

26 September 2024

Pharmac
PO Box 10254
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

By email to: consult@pharmac.govt.nz

Tēnā koe

Re: Proposal to fund lisdexamfetamine for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on PHARMAC's Proposal to fund lisdexamfetamine for the treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

The RANZCP is the principal organisation representing the medical specialty of psychiatry in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia and is responsible for training, educating, and representing psychiatrists. The RANZCP has over 8400 members, including more than 5900 qualified psychiatrists and is guided on policy matters by a range of expert committees, including Tu Te Akaaka Roa, the New Zealand National Committee.

Tu Te Akaaka Roa supports easier and more equitable access to assessments and treatment of ADHD for tāngata whai ora of all ages and welcomes Pharmac's decision to improve access and affordability of Lisdexamfetamine Dimesylate (Vyvanse) but recommends that special authorities are renewed every two years for young people under the age of 18.

As outlined in the RANZCP's [Position Statement 55: ADHD across the lifespan](#), psychostimulants should not be considered standalone treatments for ADHD, especially where comorbidities are present, but they play a key role in the effective management of the condition. Vyvanse has been shown to have similar therapeutic efficacy and a comparable release profile to methylphenidate extended-release (Concerta), making it an appropriate alternative for the treatment of ADHD. While funding Vyvanse may help ease local pressures on the supply of psychostimulants such as Concerta, Australia and other countries are experiencing similar shortages for Vyvanse and we recommend PHARMAC consider funding generic alternatives once they become available in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The RANZCP has endorsed the [AADPA Guideline](#) as the key resource to guide the assessment, management, and treatment of ADHD, including ongoing care. For any psychostimulant medication, it is important for prescribers to follow-up regularly and monitor:

- benefits of the medication,
- cardiovascular function and weight,

- potential adverse effect
- prescribing trend and risk of diversion

Tu Te Akaaka Roa is comfortable with the removal of the requirement for two-yearly specialist review for people with a formally established diagnosis whose symptoms are stable on regular treatment. However, we recommend that special authority renewal reviews be continued for all tamariki and rangatahi under the age of 18. Children grow and change, and so do their needs. Renewals ensure the benefits and risks of medications are more extensively considered, including changes in children's abilities to manage symptoms of ADHD with and without medication, adolescent-related increases in risk-taking behaviour, and risks of abuse or diversion of the medication. Additionally, special authority renewal reviews offer an opportunity for tamariki to gain understanding of the condition and treatment options and take a more active role in treatment decisions, as appropriate for their age and development. We recommend that for renewal reviews include:

- a confirmation of ongoing clinical symptoms and functional impairment, including clinical review to assess mental state.
- review of adverse effects, including monitoring of growth.
- reviewing comorbid health conditions and their management; and
- confirmation of individual consent or parental consent and child assent for continuation of medication.

Tu Te Akaaka Roa supports two-yearly medication reviews for children and young people being undertaken by a general practitioner with acceptable additional training, and nurse practitioners with support from specialist paediatricians or psychiatrists.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback; we look forward to working with PHARMAC in the future. If you have any further questions regarding this letter, please contact the New Zealand National Office - Tu Te Akaaka Roa via nzoffice@ranzcp.org or on +64 (0)4 472 7247.

Ngā manaakitanga



Dr Hiran Thabrew
National Chair, Tu Te Akaaka Roa

References