



133 Molesworth Street
PO Box 5013
Wellington 6140
New Zealand
T+64 4 496 2000

13 October 2022

s 9(2)(a)

By email: s 9(2)(a)
Ref: H2022013005

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 19 September 2022 regarding information on the Manatū Hauora website relating to puberty blockers. Please find a response to each part of your request below.

1) Internal communications relating to this change in the information present on this page of the website.

Seven email chains have been identified within the scope of this part of your request. These are itemised in Appendix 1 of this letter, which outlines the grounds under which I have decided to withhold information. Where information is withheld under section 9 of the Act, I have considered the countervailing public interest in release in making this decision and consider that it does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time. By way of context, some of these emails relate to the drafting of correspondence on the use of puberty blockers in young people. Information deemed out of scope of your request has been excluded.

2) Any external communications relating to this change, for example, any consultation made with other government organisations, political figures, medicine professional groups, medical industry associations, transgender community organisations or other relevant groups if there has been any discussion of this information change with people outside the Ministry of Health.

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act as the information requested is not held by Manatū Hauora and there are no grounds for believing it is held by another agency subject to the Act.

Manatū Hauora is in the process of responding to concerns raised regarding its website information, and as a temporary measure has reduced the website content while an evidence brief to support this area is planned over the next few months. The updated evidence will be provided to Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand (the operational component of the health system) to inform clinical guidance and consumer information.

It is important to note that treating clinicians are responsible for considering the appropriateness of a particular treatment for an individual patient. The use of any medicine or treatment is a matter for discussion between a treating clinician and their patient.

It is important that health services meet the needs of all New Zealanders, with inclusiveness and dignity for all. We are committed to providing better access, support and safe treatment for rainbow communities through our health system and ensuring the system is responsive to the needs of transgender, intersex, and gender-diverse people.

I trust this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauorā website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to be 'Joe Bourne', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr Joe Bourne
Chief Medical Officer
Manatū Hauora – Ministry of Health

Appendix 1: List of documents for release

#	Date	Title	Decision on release
1	18 August 2022 – 5 September 2022	Email correspondence: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons. Some information has been identified as out of scope of your request and removed accordingly.
2	22 August 2022	Email Correspondence: Can we find out who wrote this webpage?	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
3		Email Correspondence: Webpage on Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people	
4	23 August 2022 – 5 September 2022	Email Correspondence: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research	
5	5 September 2022 - 6 September 2022	Email Correspondence: DREP for puberty blocker meds and rapid evidence assessment	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
6	7 September 2022 -12 September 2022	Email Correspondence: Response for final sign-out H2022010237	Some information identified as out of scope of your request and removed accordingly.
7	13 September 2022 - 16 September 2022	Email Correspondence: Puberty blockers – update on webpage	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 14 September 2022 12:51 pm
To: Jenna Osborne-Taylor; Sayali Pendharkar
Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers; Sarah Upston
Subject: RE: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website

Thanks Jenna.

Great point about the intended audience – public-facing.

We should probably then look at reducing the clinical detail in the text here in that case.

I have discussed with Joe Bourne, CMO, here in OCCO and have agreed the following plan:

- Short term - Webpage lines adjustment – in particular to remove the statement that these are ‘safe and reversible’ while further due diligence on evidence proceeds.
- Medium term – evidence work by Evidence, Research and Innovation - this is the stage at which wider engagement with any changes will add value, and we have been offered some names of experts, whom could be consulted at this stage

Kia ora Sayali,

I suggest for this short-term lines adjustment we go for a reduced statement on the site while we wait for the evidence process and subsequent engagement to happen. If we do that, then we can defer the input of Medsafe team at this point.

e.g.

Puberty blockers

For young people where these feelings continue into puberty or emerge during puberty, particularly if associated with distress, it is important to see a health professional. Puberty blockers are a medication that can be used to halt the progress of potentially unwanted puberty-related physical changes.

Blockers are sometimes used, with the guidance of a clinician who specialises in their use, from early puberty through to later adolescence to allow time to fully explore gender health options.

Service providers that can help access and provide more information about blockers include:

- paediatric services
 - youth health services
 - endocrinologists
 - primary health care teams.
-

Dr Tim Jelleyman
 Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health
 Office of Chief Clinical Officers
 S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011

Auckland based. Regular MoH days: Mon – Wed;

Clinical days at Waitemāta : Thurs, Fri.

Text me if your email needs priority attention.



From: Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 14 September 2022 10:48 am
To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website

Thanks Tim.

We are mindful that this is a public-facing page and therefore shouldn't contain clinical detail as such, but should refer off to relevant pages that contain more clinical detail if possible. Equally, we feel it's important that the clinicians are heard and we're all on the same page about the intent and the level of detail required.

Tricky priorities to balance! Over to you.

