



The Royal New Zealand
College of General Practitioners
Te Whare Tohu Rata o Aotearoa

15 April 2025

Pharmac
Simpl House
Level 9/40 Mercer Street
WELLINGTON 6011

By email: Consult@Pharmac.govt.nz

Tēnā koe,

Pharmac proposal to fund two brands of oestradiol patches

The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (the College) is the largest medical college in Aotearoa New Zealand with a membership of 6,018. Our General Practice Education Programme (GPEP) and Rural Hospital Medicine Training Programme (RHMTTP) trains the specialist General Practitioner and Rural Hospital Doctor workforce. The Medical Council of New Zealand accredits the College to deliver a Vocationally Registered workforce through its Continuing Professional Development Programme, making up 40 percent of the specialist medical workforce.

The College is committed to prioritising the reduction of health inequities experienced by Māori, honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the rights of Māori. To do this we prioritise initiatives that support our members to develop cultural safety capability through all our Training, Member Professional Development and Quality programmes.

Our members provide medical care to patients and their whānau. Each year approximately 24 million¹ patient contacts are recorded in 1,077 general practice teams across Aotearoa. They deliver first point of contact care to effectively manage 90 percent of all patient healthcare concerns in the community.

Our submission

The College supports the proposal to fund more options for oestradiol, to help reduce barriers relating to access choice and cost for women across Aotearoa.

Oestrogen medication can help women with menopausal symptoms.² Increased options give women the ability to access other medication to meet their needs, if they experience side-effects from their current medication.³

Funding more options to reduce the impact of menopause will also reduce:

- Increased financial costs for changing medications or new prescriptions.
- The need for multiple GP appointments and increased time and costs for treatments.
- The well-being costs associated with changing treatments or stopping treatment due to contraindications.²
- Time off work due to adjusting to a new medication.⁴

Funding Oestradiol options will increase access to HRT, reduce the negative effects on patients, and support specialist GP to address the increasing demand for oestrogen medication to a greater number of women.

If you require further clarification, please contact Maureen Gillon, Manager Policy, Advocacy, Insights – Maureen.Gillon@rnzcgp.org.nz.

Nāku noa, nā



Dr Luke Bradford
BM(Hons), BSc(Hons), FRNZCGP
Medical Director | Mātanga Hauora

¹ Ministry of Health, 2024 data.

² MedSafe, 2023, *Hormone Replacement Therapy Guideline Update*, Accessible: <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/downloads/HRTNZGG.pdf>, [Accessed 02.04.25]

³ Healthify, 2024, Menopausal Hormone Therapy, <https://healthify.nz/medicines-a-z/m/menopausal-hormone-therapy/>, [Accessed 02.04.24]

⁴ Healthify, 2024, *Menopausal Hormone Therapy*, <https://healthify.nz/medicines-a-z/m/menopausal-hormone-therapy/>, [Accessed 14.08.24]

