

09 January 2015

Proposal to reinstate monthly dispensing on various pharmaceuticals (remove 'stat' dispensing)

PHARMAC is seeking feedback on a proposal to remove the 'three months dispensed all-at-once' ('stat') dispensing rule from the following pharmaceuticals from 1 March 2015, meaning that they would need to be dispensed monthly unless access exemptions apply:

- Betamethasone valerate cream (Beta Cream), ointment (Beta Ointment), lotion (Betnovate) and scalp application (Beta Scalp)
- Clobetasol propionate cream, ointment and scalp application (Dermol)
- Dexamethasone phosphate injection (Dexamethasone-hameln)
- Hydrocortisone cream (Pharmacy Health), tablets (Douglas) and injection (Sdu-Cortef)
- Prednisolone oral liquid (Redipred)
- Sodium valproate tablets (Epilim Crushable, Epilim) and oral liquid (Epilim S/F Liquid, Epilim Syrup)

More information about the proposal can be found on the following page.

Feedback sought

PHARMAC welcomes feedback on this proposal. To provide feedback, please submit it in writing by **Tuesday, 27 January 2015** to:

Geraldine MacGibbon
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PHARMAC

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All feedback received before the closing date will be considered by PHARMAC's Board (or its delegate) prior to making a decision on this proposal.

Feedback we receive is subject to the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) and we will consider any request to have information withheld in accordance with our obligations under the OIA. Anyone providing feedback, whether on their own account or on behalf of an organisation, and whether in a personal or professional capacity, should be aware that the content of their feedback and their identity may need to be disclosed in response to an OIA request.

We are not able to treat any part of your feedback as confidential unless you specifically request that we do, and then only to the extent permissible under the OIA and other relevant laws and requirements. If you would like us to withhold any commercially sensitive, confidential proprietary, or personal information included in your submission, please clearly state this in your submission and identify the relevant sections of your submission that you would like withheld. PHARMAC will give due consideration to any such request

Details of the proposal

From 1 March 2015 the 'three months dispensed all-at-once' ('stat') dispensing rule would be removed from the following pharmaceuticals in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule:

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack size
Betamethasone valerate	Crm 0.1%	Beta Cream	50 g OP
Betamethasone valerate	Oint 0.1%	Beta Ointment	50 g OP
Betamethasone valerate	Lotn 0.1%	Betnovate	50 ml OP
Betamethasone valerate	Scalp app 0.1%	Beta Scalp	100 ml OP
Clobetasol propionate	Crm 0.05% & Oint 0.05%	Dermol	30 g OP
Clobetasol propionate	Scalp app 0.05%	Dermol	30 ml OP
Dexamethasone phosphate	Inj 4 mg per ml, 1 ml ampoule	Dexamethasone-hameln	10
Dexamethasone phosphate	Inj 4 mg per ml, 2 ml ampoule	Dexamethasone-hameln	5
Hydrocortisone	Crm 1%	Pharmacy Health	100 g and 500 g
Hydrocortisone	Tab 5 mg and 20 mg	Douglas	100
Hydrocortisone	Inj 100 mg vial	Solu-Cortef	1
Prednisolone	Oral liq 5 mg per ml	Redipred	30 ml OP
Sodium valproate	Tab 100 mg	Epilim Crushable	100
Sodium valproate	Tab 200 mg & 500 mg EC	Epilim	100
Sodium valproate	Oral liq 200 mg per 5 ml	Epilim S/F Liquid, Epilim Syrup	300 ml

Background

PHARMAC has identified several pharmaceuticals for which the cost of stat dispensing to the Pharmaceutical Budget currently outweighs the savings from reduced dispensing fees. The proposal is to remove stat dispensing from those pharmaceuticals. The increased cost associated with additional dispensings has been taken into account in the analysis, with reference to the current Community Pharmacy Services Agreement fee structure (Stage 4 – from 1 August 2014).

Currently, approximately half of the patients on sodium valproate already visit their pharmacy more frequently than once every three months to collect medicines (either sodium valproate or another medicine). For most of the other presentations listed above, the average dispensing frequency is currently less than two dispensings per year.

If this proposal is approved, these medicines could still be dispensed stat for patients who have difficulty getting to and from a pharmacy and meet one of the following Access Exemption Criteria:

- a) have limited physical mobility;
- b) live and work more than 30 minutes from the nearest pharmacy by their normal form of transport;
- c) are relocating to another area; or
- d) are travelling extensively and will be out of town when the repeat prescriptions are due.

As part of our usual processes we regularly review funded pharmaceuticals with a view to adding or removing stat dispensing; at this time no further changes to dispensing frequency are proposed (other than temporary changes to manage stock issues).