

Minutes of the PHARMAC Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting

Friday 14 December 2007

The meeting was held at PHARMAC, 14th floor, Cigna House, 40 Mercer St, Wellington from 9.30am.

Present:

Sandra Coney	Chair
Matiu Dickson	CAC member
Dennis Paget	CAC member
Heather Thomson	CAC member
Kuresa Tiumalu-Faleseuga	CAC member
Sharron Cole	CAC member

Apologies

Vicki Burnett	CAC member
Te Aniwa Tutara	CAC member
Paul Stanley	CAC member

In attendance:

Fiona Rutherford PHARMAC (CAC Secretary)

Steffan Crausaz, Dilky Rasiah, Adam McRae, Marama Parore, Matthew Brougham, Peter Alsop, and Simon England (PHARMAC Staff) attended for relevant items.

1. Minutes of October 2007 meeting

Subject to the changes agreed, the minutes of the October 2007 meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Coney/Dickson carried

2. Action points

- The Committee noted that PHARMAC had provided to CAC:
 - the Gout publication
 - a copy of the full polypharmacy report
 - an optimal use think-piece
 - information on Maori attendance at early-childhood education centres
 - business cards for those members who attended the consumer summit
 - a copy of the Pacific Responsiveness stocktake report
- The Committee noted that its commendation of the decision to match the Betaloc price increase was conveyed to the Board.
- The Committee noted that it received in the meeting:



- an update on the Maori Health team work and the next planned meeting of the Maori caucus
- information about the intended roll-out process for One Heart Many Lives
- more people-oriented CAC branding imagery
- consumer guidelines and a cover-letter for the consultation process.
- The Committee asked that it be provided with information on Pacific Peoples' use of diabetes test strips if the information is available.
- The Committee noted that the CAC Chair had attended the PTAC meeting as an observer.

3. Correspondence

The Committee noted the correspondence from uLearn' n' Care and agreed on a response to the letter.

4. Chair's report

The Chair's report noted that the Committee had provided the Ministry of Health with comment on a draft Medicines Strategy document in November.

The Committee noted that the Board has agreed that the CAC Chair should attend Board meetings as an observer.

The Chair's report was received by the Committee.

Paget/Dickson

5. Debrief on PHARMAC Forum

The Committee discussed their perception of the PHARMAC Forum. Key points noted during the discussion were:

- The majority of participants thought that the Forum was a good idea.
- PHARMAC's hosting of the Forum demonstrated the organisation's increasing understanding of its social duty
- The role of PHARMAC staff in such a Forum is to listen to attendees points of view rather than defend the organisation's position.
- The Forum attendees should be representative of the community - more consumer groups and more Maori stakeholders should be invited to attend future forums.
- There was a lack of participant understanding of PHARMAC's role in health promotion activities and that this was reflected in attendees' responses to the access and optimal use session.
- PHARMAC should make greater efforts to explain why it is involved in access and optimal use work.
- PHARMAC needs to be clear with participants about what the outcomes of the Forum will be.
- the College of General Practitioners suggested to a Committee member at the Forum that they meet to discuss the Committee's role.



The Committee resolved to recommend that:

- 1) a broader range of consumer and community organisations be invited to future PHARMAC Forums, and
- 2) PHARMAC seek the Committee's advice on who should be invited to future Forums when the invitation list is being developed.

Coney/Dickson

6. Debrief on Consumer Summit

The Committee discussed the Consumer Summit that two Committee members had attended in November 2007. The Committee noted that attendees had differed between the first (2005) and second Summits which presented a challenge in terms of bringing the new attendees up to speed. The Committee also noted the attendees at the second Summit represented a smaller group of consumers than the first Summit.

The Committee noted that work is continuing, and this includes defining what a consumer organisation is and whether disability groups want to be involved.

7. Stakeholder perspectives: staff education on living with various conditions

The Committee discussed PHARMAC's approach to educating staff on people's experiences of living with various conditions. PHARMAC has invited a number of people to come into PHARMAC to talk to staff about their conditions.

The Committee suggested that PHARMAC consider whether ethical approval is needed, and ensure that the education sessions are safe for the potentially vulnerable people who are sharing their experiences. The Committee also suggested that PHARMAC should approach consumer groups, rather than individual consumers, to identify the people who are best equipped to participate in the education sessions. The Committee encouraged PHARMAC to be clear with consumers about the purpose of the session to ensure that expectations on both sides are met.

The Committee commented that PHARMAC should consider what the consumers get out of the experience. The Committee suggested that PHARMAC consider providing information to the people who speak at the education sessions to take back to their constituencies.

The Committee suggested that PHARMAC staff could travel to different locations to hear the perspectives of a broader range of groups.

The Committee suggested that PHARMAC consider education sessions with people with chronic pain, people who live in rural communities (whose experience of the impact of funding decisions differs to those in urban areas), older people (by visiting a rest-home), and Maori people.

Overall, the Committee supported this initiative continuing.



