

**5.19 METHOTREXATE,
Tablet 2.5 mg (as sodium)
Tablet 10 mg (as sodium),
Methoblastin[®],
PFIZER AUSTRALIA PTY LTD**

1 Purpose of Submission

- 1.1 The Category 4 submission requested a General Schedule (Unrestricted Benefit) listing of a new formulation of methotrexate, (methotrexate as sodium) 2.5 mg and 10 mg tablets (Methoblastin[®]) (MTX (as sodium) from herein) under the same circumstances as the PBS-listed methotrexate 2.5 mg and 10 mg tablets (Methoblastin[®]) (MTX from herein). The submission stated that the maize starch, polysorbate and pregelatinized maize starch excipients have been removed and that the presentation have changed from a bottle to a blister pack for the new formulation as a result of changes at the manufacturing site.
- 1.2 The submission also requested a new maximum quantity of 10 units and 5 repeats for the listing of MTX (as sodium) 10 mg 10-unit pack.
- 1.3 The sponsor has advised that, in addition to its request to list MTX (as sodium) on the PBS, it intends to delist the currently listed MTX on the PBS. The sponsor has been advised that a separate delisting request must be lodged via the Health Product Portal in order for the PBAC to consider delisting the currently listed MTX.

2 Background

- 2.1 MTX 2.5 mg, 30 pack and MTX 10 mg, 15 pack are currently listed as Unrestricted Benefit and the MTX 10 mg, 50 pack is currently listed as an Authority Required for patients requiring doses greater than 20 mg per week on the PBS.

Registration status

- 2.2 MTX (as sodium) was registered in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) on 28 August 2023.

Previous PBAC consideration

- 2.3 There were no previous submissions for this type of request in relation to MTX 2.5 mg and 10 mg.

3 Requested listing

- 3.1 The submission requested the listing of MTX (as sodium) under the same circumstances as the currently listed MTX.
- 3.2 The submission also requested a new maximum quantity and number of repeats for

Public Summary Document – July 2024 PBAC Meeting

the listing of MTX (as sodium) 10 mg.

3.3 The submission requested the following changes to the existing listing. Suggested additions are in *italics* and deletions are in ~~strikethrough~~.

MEDICINAL PRODUCT medicinal product pack	PBS item code	Max. qty packs	Max. qty units	No. of Rpts	Available brands
METHOTREXATE					
Methotrexate 10 mg tablet, 15	2272N	1	15	3	^a Methoblastin ^a Chexate ^a ARX-Methotrexate

Restriction Summary

Concept ID (for internal Dept. use)	Category / Program: GENERAL – General Schedule (Code GE)
	Prescriber type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nurse practitioners
	Restriction type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted benefit

MEDICINAL PRODUCT medicinal product pack	PBS item code	Max. qty packs	Max. qty units	No. of Rpts	Available brands
METHOTREXATE					
<i>Methotrexate 10 mg tablet, 10</i>	<i>NEW</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Methoblastin</i>

Restriction Summary

Concept ID (for internal Dept. use)	Category / Program: GENERAL – General Schedule (Code GE)
	Prescriber type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nurse practitioners
	Restriction type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted benefit

MEDICINAL PRODUCT medicinal product pack	PBS item code	Max. qty packs	Max. qty units	No. of Rpts	Available brands
METHOTREXATE					
Methotrexate 2.5 mg tablet, 30	1622J	1	30	5	^a Methoblastin ^a Chexate ^a ARX-Methotrexate
<i>Methotrexate 2.5 mg tablet, 30</i>	<i>NEW</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>5</i>	^a <i>Methoblastin</i>

Restriction Summary

Category / Program: GENERAL – General Schedule (Code GE)
Prescriber type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nurse practitioners
Restriction type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted benefit

MEDICINAL PRODUCT medicinal product pack	PBS item code	Max. qty packs	Max. qty units	№.of Rpts	Available brands
METHOTREXATE					
Methotrexate 10 mg tablet, 50	1623K	1	50	2	^a Methoblastin ^a Chexate ^a ARX- Methotrexate
<i>Methotrexate 10 mg tablet, 50</i>	<i>NEW</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>2</i>	^a <i>Methoblastin</i>
Restriction Summary 5648 / Treatment of Concept: 5648					
Concept ID (for internal Dept. use)	Category / Program: GENERAL – General Schedule (Code GE)				
	Prescriber type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nurse practitioners				
	Restriction type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted benefit				
Indication: Patients requiring doses greater than 20 mg per week					

3.4 The submission requested the listing for the MTX 10 mg, 10 pack with a maximum quantity of 10 units and a maximum of 5 repeats. It stated this was to align the quantity supplied under the new listing (60 units total across all repeats) with that of the existing listing of 15 units with 3 repeats (60 units total).

