

## Guidance for funding requests for Complementary Medicines

Lifetime Care and Workers Care may consider funding for complementary medicines<sup>1</sup> relating to injuries sustained in the motor vehicle or work-related accident. For funding to be considered, the product must be clinically required, evidence-based, Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)-approved, and recommended by a dietitian or suitably qualified general practitioner, medical or surgical specialist. To be considered, there should be a plan for ongoing review.

For the purpose of this guidance, complementary medicines are non-prescription medicines that include ingredients such as vitamins, minerals, plant or herbal material, animal material, and nutritional substances. Complementary medicines are often an adjunct to standard treatment and therapy and should not replace medical treatments recommended by healthcare professionals.<sup>1</sup>

The following guidance has been developed to assist those submitting requests to provide information that allows Lifetime Care and Workers Care to understand the relationship to injury and clinical need. This guidance is not intended to capture those complementary medicines that are evidence-based and routinely used in Australia for the treatment of the respective motor accident or workplace injury. Please refer to Appendix 1: Exempt Complementary Medicines for those products that are exempt from this guidance.

### Requirements for funding requests

The funding request will need to provide supporting written documentation addressing all the following elements:

1. The product required, including pack size, daily usage, diagnosis of the problem requiring nutritional supplements and date of next review.
2. The item is indicated for a condition that the participant/worker has, and this condition must be the result of an accident-related injury. Specify in what manner it is related to the injury.
3. What is the aim of the treatment?
4. Has an assessment of the participant/worker's diet occurred to determine that they are deficient in these nutrients, and can the participant reasonably obtain these through a diet-based approach? If yes, the request should not be made. If no, please provide details of reasons (e.g. increased nutrient utilisation, biochemistry markers) and barriers (e.g. decreased appetite, early satiety, malnutrition).
5. Is there published peer-reviewed clinical evidence supporting the above aim for the condition listed at point 2? If the product:

A) contains **more than one active ingredient** (combination product) is there peer-reviewed clinical evidence supporting the use of this product, or comparable product, for this indication in humans?

Or, B) if the product contains a **single active ingredient**, does the evidence support either the precise product or that single ingredient at a comparable strength, for that indication?

**If the answer to A or B is no**, consider alternative options.

**If yes**, provide responses to the following questions.

<sup>1</sup> Therapeutic Good Administration, 'Complementary medicines overview', 20 June 2019, <https://www.tga.gov.au/complementary-medicines-overview>

6. What are the anticipated measurable benefits for the participant/worker? How will this be tracked?
7. What are the potential risks/harm to the injured person?
8. Will this product interact with any pre-existing medications/treatments?
9. What are the consequences for the injured person **if the treatment were not approved?**
10. What alternatives have been considered to the treatment being requested?
11. If the above criteria are not clearly met, please speak with the icare contact or case manager, consider alternatives, or reconsider the necessity of intervention.

### **If the item is approved:**

- The initial quantity approved is 1 month's supply. Repeats may be granted in line with the person's needs and stability of treatment to a maximum duration of 6 months.
- It is a requirement that the participant/worker be re-assessed after 6 months by a dietician and/or medical practitioner, to determine their ongoing need, and tolerance of the chosen supplement. Updated written documentation addressing ongoing consideration for funding is to be re-submitted to icare at this time.
- For supply of product, the approved supplement is dispensed by the participant/worker's preferred pharmacy.

### **If the item is not approved:**

- We may request further details to support the application or provide details of the reasons the item is not approved.

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## **Appendix 1: Exempt complementary medicines**

The following complementary medicine products are exempt from the additional level of evidence required in this guide as they are accepted by Lifetime Care and Workers Care as evidence-based and routinely prescribed in Australia for the treatment of the respective injuries. The following products continue to require a recommendation from a dietitian or suitably qualified general practitioner, medical or surgical specialist, including the indication for the product, and the relationship to injury:

### **Spinal Cord Injury:**

- Management of pressure areas
  - Arginaid
  - Vitamin C
  - Vitamin D
  - Zinc
- Urinary Health
  - Probiotics
  - Vitamin C
- Bone Health
  - Vitamin D

### **Orthopaedic injuries, Amputations, and other Trauma related injuries**

- Bone Health
  - Vitamin D