

18 June 2013

Approval of proposal to list preservative free eye drops and amend the listings related to other eye drops

PHARMAC is pleased to announce that the approval of agreements with AFT Pharmaceuticals Ltd and with Alcon New Zealand Limited. This was the subject of a consultation letter dated 12 April 2013 <http://www.pharmac.health.nz/news/item/proposal-to-list-preservative-free-eye-drops-and-amend-the-listings-related-to-preserved-eye-drops>

In summary, the effect of the decision is that:

In relation to preservative containing eye drops

- PHARMAC will no longer apply Sole Subsidised Supply to preservative containing eye drops and as a result:
 - Hypromellose 0.3% with dextran 0.1% eye drops, under the brand name Poly-Tears, will not be awarded Sole Subsidised Supply but will have subsidy and delisting protection until 30 June 2016 and will be listed in Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule;
 - Methopt (Hypromellose 0.5% eye drops) and Vistil (polyvinyl alcohol 1.4% eye drops), currently listed in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule, will no longer be reference priced to Poly-Tears and will remain listed in Section B at the current price and subsidy ;
 - There will be no change to the listing of polyvinyl alcohol eye drops 3%, under the brand name Vistil Forte.

In relation to preservative free lubricating eye preparations

- Sodium hyaluronate eye drops 1 mg per ml under the brand name Hylo-Fresh, will be the only funded thin preservative free lubricating eye drops listed in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule and will be listed in Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 July 2013;
- Macrogol 400 0.4% with propylene glycol 0.3% eye drops, under the brand name Systane Unit Dose, will be the only funded thick preservative free lubricating eye drops listed in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule and will be listed in Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 August 2013;
- Carbomer ophthalmic gel 0.3%, under the brand name Poly Gel, will be the only funded preservative free lubricating eye gel listed in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule as and will be listed in Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 August 2013;

- All preservative free lubricating eye preparations will be subject to Special Authority criteria.

In relation to eye ointments

- Retinol palmitate 138 mcg per g ophthalmic ointment, under the brand name VitA-POS, will be listed in Section B and Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 July 2013.

Details of the proposal

Preserved lubricating eye preparations

Thin preserved lubricating eye drops

From 1 August 2013 the price and subsidy applying to hypromellose 0.3% with dextran 0.1% eye drops (Poly-Tears) will be amended in Section B and will be listed in Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule as follows (prices and subsidies expressed ex-manufacturer, excluding GST):

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack size	Current price and subsidy (\$)	Proposed Price and subsidy (\$)
Hypromellose with dextran	Eye drops 0.3% with dextran 0.1%	Poly-Tears	15 ml OP	2.62	2.30

Poly-Tears will have subsidy and delisting protection until 30 June 2016.

All other thin preserved lubricating eye drops will remain listed in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule (i.e. Methopt and Vistil) at the current price and subsidy.

Thick preserved lubricating eye drops

The price and subsidy applying to polyvinyl alcohol eye drops 3 % (Vistil Forte) will remain unchanged

Preserved lubricating eye gel

For the avoidance of doubt, no preserved lubricating eye gel will be listed in Section B and Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule and this portion of the RFP is closed.

Preservative free lubricating eye preparations

Thin preservative free lubricating eye drops

From 1 July 2013 the following thin preservative free eye drops will be listed in Section B and Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule at the following price and subsidy (expressed ex-manufacturer, excluding GST):

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack size	Price and subsidy
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				(\$)
Sodium hyaluronate	Eye drops 1 mg per ml	Hylo-Fresh	10 ml OP	22.00

Hylo-Fresh will be the only brand of thin preservative free eye drops subsidised in the community (Sole Subsidised Supply) from 1 July 2013 until 30 June 2016.

A confidential rebate will apply to all community funded dispensings of Hylo-Fresh.

Thick preservative free lubricating eye drops

From 1 August 2013 the following thick preservative free eye drop will be listed in Section B and Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule at the following price and subsidy (expressed ex-manufacturer, excluding GST):

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack size	Price and subsidy (\$)
Macrogol 400 and propylene glycol	Eye drops 0.4% with propylene glycol 0.3% preservative free	Systane Unit Dose	24 x 0.4 ml	4.30

Systane Unit Dose will be the only brand of thick preservative free eye drops subsidised in the community (Sole Subsidised Supply) from 1 August 2013 until 30 June 2016

Preservative free lubricating eye gel

From 1 August 2013 the following thick preservative free eye gel will be listed in Section B and Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule at the following price and subsidy (expressed ex-manufacturer, excluding GST):

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack size	Price and subsidy (\$)
Carbomer	Ophthalmic gel 0.3%	Poly Gel	30 x 0.5 g	8.25

Poly Gel will be the only brand of preservative free eye gel subsidised in the community (Sole Subsidised Supply) from 1 August 2013 until 30 June 2016

Restrictions applying to preservative free eye preparations

From 1 July 2013 the following restriction would apply to all presentations of preservative free eye preparations listed in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule:

Initial application from any relevant practitioner

Approvals valid for 12 months for patients meeting the following criteria:

Both:

1 Confirmed diagnosis by slit lamp of severe secretory dry eye; and

2 Either:

2.1 Patient is using eye drops more than four times daily on a regular basis; or

2.2 Patient has had a confirmed allergic reaction to preservative in eye drop

Renewal from any relevant practitioner

Approvals valid for 24 months where the patient continues to require lubricating eye drops and has benefited from treatment

The Special Authority will be interchangeable for all products listed in the preservative free eye preparations listed in Section B.

Eye ointment

From 1 July 2013, the following eye ointment will be listed in Section B and Part II of Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule at the following price and subsidy (expressed ex-manufacturer, excluding GST):

Chemical	Presentation	Brand	Pack size	Price and subsidy (\$)
Retinol palmitate 138 mcg per g	Ophthalmic oint	VitA-POS	5 g OP	3.80

For the avoidance of doubt, other brands of eye ointments could be listed in the community

Feedback received

We appreciate all of the feedback that we received and acknowledge the time people took to respond. All consultation responses received by 29 April 2013 were considered in their entirety in making a decision on the proposed changes. Most responses were supportive of the proposal, and the following issues were raised in relation to specific aspects of the proposal:

Theme	Comment
One responder supported the proposal but noted that for preservative free prednisolone eye drops the recommendation was to include a prescriber restriction. The responder did not support funding restrictions based on specified prescriber type.	PHARMAC has not consulted on listing prednisolone preservative free eye drops, the consultation was for ocular lubricants which do not have a prescriber restriction.
One responder supported the proposal. The responder questioned whether there should be a prescriber restriction to reduce fiscal risk.	The advice from the Ophthalmology Subcommittee was that the indication of severe secretory dry, diagnosed using slit lamp examination would be an appropriate restriction. PHARMAC appreciate the concerns regarding fiscal risk and will monitor usage of these products.

More information

If you have any questions about this decision, you can call our toll free number (9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday) on 0800 66 00 50.