

21 August 2023

PHARMAC
PO Box 10254
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Guild Submission to proposed changes to the access criteria for nirmatrelvir with ritonavir (Paxlovid), molnupiravir (Lageviro) and remdesivir (Veklury) for the treatment of COVID-19

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 welcomes the recent proposed adjustment to the access criteria for COVID-19 antiviral treatments, and Pharmac's collaborative, dynamic and proactive approach to healthcare delivery, which we firmly support.

We are interested to know how healthcare providers, particularly pharmacists involved in dispensing COVID-19 antiviral treatments, will gain access to comprehensive patient medical and medicine histories to effectively assess eligibility, and also how they will be assisted in determining eligibility if this is contested by a patient. We acknowledge the efforts to provide accessible lists on your website that identify immunocompromised individuals and those at heightened risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 infection.

As clinicians, we recognise the importance of delving into patient histories. With the potential expansion to patients receiving Disability Support Services, a robust method for verifying their eligibility status should be considered. This ensures that treatment decisions are well-informed and align with the unique needs of each patient.

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