



Moratorium on Integrated Community Pharmacy Services Agreements applications with Northland DHB

Background

New Zealand Health Strategy, Pharmacy Action Plan 2016-2020, and Integrated Pharmacist Services in the Community outline a future in which pharmacist services, as an essential part of an integrated model of care, are delivered in innovative ways, across a broad range of settings, so that all New Zealanders have equitable access to medicines and healthcare services. At present, Northland DHB does not have a strategy or contracting policy for pharmacy services.

The Integrated Community Pharmacy Services Agreement (ICPSA) is a nationally negotiated and agreed contract. It was introduced nationally on 1 October 2018 and is an evergreen contract, replacing the previous national agreement, the Community Pharmacy Services Agreement (CPSA). Northland's forecast annual expenditure on community pharmacy services is \$48m for 2018-19.

Currently, Northland DHB enters into an ICPSA with all pharmacies that apply for an agreement. The application process is limited; requiring the applicant to meet legislative and regulatory requirements only. It does not take into account whether the pharmacy is expected to improve patient experience, improve population health and reduce inequities.

Decision:

To enable Northland DHB to implement a community pharmacy strategy, an immediate moratorium on all new Integrated Community Pharmacy Services Agreements is in place.

Process:

Northland DHB wishes to consult and develop a community pharmacy strategy which will align with the direction of the New Zealand Health Strategy, the objectives of the Pharmacy Action Plan 2016-2020, and Integrated Pharmacist Services in the Community. The strategy will guide Northland DHB's decisions and actions about pharmacy.

A pharmacy services contracting policy, stemming from this strategy, will specify how and under which conditions Northland DHB will purchase pharmacy services, particularly via the Integrated Community Pharmacy Services Agreements (ICPSA).

The policy will:

- Make reference to how an applicant will contribute to the reduction of health inequities
- What services can be expected to be delivered from the pharmacy
- How the pharmacy will ensure continuous quality improvement of its services to Northlanders.

The draft strategy is expected to be completed in time for it to be approved by the Northland DHB Board at its April or May 2019 meeting. The policy is expected to be completed and approved by the chief executive in time for new ICPSA applications from 1 July 2019.

If you wish to get in touch please email us at communications@northlanddhb.org.nz