

# Briefing

## Draft cabinet paper: Puberty blockers for young people with gender incongruence and dysphoria

<b>Date due to MO:</b>	13 May 2025	<b>Action required by:</b>	N/A
<b>Security level:</b>	SENSITIVE	<b>Reference:</b>	H2025066100
<b>To:</b>	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
<b>Copy to:</b>	Hon Matt Doocoy, Associate Minister of Health		

### Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
<b>Steve Barnes</b>	Acting Deputy Director-General, Strategy, Policy & Legislation	9(2)(a)
<b>Joe Bourne</b>	Chief Medical Officer	9(2)(a)

### Minister's office to complete:

- |   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved             | <input type="checkbox"/> Decline   | <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change         | <input type="checkbox"/> Seen      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |  |

Comment:

# Draft Cabinet paper: Puberty blockers for young people with gender incongruence and dysphoria

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**Security level:** SENSITIVE **Date:** 13 May 2025

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**To:** Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health

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## Purpose of report

1. This briefing provides you with a draft Cabinet paper on the use of puberty blockers for young people with gender incongruence and dysphoria, for Ministerial consultation. The paper reports back to Cabinet following consultation on whether further safety measures such as regulations are needed to restrict the use of puberty blockers in young people. It seeks Cabinet's decisions on any additional safety measures to be put around prescribing of puberty blockers for gender incongruence and dysphoria.

## Background

2. In November 2024, Cabinet:
  - a. noted the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) was releasing a Position Statement on the use of puberty blockers in the treatment of young people with gender-related health needs
  - b. agreed that work should proceed towards considering regulation to restrict prescribing of puberty blockers and that the Ministry should consult on whether such regulation is needed
  - c. noted that a report back on the results of consultation and impact analyses would be submitted to the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee (SOU) early in 2025 [CAB-2024-MIN-0455].

## Development of the options and impact analysis

3. On 3 April 2025, we provided you with a briefing on the consultation outcomes [H2025063383] and advice on the policy options available to you [H2025063205].
4. You requested the Ministry prepare a paper to take to Cabinet for a discussion of the six policy options presented, without indicating a preferred option.
5. 9(2)(g)(i)

9(2)(g)(i)

6. Given that regulatory options are being considered, the Ministry is preparing a draft Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS). We will finalise the RIS and provide it to you alongside the post-consultation version of the Cabinet paper for lodging.

## Consultation

7. Consultation with groups representing those likely to be affected by further safety measures and public submissions have informed the content of the paper.
8. Guidance from DPMC stipulates that any papers with financial implications must now get pre-approval from the Minister of Finance ahead of formal Ministerial consultation. There are resource implications for all but Option A in the draft Cabinet paper, and therefore your office will need to undertake the necessary consultation with the Minister of Finance before the paper is circulated.
9. Targeted departmental consultation on the draft Cabinet paper will take place concurrently with Ministerial consultation.
10. We do not propose consulting with the Health and Disability Commissioner, the Commissioner for Children or the Human Rights Commissioner on the draft Cabinet paper. However, we note that each are investigating or responding to recent complaints related to this topic and suggest that they be informed prior to announcement of any decisions.

## Equity

11. There are likely to be impacts across particular groups and populations in New Zealand to varying degrees depending on the option chosen. These issues were raised throughout the consultation.
12. 9(2)(h)

## Next steps

13. We have attached a draft of the Cabinet paper for Ministerial consultation. Sections highlighted in grey in the draft Cabinet paper indicate input that has not yet been received, for example through departmental consultation.
14. Once the paper is circulated for Ministerial consultation, the Ministry will commence departmental consultation. The paper will be circulated with the Treasury, Ministry of Justice, Health New Zealand, Pharmac, the Parliamentary Counsel Office, the Crown Law Office and DPMC.
15. Following Ministerial consultation and feedback, the Ministry will provide a finalised Cabinet paper and RIS for you to take to SOU.
16. We understand that you wish to progress this paper to Cabinet rapidly. If Ministerial Consultation begins by 14 May 2025 the paper could be considered by SOU on 4 June.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Date</b>
Draft paper provided for Ministerial Consultation	13 May
Minister of Finance approval (required for papers with financial implications)	14 May
Ministerial Consultation	14 May-27 May
Incorporation of feedback	28 May
Final paper provided for lodging	29 May
<b>SOU</b>	<b>4 June</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>9 June</b>

17. We note that this timeline would require a one-day turnaround of any feedback received, which could be challenging if feedback is substantial. There is a two week recess in June, so the next possible SOU would be 25 June.

## Recommendations

We recommend you:

- a) **Approve** the attached draft Cabinet paper for Ministerial consultation **Yes/No**
- b) **Note** that departmental consultation will occur concurrently with Ministerial consultation **Yes/No**
- c) **Note** that consultation with the Minister of Finance is required prior to Ministerial consultation given the resource implications for all but option A **Yes/No**
- d) **Note** that the final paper and appendices would need to be lodged on 29 May 2025 if they are to be considered at the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee on 4 June 2025 **Yes/No**

*Steve Barnes*

Steve Barnes  
Acting Deputy Director-General  
**Strategy, Policy & Legislation**  
Date:

Hon Simeon Brown  
**Minister of Health**  
Date:

ENDS.

**Minister's Notes**

PROACTIVELY RELEASED