



Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

Minute of Decision

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Government Response to the Pharmac Review Panel Report

Portfolio **Health**

On 18 May 2022, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

- 1 **noted** that the Pharmac Review Panel (the Panel) has delivered its final report, concluding that Pharmac's work is important and that its performance should be improved, including its efforts to:
 - 1.1 secure equitable outcomes for all New Zealanders, especially for Māori, Pacific peoples and disabled people;
 - 1.2 engage with and promote participation and share in decision-making for Māori and honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi;
 - 1.3 make its processes, decisions, and information it holds more open and accessible to the public, consumer groups and people needing accessible information;
 - 1.4 include consumer advice and lived experience in many aspects of its work and decision-making including for people with rare disorders;
 - 1.5 collaborate much more strongly with other health agencies to achieve more equitable health outcomes; and
 - 1.6 explain the highly technical work it does and the impacts it has on people's health, and to do this with equity of health outcomes clearly visible;
- 2 **noted** that the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Bill and associated health sector changes will provide for many of the changes the Panel has suggested;
- 3 **noted** that the Panel's suggestion that Pharmac narrow its focus away from vaccines, medical devices, and responsible use of medicines raises risks of perverse outcomes and that, instead, Pharmac should work more closely with other entities on those functions;
- 4 **noted** that the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) will report to the Minister of Health by August 2022 on development of an immunisation strategy (initially focused on COVID-19) and collective governance mechanism to ensure responsiveness and achievement of outcomes across all health sector contributors;

- 5 **agreed** that in developing vaccination strategies on a collaborative basis, the Ministry, Public Health Agency, and Pharmac are expected to take into account all relevant factors, including the population health effects of vaccines, to ensure vaccine purchasing aligns with best health outcomes;
- 6 **agreed** to the Government response to the Pharmac Review Panel's report (the Government response) and recommendations, both attached to the submission under SWC-22-SUB-0093;
- 7 **agreed** that the Government response be released together with the Pharmac Review Panel's report;
- 8 **noted** that the Ministry will report to Cabinet on the progress of collective health sector implementation of the Government response by 30 June 2023.

Jenny Vickers
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Grant Robertson
Hon Kelvin Davis
Hon Carmel Sepuloni (Chair)
Hon Andrew Little
Hon Poto Williams
Hon Damien O'Connor
Hon Kris Faafoi
Hon Peeni Henare
Hon Willie Jackson
Hon Jan Tinetti
Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
Hon Aupito William Sio
Hon Meka Whaitiri
Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Office of the Chair of SWC
Officials Committee for SWC