

Public Health Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting

Meeting: Tuesday 18 April, 9:30am to 4:00pm

Attendees

PHAC Members: Kevin Hague (Chair), Peter Crampton, Beverly Te Huia, Jason Gurney, Sir Collin Tukuitonga, Ruth Cunningham

Secretariat: Jonathon Jones and Chloe Reynolds

Guests: Simon Medcalf, Emma Quealey, Penny Gault, Fiona Duncan, Sarah Reader, Chelsea Mintrom

Apologies: Beverly Te Huia

Opening of meeting

1. Opening karakia by Jason Gurney.
2. Apologies noted for Beverly Te Huia due to a bereavement.
3. Members asked to update declarations of interest. Jason Gurney emailed an update prior to the meeting that he is now a member of the Health Research Council, Public Health Committee and no longer a member of the Cancer Society of New Zealand Auckland/Northland Division.
4. Review of 21 March 2023 minutes. Members agreed minutes were accurate and correct.

Actions:

- 21 March 2023 minutes and agenda to be published to PHAC website.

Activities since last meeting

The Workshop

5. PHAC secretariat and Ruth Cunningham met with The Workshop, a communications and research company to discuss their services to support PHAC's work on food environments.

Ministry of Primary Industries Food Policy team

6. PHAC secretariat worked with the Ministry of Primary Industries Food Policy team ahead of them presenting to the PHAC.

Qualitative research proposal

7. PHAC members met with members of the Public Health Agency to discuss the PHAC's qualitative stakeholder interview research proposal.
8. PHAC secretariat also met with Manatū Hauora's Research and Evaluation team to discuss the PHAC qualitative research proposal and seek guidance.
9. PHAC secretariat approached 4 research companies to undertake the qualitative research. One company was not available to undertake the research, 2 others provided proposals and a meeting was scheduled with a further company later in the week.
10. One of the companies that provided a proposal was scheduled to meet the PHAC later in this meeting.
11. PHAC decided it was not necessary to meet with the company at this point. It would have a relationship with the successful provider.
12. Kevin Hague and Sir Collin Tukuitonga were aware of one of the Directors of a research company that provided a proposal. Peter Crampton also acknowledged he knew another Director of that company.

Actions:

- PHAC secretariat to prepare a brief paper comparing the proposals and to recommend a preferred provider.
- PHAC members to provide a rapid response to agree a preferred provider to proceed with the research.
- Peter Crampton to act as lead member to support the qualitative research proposal.

MPI Food Policy team

13. The Ministry of Primary Industries Food Policy – Trans-Tasman and Health team presented to the PHAC on New Zealand’s food system led by Director, Fiona Duncan.
14. The presentation set out New Zealand’s food regulatory system, including the joint system with Australia. It was noted that New Zealand’s regulatory model relies on industry to understand and manage risk.
15. The origins of the joint food system were set out including the Food Standards Treaty signed in 1995 that commits both countries to the development and implementation of a single set of food standards covering areas such as:
 - i. composition
 - ii. labelling
 - iii. promotion and advertising of food
 - iv. mutual recognition of food safety standards.
16. The joint system has a number of drivers, including reducing the barriers to trade, efficiency gains and public health.
17. The joint system is headed by Food Ministers, the peak-decision making body. Current Ministerial priorities include:
 - i. improving foodborne illness from *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*
 - ii. supporting the reduction of diet-related disease
 - iii. ensuring the regulatory system is efficient, effective, and future ready
18. MPI highlighted that there were opportunities for the health sector to be more involved in the joint food system, especially on non-communicable diseases. Prior to the joint food system, the Ministry of Health led New Zealand’s food standards. The group discussed issues such as social licence and industry influence.

Food Environments Project

19. The PHAC used the beginning of this agenda item to reflect on the previous item with MPI. Members discussed the regulatory system and their views on where responsibility should lie. The food star rating was an example of this where a measure could have an impact on industry to alter its behaviour.

20. Further considering measures, members noted their support for a multi-agency approach. It was also noted that there were opportunities for greater innovation and creativity, particularly dedicating some space to create supportive environments for community empowerment.
21. It was noted that there may be some useful strategies and frameworks to consider in Australia.

