

PHARMAC

Pharmaceutical Management Agency

Media release

Review of PHARMAC OPPs underway

Government drug-funder PHARMAC has begun consultation over proposed changes to its Operating Policies and Procedures.

The Operating Policies and Procedures (OPPs) is the document that sets out how PHARMAC undertakes its business of managing government expenditure on pharmaceuticals. They were last reviewed in 2000-01 by PHARMAC, and by former Minister David Caygill and Canadian academic Joel Lexchin.

Chief Executive Wayne McNee says the OPPs have served PHARMAC well and the proposed changes represent only minor amendments to reflect the changing roles of the agency.

These include incorporating the provisions for hospital pharmaceuticals into the main OPPs document, and giving more flexibility to the wording of some sections to accommodate and new roles or functions the Minister of Health may give PHARMAC in the future.

“Essentially we are taking the opportunity to update what is one of our key foundation documents,” Wayne McNee says.

“When these were last revised, there was no indication we might take on additional functions such as managing hospital pharmaceutical spending. By giving more flexibility to the document’s wording we can in effect future proof the OPPs to take into account any further activities the Minister decides.”

Consultation is now underway and submissions are being received until 6 May 2005.

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