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Market and media release

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AFT welcomes new codeine medicine restrictions

AFT Pharmaceuticals (NZX; AFT, ASX; AFP) today welcomes Medsafe's decision to classify all medicines containing codeine as prescription medicines.

AFT Pharmaceutical's Managing Director Dr Hartley Atkinson said the New Zealand medicine regulator's decision was a good result not only for AFT, but also for the country. It would increase demand for AFT's patented pain relief medicine Maxigesic® and it would also reduce codeine overdoses and poisonings.

Dr Atkinson said: "Maxigesic was developed as a better alternative for pain relief than other combination painkiller products, particularly those containing codeine.

"In the 12 months after Australia rescheduled codeine containing medicines in 2018, sales of Maxigesic tablets increased by more than 50%. Meanwhile, the decision saw a large and significant drop in codeine poisoning calls and this drop began following the announcement and prior to legislative change¹.

"While Medsafe still has to set the timeframe and programme for the implementation of the new restrictions, it is clear that the harm that comes from access without a prescription to the medicine would now start to ease."

Dr Atkinson said although AFT expected the decision to drive an increase in Maxigesic sales, it was too early to make precise predictions on the extent of the uplift although some impact on Maxigesic sales in New Zealand would be expected during the FY21 financial year.

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Notes to editors:

¹ 'Codeine use and harms in Australia: evaluating the effects of rescheduling', *Addiction: Society for the study of addiction*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.14798>

Maxigesic® is a unique patented combination of paracetamol 500mg and ibuprofen 150mg that at full dose delivers a maximum OTC daily dose of paracetamol and ibuprofen [4000mg paracetamol and 1200mg ibuprofen per day]².

Medsafe released details of its decision taken at its October meeting yesterday and the minutes of the meeting are available ([here](#))

About AFT Pharmaceuticals

AFT is a growing multinational pharmaceutical company that develops, markets and distributes a broad portfolio of pharmaceutical products across a wide range of therapeutic categories which are distributed across all major pharmaceutical distribution channels: over-the-counter (OTC), prescription and hospital. Our product portfolio comprises both proprietary and in-licensed products, and includes patented, branded and generic drugs. Our business model is to develop and in-license products for sale by our own dedicated sales teams in our home markets of Australia and New Zealand and in certain Southeast Asian markets, and to out-license our products to local licensees and distributors to over 125 countries around the world.

² Maxigesic Data Sheet <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/profs/Datasheet/m/maxigesictab.pdf>