

18 September 2019

Megs

Via email: fyi-request-11020-25594e6d@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Megs

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON PHENELZINE

Thank you for your request dated 21 August 2019 under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) for information relating to phenelzine sulphate (Nardil) supply. Your request was:

Can you please provide the below information urgently:

- 1) The current estimated supply in New Zealand of Phenelzine sulphate (both Nardil and alternative brand (Nardil S29))*
- 2) How long the current supply is forecast to last given the current situation*
- 3) Expected timeframe of the shortage*
- 4) Information regarding supply of Nardil S29 (my pharmacist advises that their supplier has the Nardil alternative as currently listed as out of stock with nil ETA). Why is this? What brands are the available alternatives? When does Pharmac expect for alternatives to be available?*

Additionally, can you please provide all information you hold on the current shortage of Phenelzine sulphate. I am interested in the cause, management, mitigation and resolution of the issue. This part of my request, while important, is non-urgent.

This request includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Any discussions, analysis, explanations or other information about the cause of the current non supply.*
- 2) Any briefings to any other agencies or Ministers on the current supply issues.*
- 3) All advice provided to doctors, pharmacists, pharmaceutical wholesalers, their professional organisations or any other medical professionals on the supply issues, guidance on alternatives, and their role in managing it.*
- 4) Any discussions, analysis, briefings or other information about decisions made to seek to source an alternative medication.*
- 5) Any discussions, analysis, explanations or other information about Pharmac's management of the current supply issue.*
- 6) All correspondence with the supplier, or their representatives or agents or related parties, about the resolution to the issue, the cause of the issue, and approaches to mitigating the impact of the issue.*

PHARMAC response

In response to your first four questions, the supplier of Nardil and Nardil s29, (Link Pharmaceuticals/Healthcare) has advised PHARMAC that it expects to be able to ensure the on-going supply of phenelzine sulphate. This will either be through the supply of the registered brand of Nardil, or via an unregistered (S29) brand of Nardil.

We understand that stock of Nardil S29 is currently available. Link advises that the resupply of the registered Nardil is likely to be in 3–4 months, although we consider that there is a risk that supply of the registered Nardil could be further delayed.

In response to question 3 of your second group of questions, PHARMAC included a news item on phenelzine supply in its regular communications to doctors and pharmacists (The Pharmaceutical Schedule Update) in May 2019. This is publicly available at <https://www.pharmac.govt.nz/2019/04/18/SU.pdf>.

For your other questions, our initial search has identified documents that we will have to consult with others on before we can release. Section 15A of the OIA allows an extension of the time limit for a response if consultation is necessary to make a decision on the request are such that a proper response to the request cannot be made within the original time limit.

This situation applies to your request. Accordingly, we are extending the due date for your request to **14 October 2019**. If we can provide the information prior to the expiry of this period, we will do so.

Please note you have the right, by way of complaint under section 28(3) of the OIA to an Ombudsman, to seek an investigation and review of our decision.

In the meantime, we hope that this information is helpful. We are making our information more freely available, so we will now publish selected OIA responses (excluding personal details) on our website. Please get in touch with us if you have any questions about this.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alison Hill".

Alison Hill
Director, Engagement and Implementation