

4 March 2025

PHARMAC
PO Box 10254
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Proposal to discontinue efavirenz tablets

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 submission 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 appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on Pharmac's proposal to discontinue the funding of Efavirenz 600mg tablets (Milpharm brand) by 1 December 2025, with supply expected to cease in June 2025.

We would appreciate clarification on the support Pharmac will provide to patients, prescribers, and pharmacists during this transition, particularly regarding:

- How will Pharmac ensure patients on Efavirenz are informed of the change and supported in transitioning to alternative treatments?
- What role will HIV specialist services play in assisting patients with complex regimen adjustments?
- How will Pharmac support patients requiring careful monitoring to prevent viral rebound, manage drug interactions, and maintain adherence?
- What assistance will be available for patients facing financial barriers to accessing specialist care or obtaining new prescriptions?
- Will Pharmac provide educational resources or clinical guidelines for prescribers and pharmacists to facilitate informed treatment decisions?
- Will Pharmac collaborate with HIV support organisations, advocacy groups, and community health providers for outreach and education?
- Will additional funding or resources be provided to pharmacists and prescribers to support patients through this transition?

We would also request that Pharmac permits community pharmacies to claim wastage for any remaining stock of Efavirenz after its delisting from the Schedule to ensure they are not financially burdened by this change. We ask that if wastage is permitted, community pharmacies are provided with a wastage claim process, including timelines and eligibility criteria, to ensure pharmacies can recover costs efficiently.

We strongly encourage Pharmac to consider these recommendations to ensure a patient-centred, well-managed withdrawal process that prioritises continuity of care.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your response and further engagement on this matter.

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