PHARMAC
TE PĀTAKA WHAIORANGA

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Some information may have been redacted for reasons including confidentiality

Pharmaceutical Management Agency (Pharmac)

Minutes of Virtual Board Meeting

Held on Tuesday 24 June 2025 at 9.00am

At Pharmac Offices, Wellington

Present:

Board members

Paula Bennett	Chair
Talia Anderson-Town	Board member
Lucy Elwood	Board member
Dr Margaret Wilsher	Board member (via Teams)

Apologies

Dr Peter Bramley	Deputy Chair
Anna Adams	Board member
David Hughes	Director, Advice and Assessment/CMO and Acting Director, Corporate – Analysis

Board Observers

Rhiannon Braund	Board Observer, PTAC Deputy Chair
Robyn Manuel	Board Observer, CAC Chair (via Teams)

Pharmac staff in attendance

Brendan Boyle	Acting Chief Executive
Catherine Epps	Director, Medical Devices and Acting Director Corporate – ICT and Business Services
Michael Johnson	Director, Strategy, Policy & Performance and Acting Director, Corporate - Financial Services
Geraldine MacGibbon	Director, Pharmaceuticals
Nicola Ngawati	Director, Equity & Engagement
Trevor Simpson	Kaituruki Maori - Director Maori
Jacqui Webber	Board Secretary (Minute taker)

Attendees joined the meeting to present relevant papers: Jayne Watkins, Jannel Fisher, Hannah Burgess, Emma Clarke, Matt McKenzie and Saar Cohen-Ronen.

The Chair requested that we write to Malcolm Mulholland to congratulate him on his King's Birthday honour.

1. Directors Only time

The Board held *Board Only* discussions, prior to formally commencing the meeting.

Welcome and Opening of Meeting

Following Directors only time, the Chair welcomed everyone and formally opened the meeting at 9.35am.

2. Chair's Report

2.1 Chair's Verbal Update

The Chair provided an update on recent activities.

2.2 Minutes of Board meetings

The Board **resolved** to **adopt** the minutes of the meetings held on 27 May 2025, subject to minor amendments.

2.3 Interest Register

The Board **noted** the interest register.

3. Acting Chief Executive's Report

The Acting Chief Executive took the report as read and there was a wide ranging discussion on the paper.

The Board **noted** the:

- Chief Executive's report for May 2025
- Senior Leadership Team Engagement Calendar
- financials for May 2025, as presented to the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee
- Chief Executive's activities since the last meeting.

4. Key Items

[redacted]

[redacted]

4.2 2022 Independent Pharmac Review Recommendations

This paper sought Board approval to close out reporting against the 2022 Independent Pharmac Review. A summary report has been developed, providing a status update and summary of progress against the Pharmac Review report recommendations.

The Board:

noted the updated progress against all recommendations made in the 2022 Independent Pharmac Review

noted that a number of workstreams have subsequently been aligned to new Government expectations that supersede the 2022 Pharmac Review

agreed to provide a briefing to the Associate Minister of Health, and pending Ministerial support, publicly release the summary of progress against 2022 Pharmac Review recommendations.

Action: Provide a briefing to the Associate Minister of Health on the recommendations.

4.3 Proposed approach for Pharmac Reset Programme

This paper set out Pharmac's proposed approach to a 12-month organisational reset and next steps. The Board and staff had a wide ranging discussion on the paper.

The Board:

endorsed the proposed aim, principles, and workstreams for the 12-month reset programme

noted that an external process has commenced to appoint the Chair of the new consumer working group, to support the Reset Programme

noted the next step is to work with the consumer working group and staff to prioritise and scope actions and create the first 90-day work plan

noted that staff will provide an update to the Board at its July meeting, including the first 90-day plan.

Action: Provide an update to the July Board meeting.

4.4 Access Criteria Policy

This paper provided the Board with an update on work that has been undertaken to formalise our policy position for the use of access criteria within the Pharmaceutical Schedule (the Schedule). The paper outlined how Pharmac is responding to government priorities and considers opportunities, risks, implementation and next steps.

The Board **noted** that:

- the Access Criteria Policy formalises our policy position for the use of access criteria within the Pharmaceutical Schedule as noted in this paper
- the Access Criteria Policy aligns with recent legal advice provided to the Minister and endorsed by the Board on sections 6 and 7 of the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act, 2022 and Pharmac's 2024/25 Letter of Expectation
- the approach outlined in the Access Criteria Policy involves defining the target population and setting broad, descriptive access criteria to find the target population in practice
- this approach will guide future funding decision making and when current Pharmaceutical Schedule listings are under review.

