

MEMORANDUM FOR BOARD MEETING 26 OCTOBER 2018

Chief Executive's Report

Current media campaigns

Media campaigns are currently underway for PHARMAC to fund new medicines for breast cancer and cystic fibrosis as well as continued coverage of the venlafaxine brand switch.

Venlafaxine brand-switch

A survey was run by the University of Auckland from March to October 2017 for people who had experienced a change in brand of venlafaxine. The objectives of the survey were to gather feedback from people about their experiences of the change, better understand the impact of brand changes for people, and gain insights to inform any future PHARMAC brand change activities. The results of the survey will be published in BMJ Open shortly. We are aware that the publishing of these results may continue to spike interest in the venlafaxine brand change. We will circulate the results of the survey to PHARMAC Board members when they are published, which may be in advance of the October Board meeting.

MEMORANDUM FOR BOARD MEETING 30 JUNE 2017

Chief Executive's Report

Potential medicine supply and implementation issues

PHARMAC decided to change brand of venlafaxine, which is funded as a last-line antidepressant. The need for careful implementation was recognised.

There have been several representations made to us about lack of efficacy and adverse effects, and social media discussion groups have had some activity in this regard. While there is nothing beyond what was anticipated from a change such as this, we continue to monitor and activity support the implementation of this change.

In addition to our regular practice of referring such reports to CARM, we have connected several people with the Auckland Medical School researchers (whose work we partly fund) who are looking at understanding adverse effects reported in product changes.