Ngā mihi nui

Jenna Osborne-Taylor (she/her/ia)

Senior Advisor | Kaitiaki Matua

Primary Care

Primary Health Care System Improvement and Innovation / Commissioning

Imēra: jenna.osborne-taylor@health.govt.nz

133 Molesworth Street, Thorndon, Wellington | PO Box 5013, Wellington 6140



Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand

[TeWhatuOra.govt.nz](https://www.TeWhatuOra.govt.nz)

I work remotely - please include virtual options for hui/meetings. My standard hours of work are 7.00am to 3.00pm.

From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, 14 September 2022 8:28 am

To: Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe
 <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
 Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>
 Subject: RE: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website

Kia ora Jenna,

Thank you for your further consideration of this mahi. Through paediatric networks I personally know S9(2)(a) and S9(2)(a). They would each bring sound advice to this discussion and from a position of experience.

Regarding process, I will first discuss with Anne Stewart (manager OCCO) and Joe Bourne (CMO) before progressing the wider discussions.

Ngā mihi

Tim

Dr Tim Jelleyman

Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health

Office of Chief Clinical Officers

S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street

Thorndon, Wellington 6011

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Clinical days at Waitemāta : Thurs, Fri.

Text me if your email needs priority attention.



From: Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>
 Sent: Wednesday, 14 September 2022 7:25 am
 To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe
 <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
 Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>
 Subject: RE: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website

Mōrena Tim

My colleague at PATHA has requested that – if at all possible – a clinician who works in the field of gender-affirming care (specifically with young people) be involved in the re writing of this page. We have no objections to this request, however we are keen to get the wording updated as quickly as possible while accommodating this.

If you can delay working on this for another 10 days or so, S9(2)(a) (a paediatrician at Counties Manukau District) has been put forward as the best person to work with. Her email is: S9(2)(a). If you need to progress more urgently, than the best person is S9(2)(a)'s clinical lead, S9(2)(a).

Additionally, several people from PATHA are attending WPATH in Montreal next week and would be very valuable when reviewing the evidence base due to both their clinical experience, and their involvement in international conversations on the matter. Their concern is that there are some scientific papers out there that aren't done well and this might not be immediately apparent to someone who isn't working in the field.

Thanks so much for your consideration, and if you'd like me to organise a hui to allow everyone to meet I'm very happy to do so.

Ngā mihi nui

Jenna Osborne-Taylor (she/her/ia)

Senior Advisor | Kaitohutohu Matua

Primary Care

Primary Health Care System Improvement and Innovation / Commissioning

Imēra: jenna.osborne-taylor@health.govt.nz

133 Molesworth Street, Thorndon, Wellington | P O Box 5013, Wellington 6140



Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand

TeWhatuOra.govt.nz

I work remotely - please include virtual options for hui/meetings. My standard hours of work are 7.00am to 3.00pm.

From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 13 September 2022 1:53 pm

To: Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>; Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>

Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>; Sarah Upston <Sarah.Upston@health.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website

Yes please.

Do you have a contact?

Dr Tim Jelleyman

Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health

Office of Chief Clinical Officers

S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street

Thorndon, Wellington 6011

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Clinical days at Waitemāta: Thurs, Fri.

Text me if your email needs priority attention.



From: Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 13 September 2022 1:48 pm

To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>; Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>

Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>; Sarah Upston <Sarah.Upston@health.govt.nz>
 Subject: RE: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website

Thanks, all. I wonder Tim whether it would be good to have Medsafe look at the revised content.

Ngā mihi nui

Sayali

Dr Sayali Pendharkar, PhD (she/her)
 Deputy Chief Science Advisor
 Office of the Chief Science Advisor
 Evidence, Research and Innovation
 Phone: S9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
 Email: sayali.pendharkar@health.govt.nz
 Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
 Sent: Tuesday, 13 September 2022 12:05 pm
 To: Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>
 Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>; Sarah Upston <Sarah.Upston@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
 Subject: RE: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website

Thank you Jenna for getting in touch, and your email is very timely.

I have just been working with Sayali – Science Advisor from Evidence, Research and Innovation (Manatū Hauora) – on some rewording. ERI will lead the evidence brief referred to, planned to complete over summer months. A subsequent systematic review is also being proposed (but not confirmed/funded yet, so not referred to in our correspondence).

I would be grateful for your team's eye over this before we get this to web people. Getting this to web team soon would be great so we can address the immediate concern with more due diligence to follow.

(There is a broader question about where this public facing information sits in the new reformed health system, but at this point of time it is right that we qualify the statement that is currently causing some appropriate concern.)

Ngā mihi
 Tim.

[Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people | Ministry of Health NZ](#)

Proposed wording adjustment:

Puberty blockers

For young people where these feelings continue into puberty or emerge during puberty, particularly if associated with distress, it is important to see a health professional. Puberty blockers are a medication that can be used to halt the progress of potentially unwanted puberty-related physical changes. of an unwanted puberty.

