

Public Health Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting

Meeting: 25 September 2024, 9:30am to 3:30pm

Location/platform: 133 Molesworth Street, Thorndon, Wellington

Attendees

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

Secretariat: Rebecca O'Connell, Anna Jackson and Hannah Quigan

Guests: Kaeden Watts, Corina Grey, Andrew Old

Apologies: Patience Davis and Ross Bell. Beverly Te Huia from 2pm.

Opening of meeting

- Opening karakia by Beverly Te Huia.
- Members asked to update declarations of interest with the Secretariat.
- Minutes from 22 August 2024 meeting were adopted as a true and correct record.

Activities since last meeting

- Kevin gave a presentation on the PHAC report *Rebalancing our food system* at the Health Coalition Aotearoa Forum yesterday (24 September). It was well received. Noted that the recording of the presentation had some issues so won't be able to be shared.
- Kevin sent the letter to the Minister on Investment in public health on 23 September 2024.

PHA and secretariat update

- The secretariat provided an update on behalf of Ross Bell on appointments and recruitment.

PHAC new members

- Discussion of new members will be had at the Appointments and Honours Committee today.
- It will go to full Cabinet on 30th September.

Secretariat recruitment

- A suitable Advisor has been found internally, with final paperwork being completed later next week, and PHA will update the PHAC via email once that appointment is complete.
- Advertising for the Principal role is still live, closing 3rd Oct. PHAC members were encouraged to promote this across their networks.
- Office of Director of Public Health is finalising paperwork with a Registrar, with that person starting late November. PHA will advise PHAC more once the paperwork is signed off.

Contracting for the determinants of health project

- The secretariat has begun negotiations with a contractor with hauora Māori expertise to design the conceptual framework and input to report writing. Looking for editing from Pacific point of view, however, document is not ready to edit now but possibly for early guidance.
- The PHA is preparing an Aide Memoire for the PHAC Chair's meeting with the Minister on 30 September. This is being written by PHA with support for content from the PHAC secretariat. At the meeting Kevin would like to discuss the new PHAC appointments, the progress on the two projects, and the letter on disinvestment and investment that went to the Minister on 23 September.
- The secretariat informed the committee that they were required to work on PHA work the past month and therefore have made less progress on the social determinants of health report than planned.

Actions:

- Secretariat to continue negotiations with contractor with hauora Māori expertise.

- Ruth will provide the secretariat with possible contacts with Pacific expertise who we could contract to review and input to the report.

Discussion of Cabinet Office circular on needs-based service provision

1. PHAC discussed the implications of the Cabinet circular as it relates to the PHAC's position statement on equity, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and Māori health, and the determinants of health report.

Actions:

- PHAC to draft a letter to the Minister with advice on the Cabinet circular and send before the October PHAC meeting.
- The implications of the Cabinet circular to be incorporated into the social determinants of health report.

Climate change presentation Kaeden Watts

2. Guest speaker, Kaeden, presented on exploring the intersection of climate change and health in Aotearoa's health and disability system. The presentation and discussion covered the compounding impacts of climate change on health, including specific impacts on Māori and other populations, and the responsibilities and opportunities for the Ministry of Health and Crown entities to act.

Actions:

- Relevant content of the presentation to be fed into the social determinants of health report.

Data on Pacific social determinants of health

3. Guest speaker, Corina Grey, presented Pacific health data.
 - Health inequities are linked to housing, income, education and employment.

- Issues with data availability and quality. Population surveys like the Census have a low Pacific response rate. Ministry for Pacific Peoples are focusing on collecting good quality data.
- Report should talk about systems and structure that expose groups to disadvantageous factors/environments. People “are not vulnerable” but are marginalised as a result of the system. Not “minority groups”.

Actions:

- Secretariat to email Corina to ask for Corina’s presentation slides.
- Ruth will follow up with Michael Walsh on life expectancy report.

PHA and health sector update

4. Dr Andrew Old provided an update on the impact of the Ministry’s change process on the PHA.
5. He noted Health New Zealand – Te Whatu Ora are working on a plan to meet Government imposed spending cuts, but the PHA is not involved at this time.
6. Dr Old thanked the PHAC for their letter to the Minister on investment in public health and signaled that the PHA may be doing some related work.
7. Kevin informed Dr Old that the PHAC intends to write to the Minister on the Cabinet circular on need.

Actions:

- Nil

Improving the effectiveness of public health spending of Vote Health

8. Rebecca sought feedback from the committee on the draft report.
9. Happy with draft –with a few changes/additions such as moving and updating table outlining public health action that is likely to be effective in improving Māori health and equity; and additional information about public health output class.

Actions:

- Rebecca to update the report to reflect the committee's feedback.
- Aim to complete report in October 2024.
- Rebecca will discuss with Kevin about possible Te Whatu Ora review of relevant sections before the report is sent to the Minister.

Social determinants of Health

10. The committee invited Kaeden back to discuss his presentation and climate change as a determinant of health.
11. The secretariat provided an overview of Health National Adaptation Plan (HNAP) and stakeholders involved in its development.
12. Key takeaways for the report include:
 - Use the checklist of impacts climate change has on health.
 - International Declarations on climate change are important levers for action.
 - Extreme weather events, eg Cyclone Gabrielle, are a good example as provide immediacy to the impacts of climate change on health.
13. The committee discussed ensuring that Pacific peoples were appropriately represented in the report given the ethnic disparities in health attributable to the social determinants.

Actions:

- Sub-section on climate change to sit within section on physical environment. This deviates from the agreed structure for each determinant.
- Include a population specific section on the compounding impact of determinants of health on Māori and Pacific peoples.

Next steps

Actions:

- Secretariat to set up contracts with hauora Māori and Pacific contractors.
- Secretariat to focus on progressing the drafting of the front end of the report and section on the determinants.
- Secretariat to present a revised timeline for the determinants of health project at the October PHAC meeting.

- Hannah, Rebecca Peter and Ruth to set up weekly meetings on determinants of health report.

Next meeting: 17 October 2024 via Microsoft teams