

13 September 2024

PHARMAC
PO Box 10254
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Proposal to widen access to empagliflozin for use in the treatment of chronic heart failure (HFrEF)

The Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (Inc.) (the Guild) is a national membership organisation representing community pharmacy owners. We provide leadership on all issues affecting the sector and advocate for the business and professional interests of community pharmacy.

Our proposal focuses on Guild members' concerns around general economic, funding and supply issues. Guild submissions should not be taken as any endorsement of, or any attempt to comment on, issues of safety, efficacy, or individual patient utility.

We support the proposal to widen access to empagliflozin for people with chronic heart failure with reduced ejection fraction (HFrEF). This proposal aligns with international clinical trends and reflects the growing recognition of empagliflozin's benefits for patients with this chronic condition, including the reduction in hospitalisation, reducing all-cause mortality, and improvement in quality of life.

We request the following is considered and incorporated into the final decision in the funding of this medicine:

Culturally diverse and inclusive patient information leaflets

Since not all individuals have access to online information, it is essential that printed materials, including patient information leaflets, are made available in multiple languages and tailored to diverse ethnic groups, especially Māori and Pacific peoples, who are at a higher risk for heart failure and poorer outcomes related to it. This approach will enable individuals to make informed decisions about their treatment options and enhance overall health literacy.

Utilisation of available technology

We encourage Pharmac to leverage available technology, such as the reCare platform, to identify potential patients who meet the new treatment and funding criteria. This proactive strategy would help identify eligible individuals early, allowing them to benefit from the newly funded treatment.

Update of the NZ Heart Foundation Guidelines and training for health professionals

If this funding proposal is successful, we encourage Pharmac to collaborate with the NZ Heart Foundation to update their guidelines in the treatment of heart failure. This should also involve updating relevant courses for health professionals offered by the NZ Heart Foundation or other organisations, such as bPac or He Ako Hiringa, to ensure that physicians are prescribing the most

current treatment options, particularly for those who would benefit most from this newly funded medicine.

If you have any questions about our response, 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Rickman', is positioned above the printed name.

Nicole Rickman

General Manager – Membership and Professional Services