



19 March 2021

PHARMAC
PO Box 10 254
WELLINGTON 6143
email: consult@pharmac.govt.nz

Re: PHARMAC consultation on PHARMAC advisory committees

The New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists (NZSA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on PHARMAC's consultation which seeks to improve how its committees provide advice to PHARMAC on medicines and consumer experiences. We support PHARMAC's goals in making these changes, which it outlines in its consultation document: to enable consumers to share their perspectives and advice formally, through the committees, to enhance the diversity of the committees, and to strengthen health equity knowledge within the committees. These goals align well with our health sector's increasing focus on health equity and what is a key goal of the Simpson Health and Disability System Review.

The NZSA is very supportive of PHARMAC's commitment to set up a Māori advisory committee to help meet PHARMAC's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to improve Māori health outcomes. Creating linkages between this committee and other PHARMAC advisory committees, such as PTAC, is a very positive change.

About the NZSA

The NZSA is a professional medical education society, which represents over 650 medical anaesthetists in New Zealand. Our members include specialist anaesthetists in public and private practice, and trainee anaesthetists. We facilitate and promote education and research into anaesthesia and advocate for the specialty and the safety of patients. As an advocacy organisation, we develop submissions on government policy and legislation, work collaboratively with key stakeholders, and foster networks of anaesthetists nationwide. The NZSA, established in 1948, also has strong global connections, and is a Member Society of the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists (WFSA).

Comments

Updating the role of the Consumer Advisory Committee

A greater voice for consumers, with greater representation to reflect the diversity of New Zealand, will have a vital role in adding value across PHARMAC's work as they will have input into decision making on medicine funding proposals, policy changes and strategic work. The proposed changes to the clinical advisory committees will enable patient and consumer views to be better heard, and for greater health equity to be achieved.



Updating the role of the Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee

We support having a consumer representative on PTAC and for PHARMAC to call for nominations and provide appropriate remuneration for these representatives, as it does for medical advisors on PTAC. Consumer representation needs to mirror the diversity of our society so that committee decisions reflect the wider views of our community and are based on inclusivity. Consumers may be able to shed light on addressing the causes of medicine access inequity.

The NZSA is happy to discuss our comments and to answer any questions in relation to this consultation. I can be contacted at president@anaesthesia.nz

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheila Hart", is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Sheila Hart
President