

Pharmaceutical Management Agency

Clinicians' Newsletter



*“Make life easier,
always think generically”*

December 2011

Want to join a PHARMAC Subcommittee?

We are interested in hearing from general practitioners who would be interested in joining one of our Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee (PTAC) subcommittees. If you would like more information please contact the PTAC Secretary Rochelle Harker on rochelle.harker@pharmac.govt.nz

Widening of Access

Fluconazole 150 mg capsule – restriction amended

From 1 December the restriction on Fluconazole 150 mg capsules will be amended. The original restriction for Practitioners will remain the same, however the maximum of one capsule per prescription may now be waived by a Specialist endorsement or on the recommendation of a Specialist.

Losartan – removal of Special Authority

The Special Authority has been removed from losartan tablets 12.5 mg, 25 mg, 50 mg, 100 mg and tablets 50 mg with hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg from 1 December.

The funded brand of losartan only tablets is Lostaar (Mylan's brand) and the combined losartan 50 mg with hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg tablets is Arrow-Losartan & Hydrochlorothiazide (Arrow Pharmaceuticals).

Note this does NOT apply to candesartan which remains on Special Authority.

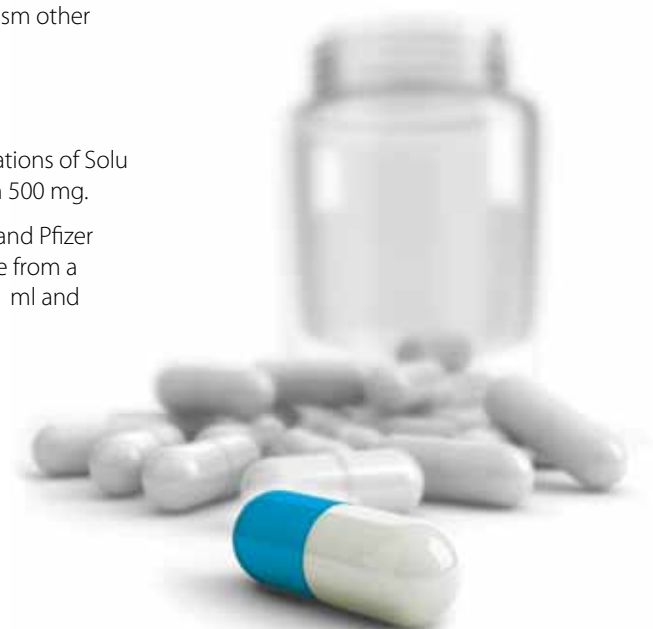
Enoxaparin sodium – Special Authority change

The Special Authority criteria for enoxaparin sodium (Clexane) injection will be amended from 1 December 2011. The change will allow patients on any oral anticoagulation, either warfarin or dabigatran, to gain a subsidy via Special Authority for venous thromboembolism other than in pregnancy or malignancy perioperatively.

Solu Medrol – new pack sizes

Pfizer has notified PHARMAC of a global change of formulation to three presentations of Solu Medrol injection 40 mg per ml, 1 ml, injection 62.5 mg per ml, 2 ml and injection 500 mg.

The new formulations have a preservative-free diluent (without benzyl alcohol) and Pfizer has prepared information for the market. There has also been a pack size change from a 25 injection pack to a single injection pack for both the injection 40 mg per ml, 1 ml and 62.5 mg per ml, 2 ml.



Spacer Devices

Masks for Spacer Devices

There has been a brand name change for masks for spacer devices. Foremount Child's Silicone Mask will be listed as EZ-fit Paediatric Mask from 1 December 2011. This is a brand name change only.

Spacer Devices: 230 ml Spacer Device

A new single patient spacer device, Space Chamber Plus, will be available fully funded from 1 December 2011. Space Chamber Plus has improved drug delivery compared to the currently funded Space Chamber with an increase of ~80% in the weight of drug exiting the device.

When switching, patients should be informed that they may experience a change in the effect and if they have any concerns they should contact their Doctor. Patients should also be monitored one month after making the change for the emergence of symptoms of disease or adverse effects. (This is particularly the case for paediatric patients).

There has been no change to the PSO restrictions for this device.

800 ml Spacer Device

There has been no change to this spacer device.

Autoclavable 230 ml Spacer Device

The number of autoclavable spacer devices available on a PSO has been reduced from 20 to 5. These spacer devices are intended for training purposes where they may be autoclaved between patients and used over and over again.

Many people are unaware that there are autoclavable and single user spacers. The autoclavable devices are very useful for practice use but they are significantly more expensive and should not be used given to patients.

New Listings

Amlodipine

A new low strength of amlodipine will be fully funded from 1 December 2011. Amlodipine 2.5 mg will be supplied by Apotex under the name Apo-Amlodipine.

Changes to Schedule Rules

From 1 December the final changes to the Pharmaceutical Schedule General Rules, due to the enactment of the Medicines Amendment Regulations 2011, will come into effect.

The last two changes affecting dentists and midwives, in summary, mean that dentists can now prescribe within their scope of practice up to three months' supply for a patient under their care and midwives can now, for oral contraceptives, prescribe up to six months supply.

COMING SOON - Changes to PHARMAC Exceptional Circumstances Scheme

Do you apply for treatments for your patients under PHARMAC's Exceptional Circumstances schemes? Or have you ever considered applying?

If so, you'll need to know about the changes being made to these schemes. From 1 March 2012, PHARMAC's Exceptional Circumstances schemes will be replaced with Named Patient Pharmaceutical Assessment (NPPA). These changes may help you to provide treatments to your patients that you previously weren't able to.

Highlights include:

- > removal of the criteria restricting funding to patients in a patient population of 10 or fewer
- > a new pathway for consideration of applications in urgent circumstances
- > a streamlined application process, including the ability to apply electronically
- > cancer and community treatments being considered under the same scheme, leading to more nationally consistent decisions
- > PHARMAC being able to fund some medicines through NPPA while they are under consideration for Schedule listing
- > a closer alignment of NPPA and full Pharmaceutical Schedule assessments, benefiting patient populations over time
- > PHARMAC publishing the outcome of funding applications, resulting in greater clarity and enhanced transparency for clinicians of what might be funded

For more information, including the NPPA Policy, criteria and contact details, visit our website at:

<http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/haveyoursay/eview>





PHARMAC Seminar Series 2012

PHARMAC Seminar Series will be continuing in 2012. Topics and dates to be confirmed shortly see the website below for further details.

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/>

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



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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

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

