

## **Integrated Community Pharmacy Services Agreement National Annual Agreement Review 2024 Meeting 1, 19 February 2024**

### **Statement**

The first meeting of the 2024 Integrated Community Pharmacy Service Agreement (ICPSA) National Annual Agreement Review (NAAR) took place on Monday 19 February 2024 between Te Whatu Ora and the Pharmacy sector representatives. The meeting focussed on setting the context and timelines for NAAR 2024, and the reestablishment of the Expert Advisory Group (EAG). It also covered the Additional Professional Advisory Services (APAS) and unregistered (s26/s29) medicines payment error.

Martin Hefford, Director Living Well, National Commissioning discussed a staged process for NAAR 2024. The short-term focus will be upon the uplift offer and how to apply it. The actual uplift offer will not be available until May 2024 as it links to the government budget process. There is a desire to have everything completed so that the uplift can take place on 1 July 2024 so washup payments are not required. NAAR requested that a range of scenarios for the redistribution of the APAS funds were modelled prior to the budget decision in May, as this would be crucial preparatory work, to fulfil this time frame.

The medium-term emphasis is upon the establishment and operation of the EAG to review existing ICPSA service specifications. A longer-term programme of system redesign will commence shortly leading to a new agreement, with an anticipated implementation in 2026. This work will also focus on funding and workforce issues. Pharmacies will have opportunities for engagement and contribution in all of this work. Provider representatives were in principle supportive of the overall approach and look forward to being engaged in this work.

The terms of reference for the EAG were approved by NAAR. Te Whatu Ora suggested a process for the selection of the representatives for the EAG governance group. This will involve a call for nominations with final decisions made in approximately 8 weeks. The provider representatives suggested some changes, accepted by Te Whatu Ora, emphasising that they themselves would set up a process for the selection of the provider and practising community pharmacist representatives, and expressing the desire to ensure a diverse set of experience and expertise was included.

Provider representatives requested that work be undertaken during these 8 weeks to collect ideas on topics for the EAG work programme adding to some initial suggestions from Te Whatu Ora.

Te Whatu Ora apologised for the APAS and unregistered medicines payment error and appreciates the importance of pharmacy providers having confidence in the operation of the payments system. The error stemmed from an issue in 2023 at which point preventative measures were put in place for the future, but the flow on from the original error was not entirely resolved until early February 2024. Correction of the overpayments and underpayments will be aligned with the ICPSA. Te Whatu Ora appreciated the strong feedback from provider representatives about fulfilling the obligations, including interest payments, in accordance with the ICPSA. The final analysis and communication with pharmacies will be completed as soon as possible.

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