

8 April 2015

Gregory Soar

Via email: fyi-request-2470-fb1aa848@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Gregory

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), which was transferred to PHARMAC on 9 March 2015 from the Ministry of Health.

You asked how much money is consumed by the use of Government subsidy for:

- All opiate based pain medication per annum;
- Opiate based pain medication per single one month script on average;
- How many scripts were written for opiate based medications in the last 12 months for which figures are available;
- All anxiety medication per annum;
- Anxiety medication per single one month script on average;
- How many scripts were written for anti-anxiety medications in the last 12 months for which figures are available;
- All anti-emetic medications per annum;
- Anti-anxiety medication per single one month script on average; and
- How many scripts were written for anti-emetic medications in the last 12 months for which figures are available.

Please find the requested data attached. The data provided is for the period from 1 February 2014 - 31 January 2015.

Please note that all data extracted for 'anti-emetic medications' only includes medications listed under the Antinausea and Vertigo agents therapeutic subheading, all data for anxiety medication only includes medications listed under the Anxiolytics Therapeutic Subheading and all data extracted for 'opiate based pain medication' is taken from medications listed under the Opioid Analgesics Subheading of Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule. You can find the Subheadings of the Pharmaceutical Schedule [here](#). There may be medications listed under other Subheadings that are also used for these indications, if there is a specific one that you are interested in please get back in touch.

It should be noted that all drug costs provided are gross costs and excluding GST. The information provided only includes subsidised medicines. PHARMAC does not hold private market data.

PHARMAC only possesses subsidised "drug cost" at the medication/chemical level. It should be noted that "drug cost" does not represent all the subsidised costs related to the drug use. For example, related pharmacy services costs subsidised by government are not included in the "drug cost", and PHARMAC does not possess complete data for "all the subsidised costs" related to the use of drugs at the medication/chemical level.

Additionally, each different medicine listed on the prescription form is considered a separate prescription.

We trust that the provision of these documents answers your queries, if you have any further questions please feel free to contact us again.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jude Ulrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Jude Ulrich
Director of Engagement & Implementation