Action:

- PHAC secretariat to source Australian action plans/strategies.
22. PHAC secretariat noted it had met with the Healthy Families team and referred to its report as part of the meeting pack. PHAC discussed the reports noting they are comprehensive, positive and community focused. PHAC highlighted its support for community level efforts.
 23. The PHAC secretariat tabled a paper on Te Tiriti o Waitangi to follow on from a previous paper on the rights-based approach. The paper sets out Manatū Hauora's Te Tiriti o Waitangi framework and a set of considerations to ensure the rights and obligations in Te Tiriti o Waitangi are met.
 24. A member noted that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is focused on collective rights but in contrast human rights are framed around individual rights.

Action:

- Jason Gurney agreed to take a lead on applying the Te Tiriti o Waitangi considerations to the PHAC's work on food environments.
25. Members expressed their support for narrative framing work and The Workshop proposal. Developing the narrative can help to build a sense of urgency on the issue.

Actions:

- PHAC agreed its preference to undertake both the qualitative research project and the narrative framing project.
- PHAC secretariat to confirming funding is available to complete both projects.

Pae Ora Strategies

26. The Pae Ora strategy team updated the PHAC on its activities since they last met in March. The bulk of consultation was now completed, which involved a strong community focus as well as targeted engagements. The team was mostly in the process of analysing feedback.
27. The strategy team acknowledged the PHAC's letter following their previous meeting and discussed how they had taken their input onboard.
28. Penny Gault, lead for the Hauora Māori strategy delivered a presentation on the development of that strategy. They were not starting from scratch, they were building on He Korowai Oranga: Māori Health Strategy 2002, refreshed in 2014 and Whakamaua: Māori Health Action Plan 2020–2025. Five emerging priority areas for system change had been identified.
29. The group discussed how the strategies will be implemented. Simon Medcalf noted that the strategies all have a statutory basis and that they are interrelated with the Government Policy Statement, which has a three-year cycle. The strategies will set the agenda and context and they are intended to be quite stable.
30. The PHAC felt that primary care was not strongly evident in the strategy development and that the Māori health strategy could be an effective lever in driving primary care.
31. Building on the last meeting, the PHAC's key piece of feedback was on workforce, highlighting that the system will need to effectively manage workforce displacement. Noting that while access and choice have increased, overall service volumes may fall, which can lead to perverse consequences. This emphasises that the overall workforce needs to grow rather than shift from elsewhere. They noted that workforce is rightly a strong focus in the Pacific strategy. They considered whether tertiary institutes could be held to greater accountability to grow the workforce, which should also include the unregulated workforce.
32. On the theme of data, they commented that the right data and insights can help the system to be clear about where the system is at where it is going. This also supports a sustainable learning system.

Actions:

- For the next PHAC meeting there should be greater detail on priority actions and draft strategies for consideration.

Next steps

33. PHAC considered their level of effort to influence the Pae Ora strategies, noting the opportunity cost against progressing other pieces of work. They decided they would continue to provide feedback and engage given the importance of the strategies in the health system reforms.
34. The PHAC discussed the importance of appropriately communicating their advice and further considered narrative framing company's proposal. They sought to re-scope the first phase of proposal.
35. PHAC discussed the qualitative research, particularly the list of names that will be provided to the provider.
36. PHAC considered their work programme going forward, noting they plan to start a process to determine its major topic for 2024.
37. PHAC also discussed the next steps for their food environments work, including how it would deliver its advice, i.e. whether to issue an interim report.
38. Jason Gurney delivered closing karakia. Meeting finished at 3.45pm

Actions:

- The PHAC agreed to engage the narrative framing company and work to rescope phase one of their proposal.
- PHAC secretariat to circulate the list of stakeholders for the qualitative interviews, for the committee to provide further comment.
- PHAC secretariat to provide updated project plan on its food environments work.

Next meeting

39. The next PHAC meeting will be held on Tuesday 23 May 2023 in Wellington.