



## MEDIA RELEASE

### NEW TREATMENT AVAILABLE TO NEW ZEALANDERS SEEKING A VIRAL CURE\* FOR HEPATITIS C<sup>1</sup>

- *MAVIRET<sup>®</sup> (glecaprevir/pibrentasvir) is a new once-daily treatment for adults with any genotype<sup>ϕ</sup> of chronic hepatitis C<sup>2</sup>.*
- *Approximately 50,000 New Zealanders living with hepatitis C are at risk of liver cancer and cirrhosis<sup>3</sup>.*
- *Up to half of New Zealanders living with hepatitis C don't know they have the virus<sup>4</sup>*

**Wellington**, 1 February 2019 – AbbVie (NYSE: ABBV) New Zealand today announced MAVIRET<sup>®</sup> (glecaprevir/pibrentasvir) is now available and fully funded by PHARMAC, giving New Zealanders living with all major genotypes of hepatitis C access to a high certainty of viral cure\*<sup>1</sup>.

MAVIRET<sup>®</sup> is a new, once-daily tablet treatment for adults with any major genotype of hepatitis C. Most people will only need to take MAVIRET for eight weeks<sup>5</sup>. The therapy contains two direct-acting anti-viral agents that work to block the lifecycle of the hepatitis C virus in a patient. Doctors consider a patient virologically cured of hepatitis C if the patient has undetectable levels of the virus 12 weeks after completing the treatment course.

There could be an estimated 50,000 New Zealanders living with hepatitis C and approximately 1,000 new infections every year<sup>2,4</sup>. Left untreated, hepatitis C can cause cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer<sup>3</sup>.

**Professor Ed Gane, chief hepatologist, transplant physician and deputy director of the New Zealand Liver Transplant Unit at Auckland City Hospital** said: "Chronic hepatitis C is an important cause of liver failure, liver cancer and liver-related deaths in New Zealand<sup>4</sup>. With early diagnosis and new treatments we could prevent hepatitis C-related illness and death in New Zealand<sup>4</sup>.

"The funding of new treatments takes New Zealand one step closer to eliminating hepatitis C as a public health threat and reaching the World Health Organisation target of global elimination of hepatitis C by 2030," he said.

**Andrew Tompkin, General Manager AbbVie New Zealand** said the funding of MAVIRET® would have a positive impact on the lives of many New Zealanders living with hepatitis C<sup>6</sup>, offering them a high certainty of cure from the virus\*.

“We have seen significant medical advancements in the development of hepatitis C medicines from the initial discovery of the virus in the 1980s, to the development and commercialisation of today’s direct-acting antivirals, which provide an opportunity to eliminate the disease in New Zealand within a generation.

“This new treatment option will mean more New Zealanders living with hepatitis C can be successfully treated.

“AbbVie is committed to helping eliminate hepatitis C by providing treatment options and supporting community elimination programmes across the world,” he said.

All medicines have adverse effects and may impact different people in different ways. In clinical trials with MAVIRET®, the most common adverse effects were mild in nature and included feeling tired, headache and nausea. Refer to the Consumer Medicines Information or your doctor or pharmacist for further information about MAVIRET®.

New Zealanders with hepatitis C are encouraged to see their doctor to have their liver health assessed and to discuss treatment options.

#### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT MAVIRET®**

MAVIRET is a fully funded prescription medicine with an alternative arrangement on how it will be available to you. Your prescriber will explain this to you.

MAVIRET® is an antiviral medicine containing a combination tablet of 100 mg of glecaprevir and 40 mg of pibrentasvir. It is used to treat chronic (long-lasting) hepatitis C virus (HCV) in adult patients. This medicine belongs to a group of medicines called direct-acting antiviral agents. Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why MAVIRET® has been prescribed for you. Normal doctor’s charges will apply.

**MAVIRET has risks and benefits.** You must not take MAVIRET® if you are allergic to any of the medicines contained in MAVIRET®, or to any of the inactive ingredients. Do not take it if you have severe liver disease; if you are taking atazanavir or rifampicin-containing products. Before you use MAVIRET®, tell your doctor if you have or have had liver problems other than hepatitis C infection, HIV infection, hepatitis B infection, or a liver transplant. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are pregnant, trying to become pregnant or if you are breastfeeding or are planning to breastfeed. Do not give MAVIRET® to a child under the age of 18 years. Some medicines and MAVIRET® may interfere with each other, so tell

your doctor if you are taking medicines containing any of the following: atorvastatin, simvastatin, pravastatin, rosuvastatin, lovastatin, carbamazepine, ciclosporin, darunavir, lopinavir, ritonavir, efavirenz, dabigatran, digoxin, ethinyloestradiol, fluindione, warfarin or other vitamin K antagonists, St John's wort. Tell your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you notice anything that is making you feel unwell. Some of the more common side effects of MAVIRET® include feeling very tired, headache and nausea.

**If you have any questions about using MAVIRET, including its risks and benefits, how much to use, how and when to use it, ask your healthcare professional or refer to the Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) available from the Medsafe website [www.medsafe.govt.nz](http://www.medsafe.govt.nz).** Ask your doctor if MAVIRET is right for you. If symptoms continue, or you have side effects, see your doctor, pharmacist or healthcare professional. Prepared August 2018, based on Consumer Medicine Information prepared in July 2018.

### **About AbbVie New Zealand**

AbbVie is a global, research and development-based biopharmaceutical company committed to developing innovative advanced therapies for some of the world's most complex and critical conditions. The company's mission is to use its expertise, dedicated people and unique approach to innovation to markedly improve treatments across four primary therapeutic areas: immunology, oncology, virology and neuroscience. In more than 75 countries, AbbVie employees are working every day to advance health solutions for people around the world. Our heritage in New Zealand reaches back more than 70 years and we employ passionate people who contribute to the company's vision of making a remarkable impact on patient lives. For further information please visit [www.abbvie.co.nz](http://www.abbvie.co.nz). Follow @abbvie\_NZ or follow us on [Facebook](#) or our [LinkedIn](#) page.

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### **References**

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