

Minutes of the PHARMAC Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting Friday 08 April 2022

The meeting was held via zoom from 9.30 am.

Present:

Lisa Lawrence Chair
Leslie Robinson
Hazel Heal
Nele Kalolo
Robyn Manuel
Sione Vaka
Mary Schnackenberg
Vivien Verheijen
Janfrie Wakim

Apologies:

PHARMAC staff in attendance:

Peter Alsop (Director Engagement and Implementation), Janet Mackay (Manager Implementation Programmes), Mako Osborne (Graduate Implementation Advisor)

For relevant items: Megan Nagel (Senior Implementation Lead), Danae Staples-Moon (Manager, Device Strategy and Development), Allannah Andrews (Manager, Policy and Government Services), Stephen Tat (Senior Policy Advisor), Angela Cathro (Kaiwhakahaere Te Whaioranga - Manager Te Whaioranga), Jannel Fisher (Manager, Communications and External Relations)

1. Karakia and Welcome

The meeting was opened with a karakia.

2. CAC Chair update/ Board meeting report

The Chair noted the review of the risks of the te Tiriti application as a standout paper at the March Pharmac Board meeting. She noted it is moving to a performance improvement piece and that the CAC's advice had been absorbed and used in the analysis.

3. Action items / notes from previous meeting / interest register

Action items

The action items were reviewed.

Notes from previous meeting

Notes for the March meeting were approved as a true record of discussions.

Interest register

Noted. No new interests to declare.

4. Pharmac Verbal Update

Pharmac's Director, Engagement and Implementation updated the CAC on:

- The extension of the term of the CAC Chair for a further year, and reappointment of four CAC members. Letters confirming this will be sent to all affected members over the coming week.
- COVID-19 treatments – new medicine, Paxlovid, now available for use in the community. Pharmac will be looking at uptake of treatments to ensure appropriate equitable access.
- Influenza vaccine – widening of access to include Māori and Pacific aged 54 – 65 years.
- Continued acknowledgement of the Pharmac review. We will share with members more detail about this as soon as we're able.
- Continued proactive media approach with 8 proactive releases during March.
- OIA statistics for Pharmac between July and December 2021 – all 80 requests were responded to on time and 76 of those shared on Pharmac website. Members were very pleased with this result and extended their warm praise to Pharmac.
- Pharmac has a new Board member, Diana Siew, who has significant experience in medical devices and bioengineering.

5. Hospital medical devices

Pharmac staff provided an induction and overview of Pharmac's medical devices programme and the current projects underway. The broad range of engagement and work over the past ten years was noted.

Pharmac currently has two streams of work underway with medical devices:

1. National contracting for hospital devices - There is currently no national list of all the devices that hospitals use so Pharmac is building a common list that all public hospitals will buy from, all with standard terms and conditions for all hospitals. There are currently around 150,000 items under contract that equates to approximately \$450 million per year of spend.
2. Developing the future approach – Pharmac is developing the systems and processes needed to centrally manage the medical devices list, including additions to the list, changes to the list, and managing any future budget.

Pharmac staff noted that 65% of hospital devices are under a Pharmac contract. Members praised Pharmac for transparency in being able to see the medical devices and costs on the website.

Pharmac staff noted that most of the engagement to date has been with procurement and clinicians within hospitals, as well as medical device suppliers. This has been because the input that Pharmac has been seeking to date is more relevant to their work, than it has individual consumers.

Pharmac staff noted that there are plans to engage more widely with consumers about Pharmac's medical device work programme and what it may mean to them. We are keen to seek CAC's feedback on the way Pharmac talks about medical devices, to ensure it is meaningful and appropriate for a general public, consumer audience.

Members were provided with some draft messaging for their consideration and feedback.

Members noted that the language was simple, clear, concise, and easy to understand. Members also noted that although the overlap between public and private will always be grey due to funding, the fact it is brought up and placed beside scope is good example of transparency.

Some suggestions for the messaging included:

- Using examples and short concise sentences
- Using animation, images and verbal communication to address low literacy levels
- Be upfront and transparent
- A simplified document to be used in communities
- Engage with external stakeholders and communities

Members noted that ongoing engagement will be critical for this work. Pharmac staff reiterated getting engagement from a range of technical expertise and seeking further input from Māori and Pacific peoples and other communities will all be needed as the future process progresses.

Pharmac staff noted there will be a broader consultation in future. Members noted that it was important to have support for those who will be impacted most by any consultation and the potential impacts that Pharmac's role may have.

