

Submission to the Medicines Classification Committee

Request for data on the potential health impact of adding tuberculin to the New Zealand Schedule as a prescription medicine

Tuberculin is currently classified in New Zealand as a prescription medicine under the class entry for antigens. According to the Medicines Act 1981, prescription medicines may be prescribed only on the prescription of authorised prescribers.

In Australia, up to 1 January 2011, tuberculin was captured by the Schedule 4 (prescription) class entry for antigens. However, from 1 January 2011 tuberculin has been listed individually in Schedule 4. This decision was intended to ensure clarity in interpretation and enforcement.

Medsafe considers that as tuberculin does not currently have an individual entry; it is possible that some stakeholders may not be aware of its status as a prescription medicine. Therefore, Medsafe considers that the inclusion of tuberculin under an individual classification entry as a prescription medicine in New Zealand is appropriate.

As tuberculin will remain a prescription medicine, ie there will be no change to its classification; there will be no new restrictions on its use. Therefore, it will still be possible for tuberculin skin tests to be administered by nurses under supervision and in accordance with standing orders.

In conclusion, Medsafe considers that there will not be any health impact due to the addition of tuberculin to the New Zealand Schedule as a prescription medicine.