

1 June 2023

PHARMAC
PO Box 10254
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

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

Dear sir/madam,

Re: Proposal to fund candesartan with hydrochlorothiazide tablets for high blood pressure

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.

The Guild welcomes the addition of candesartan with hydrochlorothiazide, in both the 16mg and 32mg strengths (with hydrochlorothiazide 12.5mg), as fully funded prescription items without restriction to Section B and in Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 July 2023.

We believe this would be a valuable addition to the fixed dose combination antihypertensive medicines already available – losartan with hydrochlorothiazide – considering availability, cost and clinical suitability, and would assist in offering another alternative for patients and their prescribers to choose from after the recall of the Accuretic brand of quinapril with hydrochlorothiazide. This is especially so as treatment with fixed-dose combination medicines provides safe, effective, rapid, and convenient hypertension control and improved patient adherence to daily medicine regimens. Having combination products available is also more cost-effective to stock and distribute (one product instead of two) and less labour intensive to dispense.

We would like to request that Pharmac use the digital information facilities currently available, such as reScript, to inform prescribers of the availability and funding of candesartan with hydrochlorothiazide once listed. We would also like to see support available for prescribers and pharmacists likening the comparable strengths of candesartan with hydrochlorothiazide to similar compounds currently listed to support the addition.

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