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Tēnā koe

Please find below the New Zealand Nurses Organisation, *Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa's* (NZNO) response to various funding proposals. As is our normal practise, these have been sent for discussion and feedback to relevant nursing Colleges and Sections, te Rūnanga o Aotearoa (NZNO's Māori membership), nurse practitioners, the Board, and professional nursing and policy advisers. Nurses generally support PHARMAC proposals, but you may be interested in their comments. We apologise that some deadlines have been missed; it is difficult to avoid with the number of consultations, tight timeframes, and the limitations of our own resources.

#### **Pharmac proposal to widen access to Montelukast tablets**

This proposal received very strong support particularly from the College of Respiratory Nurses who welcomed having an alternative funded medication choice for patients suffering from chronic allergic rhinitis associated with a number of respiratory conditions such as cystic fibrosis, bronchiectasis and asthma. Paediatric respiratory nurses noted that it will be particularly useful for children with allergic rhinitis, as the usual combination of nasal spray and antihistamine loses its effect after a period of time.

#### **Proposal single use instruments and VTE Prevention Products**

The substance of the feedback received about this (and other consultations about single use instruments) concerned sustainability and what consideration PHARMAC gives to the environmental cost of producing, using, transporting and disposing of medications and medical devices and balancing the environmental costs of washing (reusable products - and decontamination (hot water, detergents, sterilization units etc.), compared with the costs of single-use products (packaging, disposal, etc.).

NZNO's understanding is that environmental sustainability is not specifically included in PHARMAC's fundamental "factors for consideration", though the health costs of unsustainable practises and potential co-benefits of action on climate change could be considered as part of the equation under the health benefit, costs and saving, and suitability factors. NZNO strongly recommends that PHARMAC considers and accounts for the environmental impact/costs of proposals in keeping with the national and international commitments to mitigate climate change

which significantly affect the health system and health outcomes for individuals, families and whānau and communities<sup>1</sup>.

Sustainability officers have been appointed in many district health boards (DHBs) and have initiated programmes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve sustainability in the health sector, including, for example, investigating the significantly variable environmental impact of different types of anaesthesia<sup>2</sup>. We hope that PHARMAC is an active participant and leader in developing and implementing initiatives to improve the sustainable management of medications and devices.

**Sustagen Hospital Formula list price increase and change to part charge**

<https://www.pharmac.govt.nz/news/consultation-2018-02-19-sustagen/>

The substantial cost increase from \$14.90 to \$26.00 for patients who do not meet special authority criteria is of some concern, but nurses recognised that it will affect only a very small number of people.

**Proposal to list orthopaedic implants and associated products supplied by Orthomed NZ Limited (and similar)**

The Perioperative Nurses College are comfortable with PHARMAC'S approach of having *non-exclusive* agreements with suppliers of orthopaedic products.

We trust the above is of interest.

Nāku noa, nā



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<sup>1</sup> Royal Society of New Zealand. (2017). *Human health impacts of climate change*. Retrieved <https://royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/our-expert-advice/all-expert-advice-papers/climate-change-and-health/>

<sup>2</sup> McMillan, V. 2017. Anaesthesia gases are climate culprit as much as they are patients' friend. 4 Nov, 2017 NZDoctor. Retrieved <https://www.nzdoctor.co.nz/article/news/anaesthesia-gases-are-climate-culprit-much-they-are-patients-friend>