4 Comparator

4.1 The submission nominated MTX as the main comparator. The PBAC considered that MTX was the appropriate main comparator.

5 Consideration of the evidence

Sponsor hearing

5.1 There was no hearing for this item.

Consumer comments

5.2 The PBAC noted that no consumer comments were received for this item.

Pricing consideration

5.3 The prices of current MTX listing and the submission’s proposed prices for the new listing are shown in Table 1 and 2 respectively. The submission proposed an equivalent approved ex-manufacturer price (AEMP) of MTX (as sodium) to the existing AEMP of MTX. The submission noted that the proposed AEMP for MTX (as sodium) 10 mg, 10 pack has an equivalent price per tablet to the existing MTX 10 mg, 15 pack, but a lower price per pack as a result of smaller number of tablets in a pack.

Table 1: Prices of current MTX listing.

Brand	Name, form, strength	Max Qty Packs	Max Qty Units	No. of repeats	AEMP (\$)	Price per tablet ¹ (\$)	DPMQ (\$)
Methoblastin	MTX 10 mg tablet	1	15	3	11.25	0.75	25.09
Methoblastin	MTX 10 mg tablet	1	50	2	11.25	0.75	53.31
Methoblastin	MTX 2.5 mg tablet	1	30	5	5.42	0.18	18.82

¹ Price per tablet is calculated using the following formula: AEMP / Max Qty Units

Table 2: Proposed prices for the new listing of MTX (as sodium).

Brand	Name, form, strength	Max Qty Packs	Max Qty Units	No. of repeats	Ex-manufacturer Price (\$)	Price per tablet ¹ (\$)	DPMQ(\$)
Methoblastin	MTX (as sodium) 10 mg tablet	1	10	5 ¹	7.50 ⁴	0.75	21.05 ²
Methoblastin	MTX (as sodium) 10 mg tablet	1	50	2	37.50 ³	0.75	53.31
Methoblastin	MTX (as sodium) 2.5 mg tablet	1	30	5	5.42	0.18	18.82

¹The submission stated that the number of repeats for the 10 mg, 10 pack has increased from 3 in current listing to 5 to accommodate the smaller pack size. There has been no change to the total number of tablets per script for this PBS code i.e. 60 tablets. DPMQ based on 1 March 2024 fees and charges.

² DPMQ was amended to \$25.09 during initial evaluation. However, the pre-PBAC response reiterated that the DPMQ of MTX (as sodium) 10 mg, 10 pack should be \$21.05 as per sponsor's initial calculation (based on 1 March 2024 fees and charges), noting the listing has an equivalent price per tablet to the existing MTX 10 mg, 15 pack, but a lower price per pack as a result of smaller number of tablets in a pack.

³The proposed price is the PEMP rather than the AEMP. The PEMP is based on the 10mg, 15 pack (which is currently the lowest pricing quantity) AEMP \$11.25.

⁴ \$0.75 x 10 max qty units

Clinical claim

- 5.4 The TGA considered MTX (as sodium) and MTX to be bioequivalent (pg 7, TGA evaluation of responses).
- 5.5 The PBAC considered that the claim of non-inferior comparative effectiveness was reasonable.
- 5.6 The PBAC considered that the claim of non-inferior comparative safety was reasonable.

Estimated PBS usage and financial implications

- 5.7 The submission stated that the listing of MTX (as sodium) is anticipated to directly replace the currently listed MTX, as such, not likely to increase the overall utilisation of MTX on the PBS. The submission therefore estimated that the requested listing would have no financial impact to the PBS/RPBS.
- 5.8 Table 3 presented the estimated extent of use, cost of listing MTX (as sodium) and the net financial implications to the PBS/RPBS. The financial impact to Services Australia will be determined by that agency as part of the post PBAC process.

