

**Minutes of the
Pharmac Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
Wednesday 6 August 2025**

The meeting was held via teams from 09:30 am.

Present:

Robyn Manuel (Chair)
Vivien Verheijen
LJ Apaipo
Hazel Heal
Pui-Yi-Cheng
Jesse Davis

Pharmac staff in attendance

Director Equity and Engagement
Manager, Equity and Engagement
Implementation Advisor
Therapeutic Group Manager
Senior Therapeutic Group Manager
Senior Advisor, Government Services
Team Leader, Government Services
Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance
Reset Programme Manager
Engagement Lead, Reset Programme

Apologies

Georgina Johnson

Karakia

The meeting was opened with karakia.

1. Interest register / notes from previous meeting / action items

Interest register

Noted.

Notes from previous meeting

Notes from the July 2025 meeting was approved as a true record of discussion, following minor amendments.

Action items

The action items were reviewed.

Membership terms

The membership terms were reviewed.

Professional development report back

No update.

Actions

- (1) Check with Team Leader, Communications about what can be done to communicate CAC's impact externally.*
- (2) Clarify the different pathways members can seek reappointment to the committee.*

2. CAC Chair update

The Chair provided an overview of the last Board meeting which included updates on the Equity Policy, Te Tiriti Policy, pharmaceutical budget and spending and the establishment of the Consumer and Patient Working Group.

3. Potential progesterone capsules procurement process

Therapeutic Group Manager gave an overview of a potential procurement process for progesterone capsules and sought feedback on the engagement and implementation approach.

Members suggested listening to users to understand what does and doesn't work and recommended using inclusive language and clear messaging to explain what is happening and why. Members highlighted the importance of having genuine and transparent engagement and asked whether Pharmac has a framework in place to ensure meaningful engagement to diverse communities.

Members also noted the value of data in identifying which groups should be prioritised for engagement and suggested leveraging local champions to connect with communities at a grassroots level.

4. Draft proactive release policy

Senior Advisor, Government Services provided background on the proactive release policy which aims to support transparency and connect with the Pharmac Reset/Change Programme.

Members welcomed the move to plain language and sought clarification around the extent of its use. Senior advisor, Government Services acknowledged that plain language should be used throughout and noted it will be used as much as a reasonable given resource constraint.

Members discussed accessibility and having plain language summaries of health technologies. Members also raised questions about how policy decisions are shaped by the needs of populations experiencing the greatest health disparities.

Recommendation: Pharmac does its utmost to ensure all external information is in plain language so consumers and patients can effectively engage in and understand Pharmac's work.

5. Reset programme update

Reset Programme Manager outlined the actions for the first 90-day plan of the reset programme and sought feedback on the role CAC may play.

Members noted they would like to contribute to the consumer network action, emphasising the importance of reaching as many communities as possible.

Reset Programme Manager noted that they are developing an interim Customer Relationship Management system and welcomed CAC's involvement.

Director Strategy, Policy and Performance provided background on the work carried out by Pharmac to consider potential amendments to the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022.

Members noted that budget considerations and eligibility criteria are significant barriers to equitable medicine access. Members were supportive of removing reference to the fixed budget in Pharmac's statutory objective. Members highlighted that the consumer advisory committee structure needs to be more clearly defined to ensure there is some protection and diverse voices are being heard.

Director Strategy, Policy and Performance noted that clearer definitions of eligibility criteria had been suggested. While the size of the budget is determined by the Minister and Cabinet, there are other mechanisms to adjust it.

Director Strategy, Policy and Performance further explained that the current language in the legislation is intentionally broad to enable flexibility and avoid constraints from being overly descriptive.

6. Summary information templates for patients

The Chair provide background on the plain language summary of information to support patient group involvement in Health Technology Assessment.

The committee was supportive of the approach and considered it a useful resource for patients and patient groups to more easily engage in Pharmac's technology assessment process.

Recommendation: Pharmac trials use of plain language summary information templates for patients.

7. Pharmac verbal update

Director Equity and Engagement gave a verbal update:

- Ongoing recruitment including vacancies for a new consumer relations team within the Equity and Engagement directorate.
- Update on the process to increase committee fees which includes developing a paper with the Ministry of Health to be considered and approved by Cabinet Committee.
- Last month, 19 staff participated in a two-day engagement practice training based on the IAP2 Australasia design and plan engagement framework.

- A decision has been made to disestablish the Māori directorate and move to a devolved model of Māori responsiveness across the organisation.
- The Te Tiriti Policy and Equity Policy are in the final consultation phase with staff and the PSA before being considered further by the Chief Executive and Pharmac Board.
- Director Equity and Engagement is doing outreach at the School of Pharmacy in Dunedin.

Actions

(3) Publish CAC agendas on the Pharmac website.

Committee only time was held.