8. Chair's debrief on PTAC attendance

The Chair provided the Committee with her impressions of the PTAC meeting she attended. On the basis of this account, the Committee agreed that proposing that a consumer representative be able to sit on PTAC would not be the best way to ensure that consumer's views are considered when decisions are being made. The Committee considered that a better approach would be to consult with consumers on funding applications and that PHARMAC proactively provide information to people on how they can make submissions.

The Committee noted that there would be benefits from greater diversity in PTAC and also recognised that this would always be influenced, in part, by who applied for PTAC membership.

9. Funding application process

The Committee provided PHARMAC with comments on possible changes that would provide consumers with opportunities to comment earlier in the funding application process. The Committee emphasised the need for clear information for consumers about how they can provide input into decisions.

The Committee commented that it has a strong interest in commenting on any new processes for consumer involvement as they are developed.

10. Discussion with the Chief Executive

Consumer summit debrief

The Committee provided its views on the PHARMAC Forum and requested that it reviews the consumer mailing list to identify whether there are any consumer organisations that should be included and currently are not.

The Committee also asked to see the action plan arising from the Forum so that it could comment on those actions relating to consumer engagement.

The optimal role of the Consumer Advisory Committee

The Committee commented that it best adds value to PHARMAC's work at the formative stages of PHARMAC's projects and it is important the Committee is systematically included at this point. The Committee discussed the implications of PHARMAC staff providing it with more information to comment on in between meetings to ensure the Committee is involved early in projects.

The Committee suggested that PHARMAC should broaden consumer involvement by engaging with a wider range of consumer groups. The Committee suggested that it can assist PHARMAC to identify the groups that PHARMAC needs to talk to about specific medicines.

The Committee commented that role clarity is essential. The Committee noted that it thinks it is appropriate that it does not attempt to represent consumers' views in relation to individual funding applications because this is achieved through submissions from consumer



groups. The Committee commented that this has not been clearly set down in writing and as a result there has been confusion about its role.

The Committee also thought it would be good to debate and clarify the rationale behind the appointment of Committee members. Currently, the Committee provides a perspective rather than acting as a group of representatives of the public.

The Committee discussed the importance of seeking views on the Committee's Terms of Reference, and suggested that PHARMAC consider the method for consultation.

11. PHARMAC Online

The Committee considered PHARMAC Online and the resources that are likely to be made available through this mechanism over time. The Committee suggested ways that the website could be made consumer friendly – including the use of clear and simple language.

12. Pacific strategy

The Committee discussed the need to state a clear rationale for the Pacific strategy and noted that many aspects of the Maori responsiveness strategy are also relevant for Pacific people.

The Committee discussed the desirability of having a strategy to ensure the access and optimal use activities that are already occurring are having the greatest possible positive impact on Pacific communities. The Committee suggested that a timeline for the development and implementation of the strategy be provided for the Committee.

The Committee suggested that PHARMAC work with the 7 DHBs (and associated primary health organisations) that have significant Pacific populations to support and enhance the existing activities.

The Committee resolved to support the approach to developing the Pacific responsiveness strategy outlined in the staff report. The Committee sees this work as a high priority for PHARMAC and considers that PHARMAC should work towards the appointment of a position for a specific Pacific manager. In the meantime, the Committee supports the designation of a specific senior person or persons within PHARMAC who is/are given responsibility for developing the strategy.

Dickson/Coney

13. Access and optimal use update

The Committee was provided with information on a range of access and optimal use topics that it requested at its last meeting.

The Committee agreed to the inclusion, on the July meeting agenda, of a paper seeking the Committee's views on A & OU priorities. This information would contribute to the budget round for 2009/10.



The Committee discussed whether a resource (a book or game) on asthma could be provided directly to children with asthma. This would be in addition to the resources that PHARMAC plans to provide for parents of children with asthma.

The Committee discussed consumer representation on the asthma technical advisory group. CAC suggested that a representative of the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation should be included on the group and this person should be asked whether they think the Foundation is adequately represented.

Formulary development

The Committee supported the idea that the formulary be used as a source of information for consumers. The Committee suggested that if this approach was taken, a consumer representative should be included on the consortium responsible for overseeing the development of the formulary. The Committee suggested that the RFP could require prior experience in developing consumer information, or that this could be contracted for separately.

The Committee noted that the consortium would need to consider the kind of information that would meet the needs of consumers and that this information would need to go beyond what is provided in medicine datasheets. The Committee also commented on the need to consider how consumers would access the information (online, through an independent website, from pharmacies etc). The Committee suggested that PHARMAC may want to convene a small group to work through the issues associated with the development and provision of consumer information.

Branding CAC

The Committee asked for further work to be done on branding for CAC.

Information sheets for consumers

The Committee provided feedback on information sheets for consumers on a range of topics relating to PHARMAC's role and operations. The Committee asked that the information sheet that describes the Committee's role makes it clear that the Committee does not comment on individual funding decisions.

Consultation on Guidelines

The Committee suggested changes to the text of the guidelines for health consumer organisations entering into health industry sponsorship. The Committee agreed to the distribution list for consultation on the guidelines and the wording of the cover letter. The Committee asked that the guidelines be distributed as early as possible in the New Year.



Signed

Henry

Date

7/3/08