5.9 The submission estimated that the listing of MTX (as sodium) would result in a net save of \$0 to < \$10 million (Year 1 \$0 to < \$10 million to Year 6 \$0 to < \$10 million) to the PBS/RPBS over the next six years.

Table 3: Estimated use and financial implications.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Estimated extent of use						
Number of scripts dispensed ^a	¹	¹	¹	¹	¹	¹
Estimated financial implications of Methoblastin						
Cost to PBS/RPBS less co-payment	²	²	²	²	²	²
Net financial implications						
Net cost to PBS/RPBS	²	²	²	²	²	²

Abbreviations: PBS = Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; RPBS = Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Source: 'scripts - proposed', 'impact - affected' and 'impact – net' worksheets of 'Methoblastin UCM Workbook.xlsx'

The redacted values correspond to the following ranges

1 200,000 to < 300,000

2 net cost saving

5.10 The pre-PBAC response noted that the listing of a new pack size for MTX (as sodium) 10 mg, 10 pack would not result in a 1:1 substitution and would increase the total script volume. The pre-PBAC response revised the script equivalence to a substitution rate of 1.5. The pre-PBAC response further stated since the submission was lodged, two additional brands of MTX 10mg tablet, 15 pack have been listed on the PBS (Chexate and ARX-Methotrexate). The sponsor therefore estimated that a maximum of 20% of patients would be prescribed the new listing of MTX (as sodium) 10 mg, 10 pack.

5.11 Based on the revised financial estimates, the pre-PBAC response estimated that the new listing would result in a cost of \$0 to < \$10 million to the PBS/RPBS over the next six years. The revised financial estimates are provided in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Updated estimated use and financial implications from the pre-PBAC response.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Estimated extent of use						
Number of scripts dispensed ^a	¹	¹	¹	¹	¹	¹
Estimated financial implications of Methoblastin						
Cost to PBS/RPBS less co-payment	²	²	²	²	²	²
Net financial implications						
Net cost to PBS/RPBS	³	³	³	³	³	³

Abbreviations: PBS = Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; RPBS = Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Source: 'scripts - proposed', 'impact - affected' and 'impact – net' worksheets of 'Methoblastin UCM Workbook prePBAC.xlsx'

The redacted values correspond to the following ranges

1 200,000 to < 300,000

2 net cost saving

3 \$0 to < \$10 million

6 PBAC Outcome

- 6.1 The PBAC recommended a General Schedule (Unrestricted Benefit) listing of a new formulation of methotrexate, (methotrexate as sodium) 2.5 mg and 10 mg tablets (Methoblastin®) (MTX (as sodium)) under the same circumstances as the PBS-listed methotrexate 2.5 mg and 10 mg tablets (Methoblastin®) (MTX).
- 6.2 The PBAC also recommended a new maximum quantity of 10 units and 5 repeats for the listing of MTX (as sodium) 10 mg 10-unit pack. The PBAC considered that the new maximum quantity of 10 units with 5 repeats for MTX (as sodium) 10 mg appropriately aligned with the existing listing of 15 units with 3 repeats.
- 6.3 The PBAC noted that MTX (as sodium) was considered bioequivalent to MTX by the TGA. The PBAC considered that the claim of non-inferior comparative effectiveness and safety were reasonable.
- 6.4 The PBAC considered the proposed price of MTX (as sodium), which was based on the same price per tablet as the currently listed MTX, was appropriate.
- 6.5 The PBAC agreed with the pre-PBAC response and considered the minor cost to the PBS/RPBS reasonable, noting the listing of a smaller pack size of MTX (as sodium) 10 mg, 10 pack would not result in a 1:1 substitution and would increase the total script volume.
- 6.6 The PBAC noted 'a' flagging can only occur between listings with the same maximum quantity. As such, MTX (as sodium) 10 mg, 10 pack could not be directly a-flagged to MTX 10 mg, 15 pack. The PBAC noted 'a'-flagging would require formation of a new listing for 1.5 packs (15 units) of the MTX 10 mg, 10 pack which would incur additional broken pack fees as well as create potential for quality use of medicine issues.
- 6.7 The PBAC has therefore advised that, under Section 101(4AACD) of the *National Health Act 1953* (the Act), in the Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits:
- MTX (Methoblastin) 2.5 mg, 30 pack; MTX (as sodium) (Methoblastin) 2.5 mg, 30 pack, ARX-Methotrexate 2.5 mg, 30 pack and Chexate 2.5 mg, 30 pack should be treated as equivalent to each other for the purposes of substitution (i.e. 'a' flagged in the schedule)
 - MTX (Methoblastin) 10 mg, 50 pack; MTX (as sodium) (Methoblastin) 10 mg, 50 pack, ARX-Methotrexate 10 mg, 50 pack and Chexate 10 mg, 50 pack should be treated as equivalent to each other for the purposes of substitution (i.e. 'a' flagged in the schedule)
- 6.8 The PBAC noted that its recommendation was on a cost-minimisation basis and advised that, because MTX (as sodium) is not expected to provide a substantial and clinically relevant improvement in efficacy, or reduction of toxicity, over MTX, or not expected to address a high and urgent unmet clinical need given the presence of an alternative therapy, the criteria prescribed by the *National Health (Pharmaceuticals and Vaccines – Cost Recovery) Regulations 2022* for Pricing Pathway A were not met.

