 1 April 2010 the subsidy for travoprost (Travatan) eye drops 0.004% has reduced to match that of latanoprost eye drops 50 µg per ml, 2.5ml (Hysite). This will result in a manufacturer's surcharge on Travatan eye drops. For patients taking travoprost eye drops prior to 1 April 2010, full subsidy will be available until 30 September 2010 under endorsement criteria for patients prescribed travoprost prior to 1 April 2010. The six month transition period is provided to allow patients sufficient time to return to their ophthalmologist for a review of their medication if they wish to switch to a fully subsidised alternative.

## Alendronate for osteoporosis – amended Special Authority criteria

The Special Authority criteria applying to alendronate with or without cholecalciferol (Fosamax and Fosamax Plus) for osteoporosis has been amended from 1 April 2010 to clarify that T-Scores must be derived using dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA).

## Prednisolone acetate eye drops – now fully subsidised

The prices for Pred Mild and Pred Forte (prednisolone acetate) eye drops have been reduced to match the current subsidies. This means Pred Mild eye drops 0.12% and Pred Forte eye drops 1% will be fully subsidised and gives prescribers an alternative fully subsidised ocular topical corticosteroid.

## Imiquimod – amended Special Authority criteria

The Special Authority criteria for imiquimod cream 5% has been amended. There has been some confusion over whether or not a biopsy is required when completing a renewal application for imiquimod. A biopsy is preferred but not a mandatory requirement on renewal applications. We would however reinforce when imiquimod has failed, a biopsy should ideally be considered. The Special Authority criteria has been amended to make this clear. Imiquimod is not funded for actinic keratosis (solar keratosis).

## Withdrawal of dextropropoxyphene – containing medicines

In December 2009 the Medicines Adverse Reactions Committee (MARC) of Medsafe reviewed the benefits and risks of dextropropoxyphene containing medicines. In the interests of public safety, the MARC has recommended that Capadex and Paradex be withdrawn from New Zealand. Medsafe supports the MARC's conclusions. Medsafe advises that prescribers do not start any new patients on Paradex or Capadex, and that the analgesic requirements of patients currently taking Paradex or Capadex should be reviewed at the earliest opportunity. PHARMAC staff intend to recommend to the PHARMAC Board (or Chief Executive acting under delegated authority) that Paradex and Capadex be delisted from the Pharmaceutical Schedule from the date that registration is revoked.

## Pending medicine discontinuations:

- Acebutolol (ACB) - The 200 mg capsule is now discontinued from 1 April 2010
- Morphine sulphate (m-Eslon) 200 mg long-acting capsules will no longer be available once current stocks are exhausted, this date is expected to be August-September 2010

Special Authority Queries: **0800 243 666**

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

Online: **[www.pharmac.govt.nz/healthpros/Schedule/PHONewsletter](http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/healthpros/Schedule/PHONewsletter)**

Newsletter feedback: email **[rachel.mackay@pharmac.govt.nz](mailto:rachel.mackay@pharmac.govt.nz)**

*Please note this is not a complete reference to all changes occurring from 1 March 2010, for the full reference, please consult your Update to the Pharmaceutical Schedule.*

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