



# Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

## Minute of Decision

---

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

---

### Pharmacy Ownership and Licensing: Report Back

**Portfolio**                      **Health**

On 31 August 2022, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee (SWC):

- 1        **noted** that in December 2018, SWC agreed that the consultation document on a therapeutic products regulatory regime include two options for pharmacy licensing and invited the Minister of Health to report back on a recommended approach to pharmacy ownership and licensing criteria [SWC-18-MIN-0176];
- 2        **noted** that the paper attached under SWC-22-SUB-0156 is part of work to modernise New Zealand's therapeutics regulatory scheme, central to which is repealing the Medicines Act 1981, including pharmacy ownership and licensing criteria, and replacing it with the Therapeutic Products Bill;
- 3        **noted** that while the removal of restrictions on pharmacy ownership in the medium to long term would enable innovation in delivery of services, in the short-term, it would create additional uncertainty for the sector while the new health entities and processes are embedded, working relationships are formed with the primary and community care sector and the response to COVID-19 is further managed;
- 4        **agreed** that the current pharmacy ownership provisions and related exemption provisions in the Medicines Act 1981 be retained, by saving those provisions and repealing all other parts of the Act once the Therapeutic Products Bill is enacted, to allow time for pharmacies to embed changes under the new health system and continue addressing the ongoing impacts of COVID-19;
- 5        **invited** the Minister of Health to instruct the Parliamentary Counsel Office to revise the Therapeutic Products Bill to reflect retention of the current pharmacy ownership provisions and the current exemption provision in the Medicines Act 1981 (including renaming the latter Act if necessary).

Rachel Clarke  
Committee Secretary

---

**Attendance: (see over)**

**Present:**

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern  
Hon Grant Robertson  
Hon Kelvin Davis  
Hon Dr Megan Woods  
Hon Chris Hipkins (Chair)  
Hon Poto Williams  
Hon Peeni Henare  
Hon Jan Tinetti  
Hon Kiri Allan  
Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall  
Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan  
Hon Aupito William Sio  
Hon Meka Whaitiri

**Officials present from:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Officials' Committee for SWC

PROACTIVELY RELEASED