



# THE PAEDIATRIC SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

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On behalf of the Pharmacists and Therapeutics Special Interest Group of the Paediatric Society of New Zealand, I am asking that PHARMAC reconsider the position on funding the registered melatonin product, Circadin® 2mg, for children in New Zealand.

In 2014, we sent PHARMAC two submissions after consultation with Paediatricians around New Zealand. We received a letter dated 14 November 2014 stating that PHARMAC was 'not in a position to invest in melatonin in the current financial year'. However, we understand it is still an option and would like PHARMAC to reconsider its position in the current financial year.

There is still strong support amongst Paediatric Specialists in New Zealand for melatonin to be funded and they support this request for PHARMAC to reconsider the priority of funding melatonin 2mg modified-release tablets (Circadin®).

PTAC's August 2014 minutes '**recommend** that melatonin 2mg modified-release tablets (Circadin®) are listed in the Pharmaceutical Schedule for insomnia secondary to neurodevelopmental disorders in children and adolescents subject to Special Authority criteria'. Although this was given low priority at the time, we would ask that this is reconsidered. The Special Authority (SA) restrictions are still appropriate.

Please refer to our previous submissions and also the following links for information supporting funding melatonin for children with neurodevelopmental needs.

- The following article and letter to the editor reflect on the safety of melatonin dosing in children.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jpc.12840/abstract>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jpc.12963/full>

- There is need for research on the safety of long-term dosing of melatonin in children. This link refers to a trial currently being undertaken.

<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT01906866>

Although we highlighted the concern that proposed funding stopped at 18 years, we understand that the decision by PTAC not to recommend the funding of melatonin for patients older than 18 years is based on funded alternatives for this group as well as no funding application from Aspen for this group of patients. At this stage we would like PHARMAC to prioritise funding of melatonin as per the application from Aspen.

The general consensus of Paediatricians is that melatonin has a significant impact on families struggling with distressing insomnia of children with neurodevelopmental disorders. The proposed SA criteria would ensure that funded melatonin is appropriately prescribed. At this stage occasional NPPA funding and ACC funding have been approved but not for the majority of children. Circadin® 2mg modified-release tablets are the only registered melatonin available in New Zealand and to have these funded would support safe prescribing. The PTAC committee also recommended that the unregistered products should be removed from the HML and if 2mg modified-release tablets are funded for children and adolescents as above, we would support this recommendation.

We look forward to hearing from you in relation to this request.

Yours sincerely



Louise McDermott  
Chair  
Pharmacist and Therapeutics SIG  
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With support of:

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|---|-------------------------|
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| Dr Ross Wilson, CCDHB   | Dr Bobby Tsang, WDHB    |
| Dr Garth Smith, NMDHB   | Dr John Goldsmith, WDHB |
| Dr Philip Moore, HBDHB  | Dr Raj Maikoo, CMDHB    |
| Dr Robert Winkler, CCDHB                                      | Dr Janine Thomson, CDHB |
| Dr Vivienne Hobbs, BOPDHB                                     | Dr Ross Drake, ADHB     |
| Dr Kate Robertshaw, HBDHB                                     | Dr Rosemary Marks, ADHB |
| Dr David Jones, BOPDHB  | Dr Dawn Elder, SDHB     |