

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title: PTAC MEMBER

Reports to: PTAC CHAIR

Date: JUNE 2009

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

PTAC (Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee) is a committee of senior health practitioners with expertise in clinical pharmacology, internal medicine and general practice. The primary purpose of PTAC is to provide PHARMAC with objective advice on pharmaceuticals and their benefits.

More detail on the role of PTAC can be found in the Guidelines for the Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee (PTAC) and its Sub-committees 2002.

PHARMAC'S OBJECTIVE

PHARMAC's objective is to secure for eligible people in need of pharmaceuticals the best health outcomes that are reasonably achievable from pharmaceutical treatment and from within the amount of funding provided.

PTAC FUNCTIONS

To perform its primary purpose, PTAC is to:

- Consider and make recommendations to PHARMAC on applications for the listing and de-listing, restricting and de-restricting of pharmaceuticals on the Pharmaceutical Schedule that have been referred to it by PHARMAC.
- When requested by PHARMAC, consider and make recommendations to PHARMAC on proposals for defining, removing or amending a therapeutic group or sub-group of pharmaceuticals on the Pharmaceutical Schedule.
- Review, monitor and from time to time make recommendations to PHARMAC in relation to the management of the Pharmaceutical Schedule.
- Subject to the prior agreement of PHARMAC, initiate its own reviews of any policy adopted by PHARMAC in relation to the management of the Pharmaceutical Schedule, and provide reports or make recommendations to PHARMAC arising from those reviews.
- Make recommendations to PHARMAC on the information that should be provided by pharmaceutical suppliers in support of applications for the listing of pharmaceuticals on the Pharmaceutical Schedule.

- Consider and report, or make recommendations, to PHARMAC on any other matters that may be referred to it by PHARMAC.

Decision criteria

In performing its functions, PTAC is to take into account, where applicable, the following:

- The health needs of all eligible people within New Zealand;
- The particular health needs of Maori and Pacific peoples;
- The availability and suitability of existing medicines, therapeutic medical devices and related products and related things;
- The clinical benefits and risks of pharmaceuticals;
- The cost-effectiveness of meeting health needs by funding pharmaceuticals rather than using other publicly funded health and disability support services;
- The budgetary impact (in terms of the pharmaceutical budget and the Government's overall health budget) of any changes to the Pharmaceutical Schedule;
- The direct cost to health service users;
- The Government's priorities for health funding, as set out in any objectives notified by the Crown to PHARMAC, or in PHARMAC's Funding Agreement, or elsewhere; and
- Such other criteria as PTAC thinks fit.

KEY ROLE REQUIREMENTS

Review of applications/submissions:

Members of PTAC are expected, prior to the meeting, to have:

- critically appraised all the papers and information provided in the applications/submissions to be considered by the committee; and
- analysed the subject and formed a professional view of the strengths and weaknesses of the application.

All members are required during meetings to provide their view on each subject under consideration based on the available scientific evidence. They are also required during meetings to be prepared to discuss issues related to these subjects with other members in a professional and constructive manner, to enable the committee to reach its recommendations to PHARMAC.

Following the meeting all members are expected to contribute to the minute finalisation process.

PTAC's meetings are usually held in Wellington at least four times a year. Meetings are 1 ½ - 2 days long and generally require 20 – 40 hours of preparation time. Members are also expected to sit on and chair two or three subcommittees of PTAC.

ACCOUNTABILITY

PTAC and its subcommittees are accountable at all times to PHARMAC and the Director-General of Health.

RELATIONSHIPS

Members of PTAC work primarily with the PTAC Chair, other PTAC members, the PTAC Secretary, the PHARMAC Medical Director and other PHARMAC staff. Members will also work closely with PTAC Subcommittee members.

In the event that a member wishes to discuss their role or any concerns about the conduct of the Committee or governance issues, they should in the first instance speak with the PTAC Chair. Alternatively they may raise concerns with the PHARMAC Medical Director.

IDEAL PERSON SPECIFICATION

The member should be in active clinical practice and ideally have:

- an interest and expertise in childrens' medicine; and/or
- seniority in their area of practice.

Applicants should also ideally have:

- excellent critical appraisal skills;
- a good general knowledge of medicine and pharmaceuticals;
- at least five years experience in their vocational field;
- good presentation skills;
- the ability to work constructively in a group and accept consensus decision-making;
- the ability to work with a budget and make decisions under pressure;
- the ability to differentiate between an individual and societal perspective on issues; and
- a good understanding of evidence-based medicine in clinical practice.

Relevant association with other Ministerial Committees, such as MAAC or MARC may also be considered.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of PTAC will be required to comply with any statements of confidentiality obligations issued by PHARMAC and will, if required, sign confidentiality undertakings in the form required by PHARMAC. Members will be prohibited from speaking to the media in relation to the activities of PTAC and any matters discussed, or considered by PTAC, at PTAC meetings unless they have the prior agreement of the PTAC Chair and PHARMAC's Medical Director.

Members will be required to store material relating to any pharmaceutical in a secure place, until a final recommendation has been made by PTAC for consideration by PHARMAC's Board.

After PTAC has made a final recommendation, members must either return the information about that pharmaceutical to PHARMAC or undertake to destroy that information.

Members will endeavour to use all opportunities available to them to gain information from colleagues so as to enable PTAC to make the most informed judgement possible. Although the material on the agenda is confidential (as are the proceedings of the PTAC), members may reveal their interest in a product to gain information from colleagues on its use, efficacy, adverse effects etc.

Once minutes of meetings are finalised, members may discuss with colleagues matters considered at the meeting but only on a general basis and only to the extent of the contents of the official minutes. Any invitation from the media to comment on matters considered by PTAC must be previously discussed with the PTAC Chairman, PHARMAC's Medical Director and PHARMAC's media liaison advisers.

Members shall not report to their professional association without the knowledge and agreement of the PTAC Chair.

REMUNERATION

Members are to be paid for their reasonable costs incurred for attendance at meetings and time spent preparing for meetings. The current rate for PTAC members is \$95 per hour, up to \$600 for a full day.

PHARMAC will cover travel and accommodation expenses for members to attend meetings, but does not cover travel time or locum costs.

PTAC Members are entitled to a Conference and travel Allowance of \$5000 per year, accruable for up to two years, for professional development.