

13 May 2008

Adam Paterson
Secretary for the ATM
P O Box 6663
Wellesley Street
AUCKLAND

By email: Adam.Paterson@nzaf.org.nz

Dear Adam

RESPONSE TO YOUR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Thank you for your letter requesting information related to PHARMAC's medicines strategy and high cost medicines review work. I appreciate that the ATM has a continued interest in PHARMAC's work generally, and in our implementation of the actions arising from the medicines strategy.

In the coming weeks we will be releasing information on two of the items in your letter; PHARMAC's response to *Actioning Medicines New Zealand* and the PHARMAC Forum, and our High Cost Medicines Review. We regret that because we have not yet completed these documents we are unable to send them to you at this stage. That said, I recognise it is desirable for you to have some information for your meeting. I am therefore happy to provide the following summary of key work priorities for PHARMAC arising from the medicines strategy (which will be expanded on in the public document):

- formally inviting funding applicants to meet with PHARMAC at the beginning of the funding application process;
- providing guidelines on how to contribute to PHARMAC's decisions;
- with respect to PTAC, reviewing its Guidelines and together with the Ministry of Health reviewing the appointment protocol for its members;
- reviewing the role of the Consumer Advisory Committee; and
- reviewing the exceptional circumstances funding and criteria.

You have also asked for information about the availability of funding for the implementation of *Actioning Medicines New Zealand* initiatives. Funding for the 2008/09 year will not be confirmed until the Minister of Health approves PHARMAC's operating budget. This will occur by the start of PHARMAC's new financial year (1 July 2008). We will contact you to advise of the amount of the budget specified for the implementation of the Medicines Strategy once we have been advised. I note at this time however that it will be quite difficult for us to be definitive about the amount, as the work substantively entails the efforts of a large number of our staff, and that time will not be costed separately for medicines strategy work. For all intents and purposes, the strategy work is now simply

part of what we do; not something separate. That said, we will try and assist you with further information when our budget is approved. We expect to contact you by mid July.

I hope this letter goes at least some way to assisting you with an update that may be useful for your meeting.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dilky Rasiah". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dilky Rasiah
Deputy Medical Director