4.5 Initial options for developing Budget 2026 medicines budget bid

This paper provided initial thinking on options that staff were seeking Board feedback and comments on, to inform progress over coming months to support a Budget 2026 medicines budget bid.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Action: Provide an update to the Board in September.

4.6 2025/26 Statement of Performance Expectations

This paper presented Pharmac's 2025/26 Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE) for Board approval.

The Board:

noted that feedback on the 2025/26 Statement of Performance Expectations has been received from the Associate Minister of Health and Ministry of Health

noted the intended changes following the feedback received

approved the 2025/26 Statement of Performance Expectations

noted that following Board approval, the 2025/26 Statement of Performance Expectations will be provided to the Associate Minister of Health.

4.7 Legal Report for June – Legally Privileged

The General Counsel joined the meeting and provided a verbal update to his paper.

The Board **noted** the legal update.

5. Strategy & Policy

5.1 Medical Devices Programme Update

This paper served to update the Board on the Medical Devices programme and how Pharmac plans to maintain momentum in the uncertain environment, eg exploring how we can progress with the consultation in a way that supports system-wide benefits. Additionally, the paper highlighted significant resourcing constraints that could impact the programme's quality, timelines and stakeholder engagement. It sought the Board's assessment and guidance on balancing progress with risk mitigation, in an evolving environment.

The Board and staff had a robust discussion on the topic.

The Board **noted**:

- that by 1 July 2025, the Medical Devices Programme will have a comprehensive list that represents the medical devices hospitals are using
- that the ongoing external review creates uncertainty around the future state of the medical device programme and the challenge this creates around maintaining momentum in closing the list
- we will continue to progress the programme as we can, including through external engagement and increasing commercial activity to optimise purchasing from the comprehensive list and deliver immediate value to the health system
- that without securing additional budget to maintain resource levels, Pharmac will likely need to modify the engagement and consultation approach. This decrease in programme activity may compromise both the quality of work and adherence to critical timeframes, thereby exposing Pharmac to reputational risks, particularly as we transition towards a closed list environment.

6. Schedule & Funding

6.1 Pharmaceutical transactions report

The purpose of this paper was to provide the Board with an advanced overview of current issues relating to pharmaceuticals funded through the medicines budget, including current significant supply issues and the contentious, large or significant pharmaceutical transactions that staff are currently progressing.

The Board **noted** the:

- update on:
    - the large and/or significant medicines transactions that are currently planned or in progress
    - work to change the consultation process for the annual tender
    - upcoming public consultations and decision notifications
- summary of decisions made under Delegated Authority during May 2025.

6.2 Proposal to make more contraceptive devices and implants available on a PSO

This paper sought a decision from the Board on a proposal to make levonorgestrel intra-uterine devices available on a practitioner's supply order (PSO) and to increase the amount of levonorgestrel subdermal implants available on a PSO.

The Board, having regard to the decision-making framework set out in Pharmac's Operating Policies and Procedures:

resolved to add the PSO quantity in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 August 2025 (additions in **bold**):

LEVONORGESTREL
Intra-uterine device 52 mg (Mirena) **– Up to 25 dev available on a PSO**
Intra-uterine device 13.5 mg (Jaydess) **– Up to 10 dev available on a PSO**

resolved to amend the PSO quantity in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 August 2025 (additions in **bold**, deletions in ~~strikethrough~~):

LEVONORGESTREL
Subdermal implant (2 x 75 mg rods) (Jadelle) – Up to **40**~~6~~ impl available on a PSO

resolved to move levonorgestrel intra-uterine device 52 mg and levonorgestrel intra-uterine device 13.5 mg from the Hormone Preparations – System Excluding Contraceptive Hormones Therapeutic Group – Other Progestogen Preparations subgroup to the Progestogen-only Contraceptives Therapeutic Subgroup of the Genito-Urinary System Therapeutic Group in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 August 2025

noted that extensive consultation on this proposal was undertaken. This decision was delayed so staff could fully and carefully consider all responses.

6.3 Proposal to support access to budesonide with eformoterol inhalers

Margaret Wilsher acknowledged a conflict for this item as she prescribes these items and did not participate in the decision.

This paper requested a decision from the Board on a proposal to enable all-at-once (three-monthly) dispensing for some presentations of budesonide with eformoterol inhalers and also making them available on a practitioner's supply order (PSO).

