

## **Aromatase inhibitors – reference pricing**

There are some changes to the subsidies of the aromatase inhibitors – anastrozole, letrozole and exemestane. These changes include the listing of a new brand of letrozole, as well as the reference pricing of anastrozole and exemestane to the reference product letrozole from 1 February 2010. The Letara brand of letrozole and both the DP-Anastrozole and Arimidex brands of anastrozole will remain fully subsidised. Medsafe has approved DP-Anastrozole, which includes acknowledgment of its bioequivalence to Arimidex.

In addition, from 1 February 2010, patients who are currently on exemestane presenting a new prescription to their pharmacy, and any new patients, will need to have a Special Authority approval issued in order to receive full subsidy on this product. The new Special Authority form can be downloaded from the PHARMAC website at: [www.pharmac.govt.nz/Schedule/SAForms](http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/Schedule/SAForms). For patients already taking exemestane, where the initial dispensing for their current prescription occurred prior to 1 February 2010, any remaining dispensings on that prescription will be fully subsidised without the need for a Special Authority. However, the patient will require a valid Special Authority to receive fully subsidised exemestane with subsequent prescriptions.

Femara will be delisted from 1 July 2010. Medsafe has approved Letara, which includes acknowledgment of its bioequivalence to Femara.

## **Sumatriptan 50 mg & 100 mg tablets – subsidy changes**

From 1 February 2010 there will be changes to the subsidies of sumatriptan 50 mg and 100 mg tablets. From 1 February, Arrow-Sumatriptan tablets 50 mg and 100 mg will be the only fully subsidised brand of sumatriptan. The subsidy for the Imigran and Sumagran brands of sumatriptan tablets will be reduced, also from 1 February, via the application of reference pricing, to the level of Arrow-Sumatriptan tablets. This will mean that patients will need to pay a manufacturer's surcharge if they wish to remain on Imigran or Sumagran. Arrow-Sumatriptan will remain fully subsidised, and will be the sole subsidised brand of sumatriptan 50 mg and 100 mg tablets from 1 May 2010. Patient information to help counsel patients with the change in brands will be available to order from [www.pharmaonline.co.nz](http://www.pharmaonline.co.nz).

## **Healtheries Iron and Vitamin C tablets – discontinuation**

Healtheries has advised that its Healtheries Iron with Vitamin C tablet (ferrous gluconate with ascorbic acid) has been discontinued as supply has been exhausted. This will be delisted from the Pharmaceutical Schedule in six months time. We advise prescribers to switch patients to alternative fully subsidised iron preparations.

## **Pregnancy tests – change to ordering**

Pregnancy tests – hCG urine cassettes will only be able to be ordered on a Practitioner's Supply Order (PSO) from 1 February 2010. Up to 200 tests may be ordered at a time on a PSO and these will be dispensed from pharmacy as per other PSO listed items. From 1 February 2010 orders will no longer be able to be processed on a Wholesale Supply Order (WSO).

## **Fluticasone nasal spray – new listing**

From 1 February 2010 fluticasone propionate metered aqueous nasal spray, 50 µg per dose (Flixonase Hayfever & Allergy) will be fully subsidised. This provides an alternative fully funded steroid nasal spray.

Please note this is not a complete reference to all changes occurring from 1 December 2009, for the full reference, please consult your Update to the Pharmaceutical Schedule.

Special Authority Queries: **0800 243 666**

General Questions: **0800 66 00 50** (9am – 5pm Monday to Friday)

Online: **[www.pharmac.govt.nz/healthpros/Schedule/PHONewsletter](http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/healthpros/Schedule/PHONewsletter)**

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