



PHARMAC's relationships

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Seek first to understand, then to be understood

Habit Five

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

Stephen Covey



Some of what we've heard...

"Their rooms are named after companies they've chased out of the country"

"Changes to the Schedule are received with dread"

"Consumer groups feel kept at arm's length and patronised"

"Decision making is mysterious"

"PHARMAC staff bonuses are based on the savings made"

"The agency is too money-driven"

"Consultation is simply a formality; it's not meaningful"

"They don't reply to e-mails; seems like it's a policy"

"Drug choices are being limited and this has a detrimental effect on health"

"The budget isn't big enough"



Which suggests ...

We may be talking past each other on some things

Communication & engagement can be improved

PHARMAC may be missing out on useful information

We may be wasting time if perceptions are wrong

We may be missing the opportunities that arise from open and positive dialogue



Today's focus is what can we do to ensure we better understand each other?

Any and all ideas welcome



How can PHARMAC move forward?

What can't PHARMAC change?

Our statutory objective and functions

Evidence will always be important

Medicines funding not about rewarding the squeaky wheel

Some information cannot be shared

What can PHARMAC change?

Seek first to understand

Stakeholder survey generated suggestions

We have some ideas, but remain all ears



But what's engagement really about?

Building relationships to improve working together

Respecting each others views, even when disagreeing

Improve mutual understanding

Ensuring PHARMAC fully informed when making decisions

More collaboration and cooperation



We aren't starting from scratch ...

Meetings

Consultation

Funding decisions

Changes to policies and procedures

Wide mailing lists utilised

Extensive work with others on 'optimal use' initiatives

Considerable information published & available



And the stakeholder survey noted . . .

Seen as professional and trustworthy

Doing a good job in a difficult environment

Recent improvements have been noticed



Five work areas seem helpful ...

Capability – our skills and competencies

Getting out and about – more listening, meeting, greeting

Style and tone – it's all about the reader / recipient

Priority stakeholder groups – not spreading too thin

Coordination and evaluation – actively managed

... but depends on feedback today



Other suggestions have included . . .

“Earlier engagement over proposals”

“Better communication around process followed”

“Better explanation of decisions”

“Easier ways for people to participate in the process”

“More information to medical groups to better manage changes”

“Greater use of the internet for communications”

“Greater feedback on consultation responses and its influence”

... but, again, open to others



In summary ...

PHARMAC wants to do better

Better communication and engagement ...

first seek to understand

mutual & system-wide benefits

not always about agreeing, but understanding

The *Forum* ...

builds on positive existing activity

valuable in further advancing PHARMAC's work

an important next step, not an end



“By improving our communication and stakeholder engagement activity, we aim to better understand stakeholder views so our decisions are based on the best possible information. We also want PHARMAC’s processes, decisions and views to be better understood. We will not always agree, but better understanding among stakeholders is ultimately good for everyone.”



**What should PHARMAC
keep doing, stop doing or
start doing to improve its
relationships?**