Blockers are a safe and fully reversible medicine that may be used from early puberty through to later adolescence to help ease distress and allow time to fully explore gender health options. While this is not an exhaustive list of medications that may be prescribed (off-label) as puberty blockers, some that are commonly prescribed for adolescents (aged less than 18 years) are:

- Leuprorelin
- Goserelin

It is important to note that any off-label prescription remains at the discretion of the managing clinician. 'Off label' means these medications are either being prescribed for a different age group to those in the standard prescription group AND/OR for a different condition than what the medication has been approved for.

Although common side effects of these drugs (eg,...) are well known, high-quality, robust research is still required to confirm the long-term effects and reversibility of these blockers particularly in the younger age groups. This makes specialist clinical advice and oversight critical.

Service providers that can help access and provide more information about blockers include:

- paediatric services
- youth health services
- endocrinologists
- primary health care teams.

Dr Tim Jelleyman

Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health

Office of Chief Clinical Officers

S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

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From: Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 13 September 2022 11:39 am

To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>

Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>; Sarah Upston <Sarah.Upston@health.govt.nz>

Subject: Review of lines on puberty blockers on MoH website

Kia ora Tim

I hope you're well.

I'm hoping you might be able to assist me.

I understand that you recently signed out a DREP on the topic of puberty blockers (see email trail below) where the writer specifically referenced a line from the Ministry of Health's webpage on transgender healthcare [here](#).

In addition to the DREP we received, we have also been made aware that our colleagues at RNZCGP and in primary care settings are receiving a growing number of queries relating to the highlighted section of the guidance specifically:

Blockers are a safe and fully reversible medicine that may be used from early puberty through to later adolescence to help ease distress and allow time to fully explore gender health options.

After discussing with Dr Betty et al, I was hoping it might be possible to get this section of the website revised in the hopes it creates fewer queries. While the statement is no doubt true, as I'm sure you're aware there are both members of the public and medical professionals who disagree.

We will be working towards putting together a joint statement on the efficacy and safety of puberty blockers to use as a standardised response for such queries.

Please also note that we have been alerted by our colleagues at PATHA that this line being used negatively in the media – see here: <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/identity-crisis-have-we-gone-too-far-in-letting-kids-change-their-gender/TT4LEA5FS7JYWFWWCCBAEB6JM/>

Please let me know if you're not the correct person to assist and I will redirect my query accordingly.

Ngā mihi nui

Jenna Osborne-Taylor (she/her/ia)

Senior Advisor | Kaitohutuhu Matua

Primary Care

Primary Health Care System Improvement and Innovation / Commissioning

īmēra: jenna.osborne-taylor@health.govt.nz

133 Molesworth Street, Thorndon, Wellington | P O Box 5013, Wellington 6140



Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand

TeWhatuOra.govt.nz

I work remotely - please include virtual options for hui/meetings. My standard hours of work are 7.00am to 3.00pm.

From: Steve Barnes <Steve.Barnes@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Thursday, 8 September 2022 12:22 pm

To: Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: DREP for review/input: Puberty blockers use with children - due 24/08 (H2022010137) CRM:0123118

Kia ora Jenna,

I'm not totally sure but I see that Tim Jellyman signed off the letter so I'd suggest starting with him. If that doesn't work I know there's a generic OCCO email address: occo@health.govt.nz.

Steve

Steve Barnes (he/him)
 Group Manager
 Family and Community Health Policy
 Strategy, Policy and Legislation
 Mobile: S9(2)(a)
steve.barnes@health.govt.nz
 Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 8 September 2022 11:09 am
To: Steve Barnes <Steve.Barnes@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: DREP for review/input: Puberty blockers use with children - due 24/08 (H2022010137) CRM:0123118

Kia ora Steve

I hope you're well.

Apologies for bothering you – I've just been in a meeting with Dr Bryan Betty and others around a joint attack regarding the number of queries the College (and we) are receiving relating to puberty blockers. These queries specifically mention the line about puberty blockers on the MoH website.

I see from the final response to this DREP that OCCO have said that they're undertaking a review of the information we have publicly available on puberty blockers. Do you know who in OCCO I could contact about this? Would they be the people to contact about getting this line edited?

Thanks so much in advance for your help.

Ngā mihi nui

Jenna Osborne-Taylor (she/her/ia)
 Senior Advisor | Kaitohutohu Matua
 Primary Care
 Primary Health Care System Improvement and Innovation / Commissioning

īmēra: jenna.osborne-taylor@health.govt.nz
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Out of Scope

From: Jenna Osborne-Taylor <Jenna.Osborne-Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 23 August 2022 8:11 am
To: Primary Community and Rural Office <PCROffice@health.govt.nz>; Sarah Upston <Sarah.Upston@health.govt.nz>; Steve Barnes <Steve.Barnes@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Tee Wyatt <Tahndae.Wyatt@health.govt.nz>; Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: DREP for review/input: Puberty blockers use with children - due 24/08 (H2022010137) CRM:0123118

Tēnā koutou

I've had a read of the correspondence, and I'm inclined to say this doesn't sit with Primary Care, either. I suggest a hybrid of Medsafe and Policy.

