



# Cabinet Legislation Committee

## Minute of Decision

---

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

---

### Misuse of Drugs (Controlled Drugs—Designated Prescriber Nurses and Designated Prescriber Pharmacists) Amendment Regulations 2026

Portfolio                      Health

On 19 February 2026, the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1        **noted** that updating the lists of medicines and controlled drugs that nurse prescribers and pharmacist prescribers may prescribe supports timely access to medicines and patient-centred care, especially with pain management in hospitals and palliative care;
- 2        **noted** that, following advice from the Ministry of Health, the Minister of Health agreed to issue drafting instructions to:
  - 2.1        amend Schedule 1A of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1977 to add five controlled drugs that designated prescriber nurses may prescribe in certain circumstances (ketamine, midazolam, oxycodone, clobazam and phentermine) and remove six restrictions as follows:
    - 2.1.1        Buprenorphine – remove “transdermal only”;
    - 2.1.2        remove “Buprenorphine with naloxone, sublingual only”;
    - 2.1.3        Clonazepam – remove “for anxiety and panic disorder only”;
    - 2.1.4        Diazepam – remove “oral only”;
    - 2.1.5        Fentanyl – remove “transdermal only”;
    - 2.1.6        Methadone – remove “oral only”;
  - 2.2        add ketamine to Schedule 1B of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1977 – Controlled drugs that designated prescriber pharmacists may prescribe;
- 3        **noted** that the Misuse of Drugs (Controlled Drugs—Designated Prescriber Nurses and Designated Prescriber Pharmacists) Amendment Regulations 2026 (the Regulations) will give effect to the above decisions;
- 4        **authorised** the submission of the Misuse of Drugs (Controlled Drugs—Designated Prescriber Nurses and Designated Prescriber Pharmacists) Amendment Regulations 2026 [PCO 28727/3.0] to the Executive Council;

5       **noted** that the Regulations will come into force on 26 March 2026.

Sam Moffett  
Committee Secretary

---

**Present:**

Hon David Seymour (Chair)  
Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Hon Paul Goldsmith  
Hon Judith Collins KC  
Hon Tama Potaka  
Hon Brooke van Velden  
Hon Nicole McKee  
Hon Casey Costello  
Hon Scott Simpson  
Hon Chris Penk  
Stuart Smith MP  
Jamie Arbuckle MP

**Officials present from:**

Officials Committee for LEG