

Public Health Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting

Meeting: 5 March 2026, 8:00am to 3:00pm

Location/platform: 133 Molesworth Street, Thorndon/ Wellington. Room GN.9

Attendees

PHAC Members: Dr Caroline McElnay, Peter Crampton, Paula Lorgelly, Kaaren Mathias, and Matire Harwood

Secretariat: Catriona Murray, Clair Mills, Anihana Thorpe

Guests: Caleb Johnstone, Joe Bourne, Bryan Betty, and Andrew Old

Apologies: Faumuina Professor Fa'afetai Sopoaga

Opening of meeting

Opening karakia by Kaaren Mathias

- Apologies received by Tai, and Matire (for the afternoon).
- Tai has resigned, effective end of March.
- PHAC noted the two PHANZ policies.
- Members approved the previous January and February minutes.
- Members were asked for any conflicts of interest, and to update the register of interests. Paula Lorgelly to update her role.

Actions:

Nil

.

Session one – Primary Care Report

PHAC discussed the primary care report, including:

- Whether to use terms like 'shift' or 'refocus' when describing the changes needed in primary care.

- Members noted the 2001 Primary Care strategy and its continuing relevance, despite major changes in the primary care landscape.
- PHAC considered the advantages and downsides of different options of primary care 'meso-level' structures, and the importance of a geographical and population basis for organisation of the primary care system.
- Members discussed the importance of language used within the report.

Ministry of Health Update – Caleb Johnstone and Joe Bourne

Caleb and Joe presented an update on the Ministry of Health primary care work programme, including the 2025/5 'tactical plan', Cabinet papers outlining the Minister's objectives and capitation re-weighting. In line with the 2025 Letter of Expectations, current work includes preparing advice on PHOs and alliancing (with a focus around clinical services), due to the Minister at the end of March. This will offer options for development/decision.

The group briefly discussed the role of PHOs and alliances; coordination and horizontal integration; alliancing levers.

Actions:

Cabinet papers re-circulated to PHAC

Session one continued

- The members reflected on the Ministry of Health update.
- The members discussed the timing of sharing a draft version of the primary care report with the Minister.
- PHAC continued their discussion on the primary care report, including:
 - Language
 - Primary care organisation options
 - Resourcing – the function of co-payments vs a fully publicly funded system.

Actions:

Nil

Bryan Betty – Primary Care Advisory Group (PCAG) Chair

Bryan Betty joined the hui, and the group commenced a round of introductions.

- Bryan Betty described the newly established committee PCAG, noting its functions and current focus.
- The group briefly discussed targets, workforce retention, and funding.
- PHAC requested whether members of PCAG would be willing to review the Primary Care report. Bryan confirmed some members can informally review the report and provide feedback.

Actions:

- The secretariat will provide PCAG with the next iteration of the draft report for external review.

Session two – Prep for Minister meeting

PHAC prepared for their meeting with Minister Brown and discussed the key points to present to the Minister, as well as the possibility of providing a preliminary draft of the report before the end of March. Meeting with Minister 11.30-12h

Session three

PHAC debriefed on the meeting with the Minister.

Members discussed the potential work programme areas for 2026/2027, including:

- Climate change
- Aged care
- Prevention and population health
- One health
- Pacific Health
- Child health
- Oral health
- Youth mental health

PHAC continued their discussion on the primary care draft report, including:

- Ownership models, including looking into Māori providers further.
- Ongoing workforce issues, including pay disparities between primary care and hospital nurses.
- Clarification required on the term 'alliances' regarding PHAC context.

Members also discussed the following:

- The proposed timeframe for the Primary Care report: PHAC agreed that the report could be ready for external review by 23 March, with feedback to be received by mid-April prior to the April PHAC hui.
- PHAC discussed the possibility of contracting an illustrator, noting the budget.

Actions:

- Secretariat to seek Matire and Tai's feedback on work programme ideas.
- Online hui 19th March 12-1.30pm to discuss final draft before external review.
- May PHAC hui date to be confirmed, to be online (NB Peter and Clair away).

PHA and Health sector update

Dr Andrew Old. Secretariat absent

Actions:

Nil

Any other matters

- Kaaren noted the usefulness of illustrations
- Caroline noted she will be attending the June PHAC in person hui online, with the possibility of Peter chairing the hui in person.
- Clair will be on leave 22/4-21/5

Actions:

Nil

Closing

Closing karakia by Peter Crampton

Next meeting: March 19th 12-1.30pm: Online, via Microsoft teams