

Pharmaceutical Management Agency

Clinicians' Newsletter



*“Make life easier,
always think generically”*

November 2011

Widening of Access

Pravastatin - removal of Special Authority

From 1 November 2011 the Special Authority that applies to pravastatin 10 mg, 20 mg and 40 mg tablets will be removed.

For prescribers this means they no longer need to complete Special Authority applications and therefore provides an additional therapy choice. The tender for pravastatin 20 mg and 40 mg tablets has been awarded to Douglas Pharmaceuticals' brand (Cholvastin) resulting in a substantial price reduction on these two strengths.

Sigma have informed PHARMAC that it will be discontinuing the 10 mg strength and it will no longer be subsidised from 1 March 2012.

Brand Changes

Paracetamol 500 mg tablet

From 1 April 2012 Parafast paracetamol 500 mg tablets will become the sole subsidised brand of paracetamol 500 mg. This is a result of a new tender agreement which will see Parafast paracetamol 500 mg tablets subsidised from 1 November 2011.

Neither Parafast paracetamol 500 mg tablets nor the currently funded Pharmacare tablets are film coated. However, Parafast tablets are round whereas Pharmacare tablets are capsule shaped. Parafast tablets are scored and come in blisters of 10 tablets.

New Listings

Ketostix

From 1 November 2011 a new pack size of sodium nitroprusside (Ketostix) 50 test strip pack will be fully subsidised. This follows the upcoming discontinuation of the 20 test strip pack. Ketostix is still not subsidised on a Bulk Supply Order. The subsidised quantity restriction has been increased from 20 to 50 test strips to accommodate the larger pack size.

Changes to Schedule Rules

Reducing the administrative burden

From 1 November 2011 some minor amendments are being made to the Pharmaceutical Schedule General Rules with an aim of reducing the administrative burden for both prescribers and pharmacists.

In summary, the changes mean that once you as a prescriber have made it clear to a pharmacist that a patient is eligible for subsidy, the pharmacist does not have to refer back to you if that information is missing on subsequent prescriptions and the pharmacist can change the presentation dispensed if it is not practicable to dispense the presentation prescribed.

Amendments to Close Control Rule

We have had favourable feedback from prescribers to the introduction last month of minor changes to the Close Control rule. An updated flow diagram and frequently asked questions can be ordered from www.pharmaonline.co.nz or downloaded from the PHARMAC website.

We would like to clarify the intent of Close Control where a patient is unable to manage their medicine without additional support. These patients, in the opinion of the prescriber, are intellectually impaired, or frail, or infirm or unable to manage their medication without additional support.





PHARMAC Seminar Series – Upcoming Seminars

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.

For further information on the seminars below, and to register for a place, head to our website: www.seminarseries.pharmac.govt.nz



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 simon.England@pharmac.govt.nz.

| Dates (2011) | Topic | Description |
|--------------|---|---|
| 7 November | Rheumatic Fever (Part II – Invitation Only) | Please note we will be identifying and inviting registrants for these seminars from the relevant high risk areas. |
| 23 November | Palliative Care | All health workers involved in palliative care in the primary care setting, in particular GPs, practice nurses and pharmacists. |
| 1 December | Update on Special Foods | This seminar is suitable for GPs, dieticians, nurses and pharmacists. |
| 2 December | Diabetes, Pre-Eclampsia and Pregnancy Complications | This seminar is aimed towards LMC practitioners or practitioners providing care to women during pregnancy. (This is a repeat seminar). |
| 5 December | Adolescent Health | All health workers involved in caring for young people, but especially relevant for GPs, practice nurses and counselors working in the community. (This is a repeat seminar). |

ISSN 2230-4703 (Print)
ISSN 2230-4711 (Online)

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

Please note this is not a complete reference to all changes occurring from 1 October 2011, for the full reference; please consult your Update to the Pharmaceutical Schedule.