The website the writer has linked to on MOH's website is 'owned' by policy (Steve Barnes' team), the majority of their letter relates to Medsafe, and primary care isn't mentioned at all.

PATHA's Guidelines for Gender Affirming Care does cover off Puberty suppression using GnRH agonists and we (MOH / Te Whatu Ora) do endorse these guidelines. @Steve Barnes would you have anything to add on this matter?

However from Primary Care's point of view, other than saying that we're working to improve access to primary care for transgender people (which misses the point of the writer's concerns) I'm not sure what we can say to address the writer's main points.

Ngā mihi nui

Jenna Osborne-Taylor (she/her/ia)

Senior Advisor | Kaitohutohu Matua

Primary Care

Primary Health Care System Improvement and Innovation / Commissioning

īmēra: jenna.osborne-taylor@health.govt.nz

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I work remotely - please include virtual options for hui/meetings. My standard hours of work are 7.00am to 3.00pm.

Out of Scope

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

From: Robyn Carey
Sent: Monday, 22 August 2022 3:58 pm
To: Edie Taylor
Subject: Re: Can we find out who wrote this webpage?

Well, maybe that gives us more license to change it!

From: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2022 3:55:41 PM
To: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Can we find out who wrote this webpage?

Hi Robyn

I've asked the webteam – must be before almost everyone in the team's time here!

Ngā mihi

Edie Taylor (she/her)
Senior Advisor | Office of the Chief Clinical Officers
System Performance & Monitoring
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 22 August 2022 3:33 pm
To: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Subject: Can we find out who wrote this webpage?

Hi Edie,

Is it possible to get some of the history behind the creation of this webpage please? If we can determine the authors, we will be able to get their side of the story around 'safe and reversible'.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/transgender-new-zealanders/transgender-new-zealanders-children-and-young-people>

Certainly the Swedish update is not in favour of using hormonal treatments in adolescents (I've not looked up the rest of the references yet).

Thanks

Dr Robyn Carey

Chief Medical Officer

robyn.carey@health.govt.nz

Mobile: S9(2)(a)

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street Thorndon, Wellington 6011



RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

From: Robyn Carey
Sent: Monday, 22 August 2022 4:57 pm
To: Edie Taylor
Subject: RE: Webpage on Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people

Thanks very much Edie, I think it might be time for a refresh of the page.

We'll wait for S&I and MedSafe info.

Thanks again

Ngā mihi

Dr Robyn Carey

Chief Medical Officer

robyn.carey@health.govt.nz

Mobile: S9(2)(a)

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 22 August 2022 4:16 pm
To: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Webpage on Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people

From: Cara Pollock <Cara.Pollock@health.govt.nz> **On Behalf Of** WebTeam
Sent: Monday, 22 August 2022 4:10 pm
To: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Webpage on Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people

Kia ora Edie,

So it looks like the only change that has been made to that page since it was first published in 2017 was the addition of the link to the guidelines on the right-hand side. I can't actually find a record of who requested the link be added, although I found an earlier request from David St George (who was in the Office of the Chief Medical Officer at the time) asking for it on some of the other transgender health pages. I suspect it was either someone in the OCCO or possibly the system flow team who asked for it to be added to the Children and young people page as well.

The page was originally developed by a working group -- the contact we had was someone in the Youth Health, Child and Family Programmes team, but I think it was owned by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer overall.

Hope that helps.

Ngā mihi,
Cara

From: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>

Sent: 22 August 2022 3:42 PM

To: WebTeam <webteam@health.govt.nz>

Subject: Webpage on Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people

Kia ora team

Is it possible to find out who owns this page and to have a copy of the version history?

<https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/transgender-new-zealanders/transgender-new-zealanders-children-and-young-people>

We are trying to determine who the original authors of the page were and who did the last update in 2020.

Ngā mihi

Edie Taylor (she/her)

Senior Advisor | Office of the Chief Clinical Officers

System Performance & Monitoring

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street

Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Sayali Pendharkar
Sent: Monday, 5 September 2022 4:17 pm
To: Timothy Jelleyman; Edie Taylor
Cc: Sharn Brassington-Crow
Subject: Re: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Thanks, Eddie. I had let Sharn know I will be sending comments through today. I was dragged into a few urgent things Thursday/Friday.

Tim, would be good to quickly catch up tomorrow. I can do 12 noon if that suits.

Ngā Mohican nui
 Sayali

From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, September 5, 2022 4:13:20 PM
To: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Thanks Edie

Kia ora Sayali – I am happy to discuss at any point and help clarify scope if there is any question about that. (In Wellington office tomorrow so brief conversation very easy to fit in if you are about.)

Ngā mihi
 Tim.

Dr Tim Jelleyman

Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health
 Office of Chief Clinical Officers

S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011

Auckland based. Regular MoH days: Mon – Wed;

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Text me if your email needs priority attention.



