

07 December 2023

PHARMAC
PO Box 10254
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

Sent via email to: consult@pharmac.govt.nz

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Proposal to fund aripiprazole depot injection as an alternative antipsychotic treatment option

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the above consultation.

The Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (Inc.) (the Guild) is a national membership organisation representing the majority of community pharmacy owners. We provide leadership on all issues affecting the sector and advocate for the business and professional interests of community pharmacy. Our feedback on this consultation focuses on Guild members' concerns around general economic, funding and supply issues.

The Guild strongly supports the funding of aripiprazole depot injection as an alternative antipsychotic treatment option. Considering the global supply issue with olanzapine depot injection and the relative benign side effect profile compared to other funded atypical antipsychotic depot injections, funding this alternative antipsychotic treatment option would greatly benefit people affected by schizophrenia.

We also encourage Pharmac to consider widening the group of people with schizophrenia eligible for the funded aripiprazole depot injection, especially those who have adherence challenges to oral atypical antipsychotics. Receiving a monthly injection instead of taking multiple daily medicines would allow consistent medicine delivery and enable people to undergo everyday activities, leading to improved quality of life and potentially less hospitalisations.

Realising the potential cost benefits involved in switching patients to longer-acting preparations, does Pharmac actively encourage the suppliers of these products to provide information to prescribers and dispensers that they can pass on to eligible patients?

Thank you for your consideration of our response. If you have any questions about our feedback, please contact our Senior Advisory Pharmacists, Martin Lowis (martin@pgnz.org.nz, 04 802 8218) or Cathy Martin (cathy@pgnz.org.nz, 04 802 8214).

Yours sincerely,



Nicole Rickman

General Manager – Membership and Professional Services