

Aide-Mémoire

Meeting with the Medical Council of New Zealand

Date due to MO:	21 February 2024	Action required by:	N/A
Security level:	IN CONFIDENCE	Health Report number:	H2024035949
To:	Hon Dr Shane Reti, Minister of Health		
Consulted:	Health New Zealand: <input type="checkbox"/> Māori Health Authority: <input type="checkbox"/>		

Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
Allison Bennett	Group Manager, Health System Settings, Strategy Policy and Legislation	s 9(2)(a)
Joe Bourne	Chief Medical Officer, Clinical Community and Mental Health	s 9(2)(a)

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Meeting with the Medical Council of New Zealand

Date due:	21 February 2024		
To:	Hon Dr Shane Reti, Minister of Health		
Security level:	IN CONFIDENCE	Health Report number:	H2024035949

Details of meeting: 26 February 2024, 4-4.30pm

Purpose of meeting: The Medical Council of New Zealand (the Council) has requested a meeting to introduce the newly elected Chair and to discuss matters related to the medical workforce.

Comment:

- This aide-mémoire provides you with background information on the topics that the Council wishes to discuss and talking points to support you at this meeting.
- Ministry officials who will attend this meeting are Joe Bourne (Chief Medical Officer) and Allison Bennett (GM, Health System Settings).
- This aide-mémoire discloses all relevant information.



Allison Bennett
Group Manager, Health System Settings
Strategy Policy and Legislation

Meeting with the Medical Council of New Zealand

Background

1. You will be meeting with Te Kaunihera Rata o Aotearoa | The Medical Council of New Zealand on Monday 26 February, at 4pm.
2. The Council is one of 18 responsible authorities (RAs), appointed under section 114 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the HPCA Act), that regulate health practitioners.
3. As RAs are accountable to the Minister of Health, they will regularly seek to meet with you to discuss their objectives, regulatory issues, and gain insight into the government's priorities for their respective workforces.

Topics for discussion

4. The Council has indicated they are interested in discussing the following topics:

Personnel

5. At this meeting, you will be introduced to the newly elected Chair of the Council, Dr Rachel Love. Dr Love is an otolaryngology, head and neck surgeon from Ōtautahi Christchurch.
6. Also present will be the Chief Executive of the Council, Joan Simeon. Ms Simeon will speak about her position as the Chair of the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities and her recent visit with Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (the Director-General of the World Health Organization).
7. The Council has indicated they wish to discuss the makeup of the current membership, particularly that they are losing two Māori members in the coming months (see **appendix one** for list of current members).
8. As you are intending to retain your practising certificate, you have delegated all matters relating to membership of the Medical Council to the Associate Minister of Health Matt Doocey.
9. Kim Ngarimu's term expired in August 2023. Recruitment was undertaken in 2023 to fill this role, but no appointment was made at that time and a decision was made to re-recruit for the role in 2024.
10. There are four elected health practitioner members with terms expiring at the end of June 2024 and one appointed layperson member with a term expiring in November. One of the elected members whose term will expire is the former Chair, Dr Curtis Walker. Dr Walker is not eligible for re-election as he has served his full 9-year term limit.
11. Recruitment for the two layperson roles commenced in February 2024, to align the timing for these appointments to be taken to the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee, with the elected member appointments in mid-2024.

12. The Ministry will seek candidates from a range of backgrounds for the two layperson roles.

Medical workforce data

13. In August 2023, the Council launched a new data dashboard on its website. The dashboard provides an overview of registered and practising doctors in New Zealand.
14. The publicly available dashboard gives a useful breakdown of the medical workforce, including demographics, International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and vocational information.
15. This data will be of use to both health agencies and employers for workforce planning and policy development.