From: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 5 September 2022 4:04 pm
To: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>; Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Kia ora Sayali

Just following this up – are you able to let me know when we can expect this?

Many thanks.

Ngā mihi
Edie

Edie Taylor (she/her)
Senior Advisor | Office of the Chief Clinical Officers
System Performance & Monitoring
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 5 September 2022 2:55 pm
To: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Hi Edie,

Just checking what's happening with this?

I thought we were coordinating the response? Have we heard from Evidence, Research and Innovation yet about their research into this area.

Tim Jelleyman was going to review the webpages and he would be a good person to review any response we write.

Many thanks.

Ngā mihi
Dr Robyn Carey
Chief Medical Officer
robyn.carey@health.govt.nz
Mobile: S9(2)(a)
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 24 August 2022 9:29 am
To: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>; Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>; Katrina McLaren <Katrina.McLaren@health.govt.nz>; Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Thanks all. I have requested we get some additional time for the response.

I have also asked Sharn who is coordinating this response to pass on any comment from Medsafe to you as well Sayali. To keep everything together I have also attached the comments from Primary and Community Care and Policy.

Ngā mihi
Edie

Edie Taylor (she/her)
Senior Advisor | Office of the Chief Clinical Officers
System Performance & Monitoring
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 24 August 2022 9:16 am
To: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>; Katrina McLaren <Katrina.McLaren@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

That would be great.

Thank You,

Kind Regards,
Sayali

Ngā mihi nui

Sayali

Dr Sayali Pendharkar, PhD (she/her)
Deputy Chief Science Advisor
Office of the Chief Science Advisor
Evidence, Research and Innovation
Email: sayali.pendharkar@health.govt.nz
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 24 August 2022 9:12 am
To: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>; Katrina McLaren <Katrina.McLaren@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Kia ora,

I'm not here tomorrow or Friday, so will see if we can get the deadline pushed out until later next week.

Many thanks.

Ngā mihi
Dr Robyn Carey
Chief Medical Officer
robyn.carey@health.govt.nz
Mobile: S9(2)(a)
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 24 August 2022 9:04 am
To: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>

Cc: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Kia ora Robyn,

Sure, happy to help with this. I will have a look at the correspondence. I see it is due today, but if possible could it please be pushed out to Friday this week? It will give me some time to review the evidence and the draft, noting that we need to address consumer concerns in the response.

Ngā mihi nui

Sayali

Dr Sayali Pendharkar, PhD (she/her)
Deputy Chief Science Advisor
Office of the Chief Science Advisor
Evidence, Research and Innovation
Email: sayali.pendharkar@health.govt.nz
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 24 August 2022 7:47 am
To: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Kia ora,

Many thanks Sayali. It has come to our attention via consumer correspondence that the following webpage may need refreshing, in particular this sentence: **Blockers are a safe and fully reversible medicine that may be used from early puberty through to later adolescence to help ease distress and allow time to fully explore gender health options.** <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/transgender-new-zealanders/transgender-new-zealanders-children-and-young-people#:~:text=Puberty%20blockers&text=Blockers%20are%20a%20safe%20and,fully%20explore%20gender%20health%20options>.

It appears that some governments are changing their position on this matter to varying extents.

Although we have not been able to track down the author of this webpage, it seems that OCCO owned the page and that it was developed via a working party. I am hoping that we can refresh the page based on evidence and international trends, hence the request for help from Evidence, Research and Innovation.

I will forward you the correspondence separately.

Many thanks

Ngā mihi

Dr Robyn Carey

Chief Medical Officer

robyn.carey@health.govt.nz

Mobile: S9(2)(a)

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 23 August 2022 11:54 am

To: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>

Cc: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>

Subject: Rapid evidence assessments and puberty blockers meds research

Kia ora Robyn,

Dean (Rutherford) advised that you were in touch about Puberty blocker meds research specifically, and whether we could do rapid evidence assessments generally? Ian (Town) is currently on leave and I am picking this up on his behalf.

If you would prefer to discuss over Teams/in person, please let me know.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Ngā mihi nui

Sayali

Dr Sayali Pendharkar, PhD (she/her)

Deputy Chief Science Advisor

Office of the Chief Science Advisor

Evidence, Research and Innovation

Email: sayali.pendharkar@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street

Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Sayali Pendharkar
Sent: Tuesday, 6 September 2022 2:34 pm
To: Timothy Jelleyman; Sharn Brassington-Crow; Robyn Carey; Edie Taylor
Subject: RE: DREP for puberty blocker meds and rapid evidence assessment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Thank you, Tim. That covers everything 😊

[@Sharn Brassington-Crow](#) thank you for coordinating this.

Best Regards,

Sayali

From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 6 September 2022 2:21 pm
To: Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>; Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: DREP for puberty blocker meds and rapid evidence assessment

Thanks Sharn – to update, I have just met with Sayali.

