



Nursing Council of New Zealand

cc: Pharmac
cc: New Zealand Society for the Study of Diabetes
cc: Ministry of Health

8 September 2023

Re: Registered Nurse Prescribers in Primary Health and Specialty Teams unable to prescribe Liraglutide.

In response to a global supply issue for Dulaglutide (brand name Trulicity), a treatment for type 2 diabetes, Pharmac made a decision to fund Liraglutide (brand name Victoza) as an alternative treatment in December 2022. Unfortunately Liraglutide is not on the Nursing Council New Zealand list of medications able to be prescribed by Registered Nurse Prescribers in Primary Health and Specialty Teams. Glucagon-like Peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP1RA), such as Dulaglutide and Liraglutide, are recommended second-line diabetes medications to be used in patients with existing cardiovascular or renal disease, or those at high risk of cardiovascular disease. Both Dulaglutide and Liraglutide have strong evidence in improving glycaemia, reducing mortality from cardiovascular events and renal disease progression, and lowering weight.

Recently, access to Dulaglutide has been extremely limited nationwide, with patients needing to be switched from Dulaglutide to Liraglutide. Given Registered Nurse Prescribers are currently unable to prescribe Liraglutide, this has created significant challenges, and reduced access to medication for patients with diabetes. Given the increased prevalence of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease in Maori and Pasifika populations, there is currently a significant barrier for these populations to continue accessing appropriate GLP1RA therapy.

Pharmac allows for any relevant health professional, including Registered Nurse Prescribers, to complete special authority applications for both Dulaglutide and Liraglutide, but the barrier then exists with Registered Nurse Prescribers being unable to prescribe Liraglutide. The Aotearoa College of Diabetes Nurses (NZNO) represents nurses working in diabetes health, and are eager to explore any timely options available to enable prescribing of Liraglutide, and being able to continue to provide evidence based appropriate care to patients with diabetes across Aotearoa. We would support a change in the Registered Nurse Prescriber medications list to be include a class name for Glucagon-like Peptide-1 Receptor Agonists, as is seen with insulin, to allow nurses to prescribe any future GLP1RAs that may become available in the future.

Signed for on behalf of the Aotearoa College of Diabetes Nurses.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda de Hoop'.

Amanda de Hoop
Chairperson - Aotearoa College of Diabetes Nurses (NZNO)
Nurse Practitioner - Diabetes & Endocrinology Service - Palmerston North Hospital