



**NEW ZEALAND MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

3 March 2010

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By email [Stephen.woodruffe@pharmac.govt.nz](mailto:Stephen.woodruffe@pharmac.govt.nz)

Dear Stephen

**Consultation on Special Foods**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

We are pleased to see that Pharmac are considering allowing general practitioners to apply for special authorities for food supplements, something we have requested for some time. We are also pleased with the guidelines for funding food supplements which are easy to follow.

However we have a couple of concerns. Firstly, we note that the initial application form for oral supplements requires that in order to make an application the doctor must first be able to state that the patient has had unintentional weight loss of greater than 10%. We believe that that level may be too high.

Secondly we believe that requiring a patient to trial an over the counter product for at least one month and only providing them with the oral supplement if there has been no weight loss, may be too harsh.

Yours faithfully

Dr Mark Peterson  
**Chair, General Practitioner Council**  
**NZMA**