

Candidate Information on the Terms and Conditions of Appointment to the National Health Committee

New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000

Introduction

This document provides information for prospective candidates for membership of the National Health Committee. It sets out the:

- functions of the Committee;
- composition of the Committee;
- terms and conditions of appointment; and
- duties and responsibilities of a member.

Function of the Committee

The Committee's function, in line with the requirements of section 13 of the NZPHDA, is to provide advice to the Minister of Health on the quality and mix of services that should, in the Committee's opinion, be publicly funded. In doing so, the Committee should, having regard to available resources, advise the Minister on measures that would deliver the greatest benefit to the health of the population, and groups of the population, with regard to groups at risk of disadvantage.

The Committee is also to advise the Minister on other matters relating to public health, including personal health matters and regulatory matters relating to public health, and any other matters that the Minister specifies.

In fulfilling these tasks, the Committee will promote wider discussion of key strategies and changes relating to publicly funded health services.

The Committee has established a Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC). The PHAC's task is to provide independent advice to the Minister on public health issues, the promotion of public health, the monitoring of public health and any other matters that the National Health Committee specifies.

Working Arrangements

After discussion with the Ministry of Health, the Committee has agreed a work programme with the Minister of Health. A Committee Secretariat, comprising a core of permanent staff led by a Manager and sufficient to meet the Committee's statutory requirements, will be based in the Ministry of Health.

In developing its advice the Committee should:

- adopt an evidence-based approach
- consult with any members of the public, those involved in the provision of health services and services for people with disabilities, and other people that the Committee considers appropriate
- provide the Minister with advance notice of any media statements or reports to be published
- ensure its advice is published and widely available
- consult with District Health Boards on their ability, within the context of their budget constraints, to implement the Committee's advice to the Minister, and be explicit about any extra costs in its advice
- take account of the annual accountability cycle of the District Health Boards and the need for sufficient lead-time for the implementation of new policies.

Performance Measures

The Committee and its subcommittee, the PHAC, will be effectively meeting their key tasks when they provide relevant and timely advice to the Minister of Health based on research, analysis and consultation with appropriate groups and organisations.

The Committee must achieve its agreed work programme and must stay within its allocated budget.

Reporting Requirements

The Committee is required to:

- report at least once a year to the Minister of Health setting out its advice on the quality and mix of services that should, in the Committee's opinion, be publicly funded and on other matters relating to public health, including personal health matters and regulatory matters relating to public health, and any other matters that the Minister specifies, in line with the requirements of section 13 of the NZPHDA
- keep a record of all Committee meetings, which outline the issues discussed, and include a clear note of any decisions taken or recommendations made.

Composition of the Committee

There are 12 members on the Committee. The composition should provide a mix of skills and experience that will contribute to the overall direction and objectives of the Committee. New members will be chosen to remedy any identified shortfall.

Appointments should ensure that there is broad representation of all aspects of the health and disability sector and its extensive networks provide the Committee with excellent links to the views of providers and consumers across the sector.

Members should contribute to the effectiveness of the Committee as a whole by being able to:

- base their advice on an excellent understanding of the broader health and disability sector
- bring to the Committee special expertise, experience and networks in a particular part of the sector that will contribute to the Committee's work
- have an excellent grasp of public policy issues
- debate issues in various forums – in Committee, in focus groups and public discussions, with the Ministers of Health, and with officials
- be prepared to represent the Committee in public and sector meetings
- provide analysis and strategic direction to the work of the Committee
- work with Committee Secretariat to provide oversight for projects for which they are designated sponsors.

Appointment as a Member of the Committee

In making yourself available to be considered for appointment, please ensure that:

- there is no conflict of interest which would preclude your appointment and
- you are available to serve for a term of office of up to 3 years and
- you are able to allocate 2 days per month to the work of the Committee.

Terms and Conditions of Appointment

Members of the Committee and the PHAC shall be appointed for a term of up to three years. Members shall be eligible to serve a second consecutive term to allow for continuity and full use of increased experience and knowledge. Members may, at the discretion of the Minister of Health, be eligible to serve an additional period of up to 12 months to allow for continuity of projects. Members shall have staggered retiring dates to ensure a degree of continuity.

Members, may at any time, resign their office by advising the Minister of Health in writing.

Duties and Responsibilities of a Member

As an independent statutory body, the National Health Committee has an obligation to conduct its activities in an open and ethical manner. Committee has a duty to operate in an effective and consistent manner within the parameters of its functions as set out in section 13 of the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000.

The role of individual member is to have specialist expertise in a particular area in order to provide a wider perspective and contribute to well-informed collective judgements of the Committee.

Meetings and work of the Committee

The Committee usually meets in Wellington on the third Tuesday of the month. On some months the meeting may be via teleconference, rather than face-to-face. Members are expected to attend all committee meetings, including teleconferences, and to contribute to committee work between meetings. This amounts to a commitment of at least 2 days per month.

Committee members also act as sponsors on specific pieces of work, which involves leading discussions in committee meetings, liaising with the secretariat on the development of the project, and (on occasions) speaking to stakeholders about the work. This may require additional time commitments at particular phases of a project.

In addition, members may be required to meet to participate at workshops or meetings established to address specific issues. It is estimated that members would spend up to 25 days per annum on Committee business, including preparation for meetings of the Committee, committee attendance, sponsors meetings and meetings with external bodies.

Fees and Allowances

Members of the National Health Committee are paid fees for attendance at meetings and agreed work as project sponsors. The fee for Committee members is currently \$320.00 (less tax) per day; a half-day meeting preparation fee is also paid. The Committee meets the cost of travel, accommodation and meals within specified administrative arrangements.

More detailed information can be obtained from:

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