

22 November 2023

PHARMAC
PO Box 10254
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Proposal to fund testosterone gel and to award Principal Supply Status to Testogel®

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 funding testosterone gel as a suitable alternative where the currently funded patches, injections or capsules cannot be tolerated, and granting principal supply status to the brand, Testogel®, to provide diverse, funded options for individuals. The addition of testosterone gel will allow health practitioners and people needing testosterone to choose the form of testosterone that meets the individual's circumstances and provide a safety net if one of the forms is in short supply.

To support healthcare professionals with the introduction of Testogel® on the Pharmaceutical Schedule, we are interested in understanding how the supplier Pharmaco NZ Limited and Pharmac plan to disseminate information to prescribers. We acknowledge the challenge of "inbox fatigue" among prescribers and have received feedback indicating that funding-related information often does not reach them through traditional channels.

We commend Pharmac for collaborating with Healthify to update their patient resources to include information on testosterone gel. These tools will be crucial for community pharmacists, serving as handy references when dispensing this product and providing to patients. We would encourage Pharmaco NZ Ltd to work closely with professional organisations for both prescribers and community pharmacy, such as the Pharmacy Guild, to ensure that the dedicated website is promoted as a valuable resource for patient education materials, product training, guidelines, and other online resources.

However, we recommend the distribution of pre-printed handouts to pharmacies in all official and other common languages spoken in New Zealand. This is especially important as community pharmacies are now incurring significant printing costs, having taken over the sole printing responsibilities from prescribers with no compensation since the advent of NZePS.

Thank you for your consideration of our response. If you have any questions about our feedback, please contact our Senior Advisory Pharmacists, Martin Lewis (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