

Minutes of the Consumer and Patient Working Group Meeting Monday 21 July 2025

The meeting was held in person from 10am to 1pm at the Pharmac offices.

Present:

Dr Malcolm Mulholland (Chair)
Libby Burgess
Tim Edmonds
Chris Higgins
Francesca Holloway
Trent Lash (via Teams online)
Gerard Rushton
Tracy Tierney
Deon York

Pharmac staff in attendance

Jannel Fisher (Reset Programme Manager)
Sarona Iosefa (Reset Programme Engagement Lead)
Saar Cohen-Ronen (General Counsel, Legal)

Apologies

Rachel Smalley (Deputy Chair)

1. Whakawhanaungatanga

Everyone introduced themselves with a photograph to explain their “why” for being part of the newly formed Consumer and Patient (CAP) working group.

2. Declarable Interests

General Counsel advised members on how Pharmac records and manages declarable interests. There was a discussion on the multiple roles members have and potential perceived conflicts. General Counsel left the meeting.

3. Terms of Reference

Discussion about the purpose and scope of the CAP working group and if the three workstreams listed in the terms of reference were broad enough to enable the group to support the wider Pharmac reform. The three workstreams being: (1) strategic vision; (2) enhancing consumer engagement and trust, and (3) better processes.

It was clarified and agreed that the scope of the CAP working group includes both the formal Reset Programme, and the wider reform of Pharmac. This aligns with the recommendations of the Prendergast Report.

Reset Programme Manager advised how the 12-month reset would inform and influence the future 4-year improvement programme.

Motion:

A motion was moved that the CAP working group approves the terms of reference with the agreed changes and to publish them. There was unanimous agreement (yes).

Agreed actions:

- Remove reference to the CAP working group not being involved in the operations of Pharmac in the terms of reference.
- Insert reference to supporting the wider Pharmac reform in the purpose and scope sections of the terms of reference.
- Remove sub-bullet points under the three workstreams in the scope section of the terms of reference.
- Change name of group to the Consumer and Patient Working Group to reflect wide makeup and representation of the group.
- Publish the updated terms of reference on the Pharmac website.

4. Reset Programme Approach

Discussion about the roles and responsibilities of the CAP working group, including decision making for the reset programme. It was noted that the CAP working group Chair is part of the reset programme governance group.

Members also discussed the role of the CAP working group and Pharmac's existing Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC). Concern was raised about work being duplicated or the two groups working at cross purposes.

Members noted that Pharmac can't shy away from the "too hard" items and that while some of this work may not be delivered in the reset programme it needs to be considered for the future 4-year improvement programme.

Motion:

Reset programme approach paper was noted by members as background information.

Agreed actions:

- Update the roles and responsibilities table so the CAP working group is "consulted" not "informed" on decision making.
- As action items for the reset programme are scoped, provide clarity on the role and responsibilities of the CAP working group and CAC.
- Capture action items that could form part of the future 4-year improvement programme.

5. First 90-Day Plan

Reset Programme Manager presented the draft first 90-day plan. The actions are based on recommendations from the consumer engagement workshop report and focus building trust with consumers and quick wins.

Agreed actions:

1. Establish consumer working group to support the reset programme
2. Formalise consumer network to support wider consumer input

3. Expand Pharmac's engagement function to strengthen consumer relationships
4. Publish an update on progress with the Pharmac Review recommendations
5. Provide advice on the 2026/27 budget bid
6. Provide advice on the Pae Ora legislation amendment
7. Develop a joined-up communications planning approach
8. Clinical meeting recommendations.

Discussion about progress with last year's Pharmac Letter of Expectations and previous review recommendations, measuring progress and impact of each action, and advocating for change outside the role of the CAP working group.

Members prioritised which of these actions they wanted to focus on first. Members agreed the first five to focus on working with Pharmac on were:

1. Provide advice on the Pae Ora legislation amendment
2. Provide advice on the 2026/27 budget bid
3. Progress on the Pharmac Review recommendations and 2024/25 Pharmac Letter of Expectations
4. Clinical meeting recommendations
5. Develop a joined-up communications planning approach.

Reset Programme Manager spoke about the importance of defining the problem to then work on designing the solution together, which was supported and reinforced by the Chair.

Motion:

A motion was moved that the CAP working group accepts the 90-Day Plan approach. There was unanimous agreement (yes).

Agreed actions:

- The next CAP working group meeting to focus on the Pae Ora legislation, including previous advice and timeframes for current amendments.
- Members to provide the reset programme team with key contacts to start forming the consumer network database.
- Regular reflection time scheduled into meetings to enable frank discussions on achievements so far, and value add as a group.

6. Meeting approach

Members agreed to begin with fortnightly meetings to make progress on the action plan, but it was noted the frequency may reduce in the future. Members agreed to use subgroups, as needed, to address specialist issues and to meet timeframes. Members also asked for quarterly face to face meetings to be considered.

Discussion about what information can be shared prior to meetings and following meetings with wider networks. Members requested that meeting minutes be provided as quickly as possible rather than waiting for the next meeting.

Motion:

A motion was moved that the CAP working group accepts the proposed meeting approach. There was unanimous agreement (yes).

Agreed actions:

- Poll to be sent out to members to confirm future online meeting dates, before the dates for face-to-face meetings are confirmed.
- Meeting papers to note if they can be discussed with wider networks prior to the meeting
- Add agenda item to agree what can be shared from the meeting and what is released publicly
- Draft minutes to be provided to members within three days of the meeting and members to review and approve minutes within three days of receiving them, before Chair approves release publicly on Pharmac website.
- Future meeting packs to have page numbers and Pharmac details on page one.

Close of meeting 1pm.