In discussion with Sayali we proposed the following next steps:

- Adjust line in website in a way that acknowledges
- Develop Evidence brief in next 5 – 6 months
- Systematic Review/meta-analysis – propose this to be procured and follow

In the letter we should note we are amending the website information to reflect limits of evidence on reversibility and that further work to develop an evidence brief is planned. I will prioritise reviewing the letter shortly. (We will defer mention of any proposed Systematic Review as yet to be established).

The process to adjust website needs to be set in motion.

(Sayali – have I summarised correctly?)

Ngā mihi
 Tim

Dr Tim Jelleyman

Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health
 Office of Chief Clinical Officers

S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011

Auckland based. Regular MoH days: Mon – Wed;

Clinical days at Waitemāta : Thurs, Fri.

Text me if your email needs priority attention.



From: Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 6 September 2022 2:07 pm

To: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>

Cc: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: DREP for puberty blocker meds and rapid evidence assessment

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you Robyn and Sayali for the help with this direct reply/on this topic.

I note the comments on action required following OCCO decisions.

I have slightly updated the below DREP, and updated the signatory to be Tim. Likely this will need further updating following discussions today, but otherwise will hand this over to Edie/OCCO ODDG for review/changes.

 [FW 2130-2022 Fwd Enquiry regarding MOH guidance on puberty blockers 4F5E2C92F819ED11B83E00224811D365](#)

Ngā mihi,

Sharn Brassington-Crow ([he/him](#))

Advisor/Kaitohutohu | Ministerial Correspondence

Government Services | Government & Executive Services

Manatū Hauora

sharn.crow@health.govt.nz

133 Molesworth Street Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 6 September 2022 7:51 am
To: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>; Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>; Dean Rutherford <Dean.Rutherford@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>; Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: DREP for puberty blocker meds and rapid evidence assessment

Kia ora Sayali,

I agree with your comments, both in the email and in the DREP.

I understand you and Tim are meeting later today.

Tim and I are comfortable that this goes out in Tim's name, both for continuity with the CMO switch and as OCCO's resident paediatrician. I will of course update Joe Bourne during our overlap period next week.

Ngā mihi

Dr Robyn Carey

Chief Medical Officer

robyn.carey@health.govt.nz

Mobile: S9(2)(a)

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 5 September 2022 10:46 pm
To: Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>; Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>; Dean Rutherford <Dean.Rutherford@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>; Robyn Carey <Robyn.Carey@health.govt.nz>
Subject: DREP for puberty blocker meds and rapid evidence assessment

Kia ora Sharn,

Please find attached my comments on the puberty blockers DREP. I agree with Robyn – we can better address the concerns raised by S9(2)(a), and update the information on Ministry's website focusing on latest evidence and international trends. I am also catching up with Tim tomorrow for his advice on what else we may need to consider here.

Additional thoughts below:

- We should undertake a formal systematic review and meta-analysis on evidence-to-date on puberty blockers similar to UK, Sweden, Finland

- Consider a wider conversation around using (more likely starting to collect) data from existing longitudinal studies in NZ (incl. health survey?)
- Conversation with PATHA to update their guidelines (dated 2018) particularly in light of the NICE Review...

By way of next steps I suggest the following:

- An evidence brief on puberty blockers to publish on Ministry's website
 - Office of the CSA will be getting an intern over November to February who could do this as part of their project
- Update Ministry webpage to remove the comment on safety and reversibility of puberty blockers, add in key references, list some of the commonly used off-label drugs

Keen to hear any thoughts/feedback on points above.

Ngā mihi nui

Sayali

Dr Sayali Pendharkar, PhD (she/her)

Deputy Chief Science Advisor

Office of the Chief Science Advisor

Evidence, Research and Innovation

Phone: S9(2)(a)

Email: sayali.pendharkar@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street

Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe
Sent: Monday, 12 September 2022 1:46 pm
To: Timothy Jelleyman
Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers; Edie Taylor; Sharn Brassington-Crow
Subject: RE: Response for final sign-out - H2022010137

Categories: Tracked To Dynamics 365

Kia ora Tim,

Yes, ERI will lead the Evidence Brief piece. This will of course be done in close collaboration with you, and anybody else from OCCO that may need to be involved 😊

Ngā mihi nui

Sayali

Dr Sayali Pendharkar, PhD (she/her)
 Deputy Chief Science Advisor
 Office of the Chief Science Advisor
 Evidence, Research and Innovation
 Phone: S9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
 Email: sayali.pendharkar@health.govt.nz
 Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 7 September 2022 2:59 pm
To: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Response for final sign-out - H2022010137

Good point. I have not been clear enough.

The bit we have committed to do quickly is re-phrase the MoH webpage (which I can lead under OCCO to put via the webpage management comms team), and then to develop an evidence brief to inform the MoH position – a slower piece of work under Evidence, Research and Innovation which I have discussed with Sayali – *Sayali, am I correct that ERI would lead this Evidence Brief piece?*

Maybe 'guidance' is the wrong word as I can see you are reading as referring to the referenced guidelines – which is the externally written document.

