

Integrated Community Pharmacy Services Agreement National Annual Agreement Review 2024 Meeting 2, 4 April 2024

Statement

The second meeting of the 2024 Integrated Community Pharmacy Service Agreement (ICPSA) National Annual Agreement Review (NAAR) took place on Thursday 4 April 2024 between Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora (Health NZ) and the Pharmacy sector representatives. The meeting focussed on the ongoing establishment of the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) and options for the redistribution of Additional Professional Advisory Services (APAS) payments.

A process for the nominations for the provider and pharmacist representatives on the EAG had been proposed to the NAAR representatives, as agreed at the last meeting of NAAR. The process specifies the intention to reach agreement on the EAG membership by consensus, and only if this could not be achieved, a process of weighted voting would be applied.

Some provider representatives in NAAR disagreed, as they felt the method of voting proposed would unfairly benefit the larger provider groups. Some other approaches to the voting were suggested. The discussion covered a number of points including: that it was for NAAR representatives themselves to make the decision on how to proceed, not Health NZ; that it was important to avoid delaying the nominations process further if possible; that there was an overall sense of confidence that larger provider groups would give rigorous attention to the diversity of voices on the EAG. A decision was reached by NAAR to progress with the proposed process, but it was noted that the design of the voting system does not have the agreement of every provider representative in NAAR.

A set of papers was presented to the meeting by Health NZ, including a forecast of expenditure on services under the Integrated Community Pharmacy Services Agreement (ICPSA) and the details of locally commissioned services. The papers also covered a discussion about the APAS funding and the impact of redistributing the spend from APAS into other services. A range of views were expressed on how to approach the shift from APAS funding to service lines. Further consideration will occur when the size of the uplift is known. It was requested, in the meantime, that any further analysis that NAAR wished to be done be communicated by email to Health NZ.

Health NZ has agreed to finance training for mandatory training under the ICPSA and the Care in the Community agreement for the supply of COVID-19 antiviral medicines viz; for clozapine, CPAMS and COVID-19 antiviral medicines. Health NZ is also scoping support for pharmacists to undertake active formal referrals of unregistered pēpi to a PHO/general practice when offering childhood immunisations.

An initial discussion about potential topics for the EAG work programme took place, with some potential priorities emerging, for example, minor health conditions services and whether some locally commissioned services could become national. A formal email with a call for topics for the EAG programme will be sent tomorrow, with responses in by Friday 19 April 2024.

The next meeting will be held in the middle of May rather than late April, to give time for the process for nominations for the EAG to be thoroughly completed.
