

Minutes of the PHARMAC Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting

Wednesday 31 October 2007

The meeting was held at PHARMAC, 14th floor, Cigna House, 40 Mercer St, Wellington from 9.30am.

Present:

Sandra Coney	Chair
Matiu Dickson	CAC member
Dennis Paget	CAC member
Heather Thomson	CAC member
Te Aniwa Tutara	CAC member
Paul Stanley	CAC member

Apologies

Sharron Cole	CAC member
Vicki Burnett	CAC member
Kuresa Tiumalu-Faleseuga	CAC member

In attendance:

Simon England	PHARMAC
Fiona Rutherford	PHARMAC (minutes)

Steffan Crausaz, Elspeth Kay, Janet Mackay (PHARMAC Staff) attended for relevant items.

1. Minutes of July 2007 meeting

The minutes of the July 2007 meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Coney/Dickson carried

2. Action Points

- The Committee noted the further response that the Chair of CAC sent to women campaigning for Herceptin funding, following discussion of correspondence at the 13 July CAC meeting.
- The Committee requested that the guidelines for consumer groups be distributed by the end of the year for interested people to provide comments by mid-February.
- The Committee requested that business cards be available by November 26 for those members attending the Consumer Summit in Auckland.
- The Committee requested that it be provided with another design option for imagery for CAC branding.
- The Committee expressed concern that it had not received a full copy of the stocktake report on PHARMAC's responsiveness to Pacific people. The Committee considers that it has had a key role in the promotion of a Pacific Responsiveness Strategy over a number of years. The Committee also considers that it provides the only advisory role on Pacific



perspectives to PHARMAC. The Committee noted PHARMAC's concerns that the draft Pacific Responsiveness Stocktake Report went beyond the terms of reference. The Committee requested the full report and suggested that it could be accompanied by a summary analysis from PHARMAC identifying the risks with the report's recommendations and identifying possible actions to mitigate these.

3. Correspondence

The Committee noted the response from Medsafe on the Joint Therapeutics Agency. The Committee requested that it be informed of any proposals to change the legislation or regulations concerning medicines regulation. The Committee noted that it had made submissions on the ANZTPA and that it may want to make submissions on any alternative changes that are being considered.

4. Chair's report

The Committee report noted the minute of the 20 September teleconference at which the Committee commented on PHARMAC's proposed changes to the sole supply policy.

The Committee welcomed the re-appointment of Sandra Coney as the Chair of CAC, and Te Aniwa Tutara, Dennis Paget, and Heather Thompson as CAC members.

The Committee discussed their attendance at the Consumer Summit in Auckland on November 26. The Committee welcomed the inclusion of an opportunity for a Maori Caucus on the Sunday prior to the Summit and the Maori members of the Committee indicated that they would attend.

The Committee discussed their attendance at the PHARMAC Forum on 3 December in Wellington.

The Chair advised that PHARMAC has asked her to write an affidavit about the Committee's role in the decision-making process about funding for Herceptin. The Chair stated that she intended to do this and commented that the affidavit will make clear that CAC's role is not to make decisions or recommendations about individual funding applications.

The Chair's report was received by the Committee

Tutara/Dickson

5. Access and Optimal Use update

Optimal Use Think Piece

PHARMAC was developing a think-piece about the future direction of optimal use work across the medicines system. The Committee discussed the importance of seeking consumer views at the start of the process and queried how consumer input could be



incorporated into this think-piece. The Committee requested that it have the opportunity to contribute to the think-piece.

Evaluation Framework

PHARMAC was developing an evaluation framework to ensure that PHARMAC's Access and Optimal Use campaigns are rigorously evaluated. The Committee welcomed this work and discussed the importance of measuring the impact of its initiatives on Maori and other population groups.

Childhood Asthma Campaign

The PHARMAC Board has agreed to plans for the Childhood Asthma campaign for the coming year. The Committee discussed the extent to which an intervention for pre-school play-based education would reach Maori children with asthma. The Committee requested statistics on Maori attendance at early-childhood education centres. The Committee commented on the need to highlight where asthma management is working well in Maori communities so that positive messages are being conveyed, alongside information about disparities. The Committee also discussed the particular problems with asthma in rural communities which are often exposed to more pollen and can have difficulty accessing medication.

The Committee recommended that PHARMAC consider having parent representatives on the childhood asthma advisory group. The Committee encouraged PHARMAC to consider ways to ensure consumer views are sought as a matter of organisational practice.

Maori Health Team Work

The Committee noted that the Maori caucus hadn't met for six months and sought an update on the Maori Health Team's work.