Alternative suggested wording for that paragraph/line: 'I can advise you that Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) are in the process of revising the webpage in a way that acknowledges the current limits of available evidence. ...'

Dr Tim Jelleyman
Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health
Office of Chief Clinical Officers
S9(2)(a)
timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
Thorndon, Wellington 6011
Auckland based. Regular MoH days: Mon – Wed;
Clinical days at Waitemāta : Thurs, Fri.
Text me if your email needs priority attention.



From: Edith Bennett <Edith.Bennett@health.govt.nz> **On Behalf Of** Office of the Chief Clinical Officers
Sent: Wednesday, 7 September 2022 1:44 pm
To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Sharn Brassington-Crow <Sharn.Crow@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Response for final sign-out - H2022010137

Kia ora Tim

Thank you for preparing the letter Sharn has included below.

Just one point from us before this goes out - can you please confirm there is an agreed work programme in place to make puberty blocker guidance clearer and who is leading this?

If this hasn't been finalised, I would advise that we omit this from the letter. Noting the current guidance is not Ministry developed, just endorsed.

Thank you!

Edith

Office of the Chief Clinical Officers

occo@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street

Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe
Sent: Friday, 16 September 2022 10:49 am
To: Edie Taylor; Timothy Jelleyman
Subject: RE: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Categories: Tracked To Dynamics 365

Excellent – thanks, Edie 😊

Ngā mihi nui

Sayali

Dr Sayali Pendharkar, PhD (she/her)
Deputy Chief Science Advisor
Office of the Chief Science Advisor
Evidence, Research and Innovation
Phone: S9(2)(a)
Email: sayali.pendharkar@health.govt.nz
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 16 September 2022 10:48 am
To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Updated - <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/transgender-new-zealanders/transgender-new-zealanders-children-and-young-people>

Ngā mihi
Edie

Edie Taylor (she/her)
Senior Advisor | Office of the Chief Clinical Officers
System Performance & Monitoring
Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
Thorndon, Wellington 6011





From: Edie Taylor
 Sent: Friday, 16 September 2022 10:30 am
 To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
 Subject: RE: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Have sent through to the webteam to update – thanks both!

Ngā mihi

Edie Taylor (she/her)
 Senior Advisor | Office of the Chief Clinical Officers
 System Performance & Monitoring
 Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
 Sent: Thursday, 15 September 2022 9:02 pm
 To: Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>
 Subject: RE: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Thank you Sayali for that edit.
 Medsafe team (Derek) were also happy with the cut down wording without specific drug name mentioned.
 I will ask Edie Taylor in OCCO to progress the recommended wording to web team.

Kia ora Edie,
 If you are able to, would you progress this through web team?
 The final recommendation to go to web team is, as an update to the Puberty Blockers section of the page, :

[Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people | Ministry of Health NZ](#)

Proposed wording adjustment:

Puberty blockers

For young people where these feelings continue into puberty or emerge during puberty, particularly if associated with distress, it is important to see a health professional. Puberty blockers are a medication that can be used to halt the progress of potentially unwanted puberty-related physical changes.

Blockers are sometimes used from early puberty through to later adolescence to allow time to fully explore gender health options. This is done under the guidance of a clinician who specialises in their use.

Service providers that can help access and provide more information about blockers include:

- paediatric services
- youth health services
- endocrinologists
- primary health care teams.

Dr Tim Jelleyman

Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health

Office of Chief Clinical Officers

S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street

Thorndon, Wellington 6011

Auckland based. Regular MoH days: Mon – Wed;

Clinical days at Waitemāta : Thurs, Fri.

Text me if your email needs priority attention.



From: Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, 14 September 2022 6:23 pm

To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Hi Tim,

No problem at all. I think given Medsafe's response, I agree with you that we proceed with publishing the version you have shared below. One minor suggestion is splitting the 2nd paragraph into 2 sentences – have edited below.

Also, as I think you or Anne suggested, a meeting in the coming weeks would be useful to discuss the general logistics of such pieces of work :)

Kind Regards,

Sayali

Dr Sayali Pendharkar, PhD (she/her)
 Deputy Chief Science Advisor
 Office of the Chief Science Advisor
 Evidence, Research and Innovation
 Phone: S9(2)(a)
 Email: sayali.pendharkar@health.govt.nz
 Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011



From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 14 September 2022 5:45 pm
To: Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Kia ora Sayali – sorry about all the mail traffic; here is the detail from Medsafe.

This also pushes me towards the simpler cut back version without any names of the drugs. What do you think?

e.g.

Puberty blockers

For young people where these feelings continue into puberty or emerge during puberty, particularly if associated with distress, it is important to see a health professional. Puberty blockers are a medication that can be used to halt the progress of potentially unwanted puberty-related physical changes.

Blockers are sometimes used from early puberty through to later adolescence to allow time to fully explore gender health options. This is done under the guidance of a clinician who specialises in their use.