6.9 The PBAC noted that this submission is not eligible for an Independent Review as it received a positive recommendation.

Outcome:

Recommended

7 Recommended listing

7.1 Add new item:

MEDICINAL PRODUCT medicinal product pack	PBS item code	Max. qty packs	Max. qty units	No. of Rpts	Available brands
METHOTREXATE					
Methotrexate 10 mg tablet, 15	2272N	1	15	3	^a Methoblastin ^a Chexate ^a ARX-Methotrexate
Restriction Summary					
Concept ID (for internal Dept. use)	Category / Program: GENERAL – General Schedule (Code GE)				
	Prescriber type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nurse practitioners				
	Restriction type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted benefit				

MEDICINAL PRODUCT medicinal product pack	PBS item code	Max. qty packs	Max. qty units	No. of Rpts	Available brands
METHOTREXATE					
Methotrexate 10 mg tablet, 10	NEW	1	10	5	Methoblastin
Restriction Summary					
Concept ID (for internal Dept. use)	Category / Program: GENERAL – General Schedule (Code GE)				
	Prescriber type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nurse practitioners				
	Restriction type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted benefit				

MEDICINAL PRODUCT medicinal product pack	PBS item code	Max. qty packs	Max. qty units	No. of Rpts	Available brands
METHOTREXATE					
Methotrexate 2.5 mg tablet, 30	1622J	1	30	5	^a Methoblastin ^a Chexate ^a ARX-Methotrexate
Methotrexate 2.5 mg tablet, 30	NEW	1	30	5	^a Methoblastin
Restriction Summary					
Category / Program: GENERAL – General Schedule (Code GE)					
Prescriber type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nurse practitioners					
Restriction type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted benefit					

MEDICINAL PRODUCT medicinal product pack	PBS item code	Max. qty packs	Max. qty units	No. of Rpts	Available brands
METHOTREXATE					
Methotrexate 10 mg tablet, 50	1623K	1	50	2	^a Methoblastin ^a Chexate ^a ARX- Methotrexate
<i>Methotrexate 10 mg tablet, 50</i>	<i>NEW</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>2</i>	^a <i>Methoblastin</i>
Restriction Summary 5648 / Treatment of Concept: 5648					
Concept ID (for internal Dept. use)	Category / Program: GENERAL – General Schedule (Code GE)				
	Prescriber type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nurse practitioners				
	Restriction type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted benefit				
Indication: Patients requiring doses greater than 20 mg per week					

This restriction may be subject to further review. Should there be any changes made to the restriction the Sponsor will be informed.

8 Context for Decision

The PBAC helps decide whether and, if so, how medicines should be subsidised through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) in Australia. It considers applications regarding the listing of medicines on the PBS and provides advice about other matters relating to the operation of the PBS in this context. A PBAC decision in relation to PBS listings does not necessarily represent a final PBAC view about the merits of the medicine or the circumstances in which it should be made available through the PBS. The PBAC welcomes applications containing new information at any time.

9 Sponsor's Comment

The sponsor had no comment.