



The Paediatric Society of New Zealand
Te Kāhui Mātai Arotamariki o Aotearoa



November 2025

Submission: Proposal to fund a new brand of methylphenidate hydrochloride (Rubifen LA)

From: Te Kāhui Mātai Arotamariki o Aotearoa | The Paediatric Society of New Zealand (PSNZ)

The PSNZ Paediatric Neurodevelopment Clinical Network appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on PHARMAC's proposal to fund Rubifen LA, a generic modified-release methylphenidate brand supplied by AFT Pharmaceuticals.

We support this proposal

Methylphenidate supply instability has created significant clinical challenges since September 2023. These ongoing shortages have resulted in treatment interruptions for young people with ADHD and narcolepsy, increased clinical burden on healthcare providers managing supply issues, and heightened pressure on whānau navigating access to essential medicines.

The addition of Rubifen LA provides a meaningful opportunity to strengthen supply resilience and reduce the risk of further treatment disruptions for our patient population.

Clinical Benefits and Equitable Care

As a bioequivalent generic to the currently funded Ritalin LA, Rubifen LA offers the same evidence-based pharmacological profile, with a modified-release formulation that supports once-daily dosing and improved adherence. The availability of multiple methylphenidate formulations, including this new option alongside Methylphenidate Sandoz XR (funded from December 2025), enhances our ability to provide individualised care tailored to young people's clinical needs and circumstances.

Choice in available options is essential for equitable healthcare delivery and helps remove barriers to accessing appropriate treatment.

Alignment with Policy Changes

This proposal appropriately prepares for the regulatory and funding changes to stimulant medicine prescribing in February 2026, ensuring adequate supply sources are available to support the anticipated increased demand and continued access to ADHD treatment pathways.

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Recommendation

The PSNZ Neurodevelopment Clinical Network recommends that PHARMAC proceed with funding Rubifen LA from 1 July 2026. We support this move to strengthen medication supply resilience, reduce treatment disruptions, and support equitable access to evidence-based ADHD treatment for young people across Aotearoa New Zealand

Ngā mihi nui,

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