Service providers that can help access and provide more information about blockers include:

- paediatric services
- youth health services
- endocrinologists
- primary health care teams.

Dr Tim Jelleyman
 Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health
 Office of Chief Clinical Officers
 S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street
 Thorndon, Wellington 6011

Auckland based. Regular MoH days: Mon – Wed;

Clinical days at Waitemāta : Thurs, Fri.

Text me if your email needs priority attention.



From: Derek Fitzgerald <derek.fitzgerald@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 14 September 2022 5:01 pm
To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Maria Storey <Maria.Storey@health.govt.nz>; Catherine Marnane <Catherine.Marnane@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Thanks

From a regulatory point of view, providing information that an approved medicine can be used for an unapproved indication breaches section 20 of the Medicines Act 1981. This is because advertising (providing information about) an unapproved indication would make the medicine unapproved. In terms of section 20, providing information about an unapproved indication can be interpreted as advertising the availability of an unapproved medicine which is not permitted. The Act does not differentiate between the parties that could be providing such information. For instance, should the company marketing the medicine make such a claim, this would be a clear breach of the legislation, whereas an opinion piece by clinicians who were providing information about options is less likely to be a breach, or would be regarded as a lower level breach. If the Ministry advocated that certain medicines be used off-label, this could come in for criticism as a potential breach of the legislation. Important to note that where potentially controversial matters are concerned, there may be extra scrutiny of the legality of the Ministry's actions. You may wish to obtain a legal opinion on the information the Ministry publishes / wishes to publish on this.

Regards

Derek Fitzgerald
 Manager, Compliance Management Branch, Medsafe
 +64 (0)4 819 6866

From: Catherine Marnane <Catherine.Marnane@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 14 September 2022 9:05 am
To: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Maria Storey <Maria.Storey@health.govt.nz>; Derek Fitzgerald <derek.fitzgerald@health.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Kia ora Tim

Thank you for your email. Yes this page has created a number of queries over the years -I have been around for a long time!

I have forwarded your query to Maria Story, Acting Manager, Clinical Risk Management re the safety aspects. I have also included Derek Fitzgerald, Manager Compliance as I think it wise that he take a look at the wording related to prescribing an unapproved product.

Maria and Derek. Would you mind getting back to Tim with any comments you have.

Ngā mihi

Catherine

From: Timothy Jelleyman <Timothy.Jelleyman@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 13 September 2022 3:56 pm

To: Catherine Marnane <Catherine.Marnane@health.govt.nz>

Cc: Office of the Chief Clinical Officers <occo@health.govt.nz>; Edie Taylor <Edie.Taylor@health.govt.nz>; Sayali Pendharkar-Orpe <Sayali.Pendharkar@health.govt.nz>

Subject: Puberty blockers - update on webpage

Tēnā koe Catherine,

We have had a number of recent enquiries about one of the Manatū Hauora webpages, and specifically the information relating to puberty blockers.

There is a plan to review evidence, with Evidence, Research and Innovation leading work an Evidence Brief in the first instance. In the meantime we need to note some qualifications to the existing webpage reference to the safety and reversibility of Puberty Blockers in younger people (<18yrs), and here is a working draft of that.

For this we are requesting Medsafe team review and advise any further adjustments to this interim wording. You were suggested as a contact in Medsafe.

Ngā mihi

Tim.

[Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people](#) | [Ministry of Health NZ](#)

Proposed wording adjustment:

Puberty blockers

For young people where these feelings continue into puberty or emerge during puberty, particularly if associated with distress, it is important to see a health professional. Puberty blockers are a medication that can be used to halt the progress of potentially unwanted puberty-related physical changes of an unwanted puberty.

Blockers are a safe and fully reversible medicine that may be used from early puberty through to later adolescence to help ease distress and allow time to fully explore gender health options. While this is not an exhaustive list of medications that may be prescribed (off-label) as puberty blockers, some that are commonly prescribed for adolescents (aged less than 18 years) are:

- Leuprorelin
- Goserelin

It is important to note that any off-label prescription remains at the discretion of the managing clinician. 'Off label' means these medications are either being prescribed for a different age group to those in the standard prescription group AND/OR for a different condition than what the medication has been approved for.

Although common side effects of these drugs (eg,...) are well known, high-quality, robust research is still required to confirm the long-term effects and reversibility of these blockers particularly in the younger age groups. This makes specialist clinical advice and oversight critical.

Service providers that can help access and provide more information about blockers include:

- paediatric services
- youth health services
- endocrinologists
- primary health care teams.

Dr Tim Jelleyman

Chief Clinical Advisor, Child and Youth Health

Office of Chief Clinical Officers

S9(2)(a)

timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz

Manatū Hauora, 133 Molesworth Street

Thorndon, Wellington 6011

Auckland based. Regular MoH days: Mon – Wed;

Clinical days at Waitemāta : Thurs, Fri.

Text me if your email needs priority attention.



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