One Heart Many Lives

The Committee discussed the One Heart Many Lives programme which is being introduced in Lakes and in Tainui (which covers two DHB areas) over the next two years and is continuing in Northland and Hawkes Bay. The Committee commented on the increasing profile of the programme and the expectation that it will be introduced into more areas. The asked whether it was possible for the programme to be established more rapidly in areas where it has not yet been introduced. The Committee commented that the Board should be aware the One Heart Many Lives campaign has generated expectations in DHBs in which it has not yet been initiated.



Gut Reaction Campaign

The Committee noted that it has been provided with information about the Gut Reaction campaign. The Committee requested that it have the opportunity to comment on campaign development in the early stages. The Committee has requested that it have the opportunity to comment on an evaluation of the campaign before it goes to the Board. The Committee would also like to see the online modules of the campaign at its next meeting.

Polypharmacy

The Committee suggested a number of additional issues that could be considered in the polypharmacy work, including how consumers can be informed about polypharmacy issues, the effect of polypharmacy on quality of life, and how the unnecessary use of medicines can be addressed.

Identifying Optimal Use Initiatives

The Committee expressed the view that it could usefully suggest topics for the AOU team to consider developing campaigns on.

6. Stakeholder survey

The Committee noted that the survey was of limited scope with regard to the inclusion of consumer organisations and that the results may not reflect the views of a broader range of consumer groups. The Committee recommended that PHARMAC consider building relationships with a broad range of consumer groups, including those that are not disease-specific.

The Committee discussed that need for the broader public to understand PHARMAC's role and that this will require connecting with people who are not involved in or represented by consumer groups. The Committee also commented that due to the nature of its role, PHARMAC will never please everyone.

The Committee suggested that PHARMAC could improve its relationships with stakeholders by providing independent health information to inform consumers. The Committee noted that PHARMAC's new website could provide access to this information. The Committee commented that the proposed new website will link to datasheets, on the Medsafe website, which are provided by suppliers and can be out of date and inaccurate.

7. Optimal role of the Consumer Advisory Committee

The Committee commented that it is not incorporated into PHARMAC's processes well enough to be able to carry out its role as effectively as possible. The Committee requested that PHARMAC provide it with suggestions about how it can better seek and incorporate CAC in its work. The Committee noted that large organisations have staff

members who are specifically responsible for ensuring consumer views are sought and incorporated.

The Committee requested that PHARMAC consider funding a consumer magazine which provides a consumer-oriented view about PHARMAC's work. This could be available from pharmacies, GPs and other outlets and provide information on health and medicines.

The Committee also reiterated that it believes that the role of the group would be enhanced if the Committee Chair were to sit on the PHARMAC Board.

The Committee requested that its brand images, which will be used as the background for Committee materials, be people-oriented.

The Committee noted that the Chair will be attending the November PTAC meeting and this will assist the Committee's reflections on ensuring consumer perspectives are considered in the medicines funding process.

The Committee encouraged PHARMAC to consider structural changes that could be made to better integrate consumers into PHARMAC's processes. In particular the Committee considered that consumer organisations would welcome efforts to seek consumer views on funding applications prior to their consideration by PTAC.

The Committee requested information on how the consultation database is used, and on responses from consumer groups to assess how well the mechanism is working.

The Committee noted that more meetings would better enable the Committee to provide more regular comment on PHARMAC's work. The Committee discussed a secure website as another alternative for PHARMAC to seek feedback from CAC more frequently.

The Committee suggested that its composition should be considered to ensure that it is representative of the community, particularly with regard to young people.

8. Correspondence with consumers

The Committee commented that the letters it had been asked to review could be made more consumer-friendly by using plainer English and being less technical. The Committee commented that people primarily want to know that their request has been given serious consideration and what the outcome is, with some explanation

9. Funding and Procurement update

The committee noted a briefing paper outlining current issues and developments around medicines.

Methyphenidate (Ritalin)

The Committee noted that PHARMAC had put in place a mechanism for those people experiencing adverse effects after switching from Ritalin SR to Rubifen SR.



Metoprolol (Betaloc)

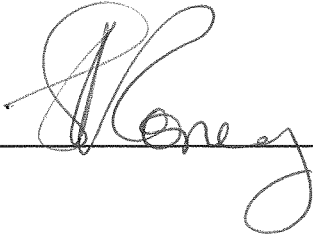
The Committee noted that PHARMAC made a decision to match the price increase with an equivalent increase in the subsidy. The Committee commented that it recognises the opportunity costs of the decision and that the PHARMAC Board should be commended for taking this decision and ensuring that consumers were not disadvantaged.

Trastuzumab (Herceptin)

The Committee discussed the response that has followed PHARMAC and DHB's decision to fund 9 weeks Herceptin, including the SOLD study which will compare 9 weeks with 12 months Herceptin.



Signed



J. Kony

Date

7/3/08
