

**Minutes of the
Pharmac Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
Wednesday 10 September 2025**

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

Present:

Robyn Manuel (Chair)
Vivien Verheijen
Pui-Yi-Cheng
Jesse Davis
Georgina Johnson

Pharmac staff in attendance

Director Equity and Engagement
Manager, Equity and Engagement
Implementation Advisor
Therapeutic Group Manager
Therapeutic Group Manager
Principal Advisor, Pharmaceutical Funding
Policy Team Manager
Policy Advisor
Reset Programme Manager

Apologies

Hazel Heal
LJ Apaipo

Karakia

The meeting was opened with karakia.

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

Interest register

Noted. Members raised new interests.

Notes from previous meeting

Notes from the August 2025 meeting was approved as a true record of discussion.

Action items

The action items were reviewed.

Membership terms

The membership terms were reviewed.

Professional development report back

No update.

2. CAC Chair update

The Chair noted there was no August Board meeting.

The Chair provided an overview of the upcoming 'Valuing life' summit to be hosted by Patient Voice Aotearoa and Medicines New Zealand, the patient and citizens interest group project work, and the last Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee and Consumer Governance Group meetings.

The Chair also mentioned that the 2026 Health Technology Assessment International meeting is being held in Turkey and that there is funding support available to attend.

3. Pharmac verbal update

Director Equity and Engagement gave a verbal update:

- Several roles in the Equity and Engagement Directorate have been filled, including a new Communications Advisor, Senior Implementation Advisor and Manager External Engagement for the new Consumer Relations team.
- New Corporate Services Director appointed on a 12-month fixed term to lead Pharmac's corporate functions.
- New Chief Executive starts 15 September.
- Pharmac is working with Health New Zealand and Ministry of Health to work out roles in relation to medical devices going forward.
- Following the disestablishment of the Māori Directorate, staff have been redeployed across the organisation.
- Pharmac hosted Japan's Institute for Health Economics and Policy, a non-profit endorsed by the Japanese Ministry of Health that provides research and advice on health policy. The delegation visited as part of their research into New Zealand's health system.
- Director Equity and Engagement met with the National President of Grey Power NZ Federation and Marlborough Secretary to update them on various workstreams underway to support consumer and patients' groups.
- Several Pharmac staff attended the Medical Technology Association of New Zealand event at the Beehive. The event was a chance for medical device companies to showcase their latest innovations.

Members asked whether there has been engagement with any rangatahi groups. Director Equity and Engagement noted that Pharmac is looking to grow and broaden its consumer network.

4. Competitive procurement process – prostate cancer treatments

Therapeutic Group Manager provided background on a potential procurement process for prostate cancer medicines and sought advice on the engagement and implementation approach.

Members noted the importance of managing public expectations and suggested prioritising consumer engagement and community outreach, supported by clear, meaningful messaging and robust feedback mechanisms.

Members also mentioned looking at the wider impact on patients and how it affects communities, particularly rural communities.

5. Proposal to consult on the concept of Pharmac declining items from the bottom of the OFI

Principal Advisor, Pharmaceutical Funding provided background on a proposal to start declining funding applications that have been low ranked on the Options for Investment (OFI) list for a while and are unlikely to be funded and sought feedback on the idea.

Members were broadly supportive but noted that it was important to understand the impact of declining medicines, particularly on vulnerable people. Members noted that communications need to be managed carefully as there is risk of criticism and negative perception from the public.

6. Horizon Scanning

The Manager Policy and Policy Advisor provided an update on Pharmac's early work to develop a horizon scanning approach.

Members expressed interest in the sustainability and environmental impact of future health technologies and suggested establishing a mechanism for reporting back when partnering with stakeholders.

It was noted that the objective should be to set an 'equitable' horizon scanning approach, rather than 'most equitable', and that the policy team should be appropriately resourced to support this work.

Members noted that horizon scanning has the potential to become a strategic tool for advancing equitable access to future health technologies. Members highlighted the importance of aligning this work with Health NZ - Te Whatu Ora's national service planning and equity strategies.

Manager Policy highlighted that horizon scanning must be consistent and sustainable and will require a system-wide approach.

7. Reset programme update

Reset Programme Manager provided an update on the Reset programme team and outlined the approach for developing future 90-day plans for the programme to ensure they are aligned with consumer expectations and operational realities.

Members asked how the team will ensure voices from marginalised groups are heard. Reset Programme Manager noted that each action will have its own plan that will ensure the right people are involved in developing solutions.

Actions

(1) Members to send Reset Programme Manager contacts to add to the consumer register.

Committee only time was held.