The Board, having regard to the decision-making framework set out in Pharmac's Operating Policies and Procedures:

resolved to apply stat dispensing to the following presentations of budesonide with eformoterol in the Respiratory System and Allergies Therapeutic group, Inhaled Corticosteroids with Long-Acting Beta-Adrenoceptor Agonists therapeutic subgroup in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 August 2025 as follows (additions in **bold**):

BUDESONIDE WITH EFORMOTEROL	
❋ Powder for inhalation 160 mcg with 4.5 mcg eformoterol fumarate per dose (equivalent to 200 mcg budesonide with 6 mcg eformoterol fumarate metered dose)	$41.50 120 dose OP ✓ DuoResp Spiromax
❋ Aerosol inhaler 100 mcg with eformoterol fumarate 6 mcg	$18.23 120 dose OP ✓ Vannair
❋ Powder for inhalation 100 mcg with eformoterol fumarate 6 mcg	$33.74 120 dose OP ✓ Symbicort Turbuhaler 100/6
❋ Aerosol inhaler 200 mcg with eformoterol fumarate 6 mcg	$21.40 120 dose OP ✓ Vannair
❋ Powder for inhalation 200 mcg with eformoterol fumarate 6 mcg	$33.74 120 dose OP ✓ Symbicort Turbuhaler 200/6

resolved to apply the PSO rules to the following presentations for budesonide with eformoterol in the Respiratory System and Allergies Therapeutic group, Inhaled Corticosteroids with Long-Acting Beta-Adrenoceptor Agonists therapeutic subgroup in Section B of the Pharmaceutical Schedule, from 1 August 2025 as follows (additions in **bold**):

BUDESONIDE WITH EFORMOTEROL	
❋ Powder for inhalation 160 mcg with 4.5 mcg eformoterol fumarate per dose (equivalent to 200 mcg budesonide with 6 mcg eformoterol fumarate metered dose) – **Up to 120 doses available on PSO**	$41.50 120 dose OP ✓ DuoResp Spiromax
❋ Aerosol inhaler 100 mcg with eformoterol fumarate 6 mcg – **Up to 120 doses available on PSO**	$18.23 120 dose OP ✓ Vannair
❋ Powder for inhalation 100 mcg with eformoterol fumarate 6 mcg – **Up to 120 doses available on PSO**	$33.74 120 dose OP ✓ Symbicort Turbuhaler 100/6
❋ Aerosol inhaler 200 mcg with eformoterol fumarate 6 mcg – **Up to 120 doses available on PSO**	$21.40 120 dose OP ✓ Vannair
❋ Powder for inhalation 200 mcg with eformoterol fumarate 6 mcg – **Up to 120 doses available on PSO**	$33.74 120 dose OP ✓ Symbicort Turbuhaler 200/6

noted that extensive consultation on this proposal was undertaken and all responses have been carefully considered.

6.4 Medical Devices Transaction and Investment Report

This paper updated the Board on progress with medical devices national contracting activity.

The Board **noted** the:

- update on progress with medical devices contracting activity
- comprehensive list consultation has resulted in over 26,000 items being added to the Pharmaceutical Schedule
- summary of decisions made under Delegated Authority during May 2025 by the Director, Medical Devices.

7. Regular Reporting

7.1 Communications and Government Services Report

This paper summarised recent communications and government services activity and the impact of their work.

The Board **noted**:

- that five media releases were distributed in May and communications planning is underway for a range of upcoming internal and external matters

- a draft proactive release policy has been approved by the Pharmac Senior Leadership Team
- that the plain language work programme was focussed on reader centred writer training in May.

8. Record of previous Committee meetings

8.1 Record of Previous Meeting(s)

The Board **noted** and **endorsed** the minutes of the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 23 May 2025.

8.2 Summary of May 2025 Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting

This paper informed the Board of advice received from the CAC at the 7 May in person meeting.

The Board **noted** the:

- minutes from the May CAC meetings
- summary of key issues across the meeting.

9. Governance matters

9.1 Board and Committee Member Terms and Meeting Attendance Register

The Board **noted** the:

- Board and Committee member terms; and
- Meeting Attendance Register.

9.2 Board Correspondence

The Board **noted** the correspondence sent / received for the prior month.

9.3 Board Actions

The Board **noted** the Board Actions.

9.4 Matters Arising

The Board **noted** the Matters Arising schedule.

9.5 Board Annual Agenda for 2025 and 2026

The Board **noted** the Board Annual Agenda for 2025 and 2026.

9.6 Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

The Board **noted** the Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations.

10. General Business

The meeting closed at 12.20pm.

Date of Next Meeting: 29 July 2025

Paula Bennett, Chair Date