Health workforce regulation

Review of the HPCA Act

16. In December 2023, you were provided with advice that outlined the current state of the Ministry's review of the HPCA Act [see H2023032966]. We are intending to provide you with a further update on this review by the end of February 2024.
17. The Council is aware that a review of the HPCA Act is underway and will be interested to hear your views on this work and be updated on its status.
18. The Ministry intends to consult on a new direction for health workforce regulation throughout 2024. The Council, along with all RAs, will be a key stakeholder in this consultation and will have many opportunities to inform the development of any proposed changes.

Improvements to workforce regulation under existing legislation

19. While developing proposals for regulatory reform, the Ministry is exploring what could be achieved in the current environment to improve performance of the RAs and address regulatory issues.
20. For example, the Ministry is seeking to make improvements to annual reporting and performance reviews to make these processes mutually beneficial for RAs and the Ministry, and ensure high standards of regulation and governance.
21. Given the Ministry's limited levers under the Act, it will be important for the RAs to constructively engage with the Ministry in order to make any progress in this area.
22. You could take this opportunity to express your expectations of the Council to work collaboratively with other RAs (and the Ministry) to ensure that regulatory decisions are made with system impacts in mind.

Regulation of the Physician Associate profession

23. The Council has an active interest in the Ministry's processing of an application for regulation of the Physician Associate (PA) profession, in part because of the possibility – should the PA profession be regulated – that it could be added to the professions regulated by the Council.


24. Although the Council initially (August 2015) expressed its willingness to provide regulatory oversight of PAs, it has more recently been opposed to that arrangement.
25. The Ministry is currently analysing the (49) submissions received in response to its consultation on a proposal to regulate the PA profession. We intend to provide you with a briefing on the outcomes of the consultation (and recommendations) at the end of March 2024.
26. If the Council raises the matter, you could confirm that no decisions have been made yet about regulating the PA profession, and that the Council would be consulted prior to any recommendation being made about it regulating the PA profession.

Supporting government priorities

27. The Council will be interested to hear more about the government's priorities for the workforce, in particular any potential changes to regulation.
28. This may lead to a discussion about the concept of an "occupations tribunal", which was referenced in the coalition agreement between the National Party and the ACT Party. The agreement commits only to the "consideration" of an occupations tribunal; the potential benefits of this will be assessed as part of the review of workforce regulation.

Talking points for meeting with the Medical Council of New Zealand

s 9(2)(g)(i)



PROACTIVELY RELEASED

Appendix one: Current membership of the Medical Council of New Zealand

Name	Gender Identity	Region	Ethnicity (and Iwi if applicable)	Date of original appointment	Expiry date of present term
Dr Curtis Walker (elected member)	M	Manawatū-Whanganui	Māori (Ngāti Porou)	1 July 2015	30 June 2024
Kim Ngarimu (term expired)	F	Upper Hutt	Māori (Ngāti Porou)	14 August 2014	14 August 2023
Hinamaha Sylvia Lutui	F	Auckland	Pacific (Tongan)	10 July 2023	9 July 2026
Ronald Paterson	M	Auckland	European (NZ European), Māori (Ngāti Raukawa)	10 July 2023	9 July 2026
Simon Watt (Deputy Chair)	M	Wellington	European (NZ European)	7 November 2022	6 November 2025
Dr Charles Hornabrook	M	Wellington	European (NZ European)	2 October 2019	6 November 2025
Dr Kenneth Clark	M	Manawatū-Whanganui	European (NZ European)	13 August 2020	6 November 2025
Dr Rachelle Love (Chair)	F	Canterbury	Māori (Ngāpuhi; Te Arawa)	13 August 2020	6 November 2025
Dr David Ivory	M	Canterbury	Māori (Ngāti Maniapoto)	7 November 2022	6 November 2024
Dr Pamela Hale (elected member)	F	Nelson-Marlborough	European (NZ European)	1 July 2015	30 June 2024
Dr Ainsley Goodman (elected member)	F	Auckland	European (NZ European)	18 October 2018	30 June 2024
Dr Stephen Child (elected member)	M	Auckland	European (NZ European)	2 October 2019	30 June 2024