Members noted the importance of knowing who the consumer of a device is, which can be more than just the patient. Consumers will care most about how their everyday life will be impacted at home. It will be necessary to take into consideration a patient's family and caregiver to provide appropriate support with any future changes.

Members were encouraged to sign up for Pharmac's device newsletter, Device Advice, for regular updates on the devices programme of work: <https://pharmac.govt.nz/hospital-devices/device-advice/>

Action: CAC members to provide feedback on the medical devices messaging document to cac@pharmac.govt.nz by next meeting (scheduled for 13 May 2022).

6. Poroporoaki

A poroporoaki for departing member, Tui Taurua, was held.

7. Draft te Tiriti policy update

Pharmac staff gave an update on the progress of Pharmac's draft te Tiriti policy. CAC members provided feedback on a previous iteration of the draft policy in December 2021.

Pharmac staff noted that the draft policy has been about setting expectations while the Pharmac is also building capacity internally. Will Workman¹ has been supporting Pharmac in the development and review.

¹ Will Workman is a business consultant specialising in Māori social and economic policy, and is the managing director of Pānuī, providing information and analysis on Māori social, treaty and economic policy matters.

Next steps will be incorporating the feedback from Will Workman, and for Pharmac's Māori caucus to discuss and provide feedback. The policy will also go through Pharmac's Māori Advisory Rōpū for further critical analysis.

Pharmac staff noted that as this is Pharmac's first te Tiriti policy, there will be an intention to review regularly, especially in rapidly changing health system. The policy will set a direction and support staff. Pharmac staff noted there are no hard timeframes for policy completion – this is about the process to do things right.

Members agreed with the shift in language to be about what is right, noting the importance of pulling away from legislative language. Members were also excited to see mātauranga Māori.

Members were pleased to see critical Tiriti analysis and to addressing racism and its impact on Māori health. Members had questions around implementation and were updated that all of SLT had attended Anti-racism training with Associate Professor Heather Came. There is further training planned to embed this practice and critical Tiriti analysis further.

Members noted that some of the language needed to be looked over to ensure consistency and mindfulness of Māori who read it. It was also noted that the policy should encourage critical thinking rather than just telling someone what they should do.

Members noted they were happy to be part of and contributing to this important kaupapa for Pharmac.

8. Paediatric Oncology Treatments

Pharmac staff gave an overview of rule 8.1b of the Pharmaceutical Schedule. Under this rule, District Health Board hospitals may give any pharmaceutical use within a paediatric oncology/haematology service for the treatment of cancer. This is a 'legacy' rule and Pharmac staff noted that we haven't articulated well why the rule should or should not exist. The planned two-stage consultation is to help understand the environment the rule exists within and determine if there is an issue. The first consultation may, or may not, result in a proposal to change to the rule. There would be a second consultation on any proposals for change.

Members noted that although the rule was not equal, it did provide equitable outcomes – therefore the rule itself is equitable. Members also noted the importance of prioritising children.

Members noted things to consider included whether there was the ability for pharmaceutical companies to 'abuse' the rule and the line between paediatrics and adolescents. Members also noted that Pharmac should be mindful of timing should there be any changes to the rule.

Members noted that most Māori are aged under 25 and there needs to be higher considerations of these implications. Members suggest that biology be a marker point rather than a calendar age.

Members noted that Pharmac should focus on paediatric oncologists' opinions and knowledge here given this was their area of expertise.

Members in general were supportive of the rule as it was currently.

9. 'You are a priority' Campaign

Pharmac staff gave an overview of the 'You are a priority' campaign which promoted the ethnicity-based funding criteria for the newly funded type 2 diabetes medicines. The primary aim of the campaign was to test channels for engaging with Māori audiences and to improve Māori perceptions of Pharmac. The campaign ran from July to December 2021.

The campaign achieved high levels of engagement and media 'impressions'. Pharmac staff noted that the success was attributed by taking a by Māori for Māori approach. Pharmac has a desire to run another similar campaign and members were asked for their feedback.

Members suggested that Pharmac continue focus on Māori to build on what has been achieved. The recent widening of access to influenza vaccine was suggested as a potential topic.

Members noted that digital media communications could be affected by age. Members also noted that grassroots activities, such as churches and community groups, may be a better approach for some communities, such as Pacific.

10. Karakia and meeting close

The meeting was closed with a karakia.