



Community Panel Meeting Minutes

Date	13 April 2022
Time	6.00-8.00pm
Venue	Zoom
Attendees	Api Talemaitoga, Aram Kim, Callum Woodhouse, Jordon Milroy, Margaret Brown, Michelle Mascoll, Sarah Sparks, Martin Rodgers (DPMC Secretariat), Louise Cox (DPMC Secretariat), Rachel Sutherland (DPMC Secretariat), Debbie Ryan (CICRIAG), Kay Baxter (DPMC), Glenn Patrick (NZ Customs Service), Mariana Pobornikova (NZ Customs Service)
Chair	Sarah Sparks
Minute taker	Louise Cox
Apologies	Hafsa Ahmed, Anthony Taueki

Items 1-3: Welcome and confirmation of minutes

1. Sarah opened the meeting and welcomed the Community Panel (the Panel) members and other attendees.
2. The minutes from the 2 March 2022 meeting were confirmed.

Item 4: DPMC discussion on the approach to COVID-19 management post-winter 2022

Refer to 13 April 2022 presentation: Initial thinking COVID-19 “post-winter” strategy for the medium and long term

3. Kay Baxter, DPMC Policy Manager, presented to the Panel on the initial thinking regarding the COVID-19 post-winter strategy for the medium and long term. The presentation covered:
 - a. the proposed framing for the next stage of the COVID-19 journey
 - b. virus variant scenarios
 - c. the shifts in our strategy through the course of the pandemic
 - d. the proposed strategic approach
 - e. Te Tiriti o Waitangi and equity
 - f. giving effect to the proposed strategy.

4. Kay invited feedback and Sarah opened to the Panel for whakaaro.
5. The Panel provided feedback that traversed the following areas and points:
 - a. Suggested reconsideration of use of the term 'open' as it could engender the sense of being or becoming more vulnerable
 - b. The importance of the concept of 'restoring' that could be included, particularly in recognition that a lot of people in the community are feeling abandoned and the issue of backlogs in health care due to the need to prioritise the COVID-19 response
 - c. Wording could more strongly convey the movement away from restrictive measures to focus on different priorities, including explicitly setting out how vulnerable people will be protected
 - d. Suggested use of terms that are already familiar to the public to maintain consistency and reduce the sense among the public that plans and strategies are frequently changing. It was suggested further that the 'green, orange and red' terms could continue to be used to achieve continuity
 - e. Questions around what 'agile in the community' means and how this translates into what people need to do, particularly given the fatigue that is present in the community
 - f. Baseline measures should
 - i. include support for people suffering from long COVID
 - ii. better reflect the key role of the community
6. There was further conversation on messaging to communities with the Panel raising that simplicity in communicating changes is key to taking the community along on the journey successfully. Furthermore, the Panel highlighted that honesty, compassion and kindness need to be conveyed and followed with actions. Consideration of other language and accessible format requirements was noted as needing to be forefront as well as messaging aimed at younger people.
7. The Panel members suggested that measuring the effectiveness of communications should be explicitly included in the strategy.
8. Sarah asked how the voices of tangata whenua have been able to feed into the work, noting that Māori communities are diverse in perspectives and needs. She noted that Māori apply a holistic approach rather than a linear approach that government tends to apply. She further raised that stakeholder mapping within te ao Māori is important. Kay responded that they have been regularly meeting with iwi chairs and other Māori organisations and noted that ministers are also directly engaging with Māori groups.
9. Kay thanked Sarah and the Panel for their time and the discussion.

Item 5: COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group – lessons from response to Omicron discussion

10. Louise introduced COVID-19 Independent Continuous Review, Improvement and Advice Group (CICRIAG) member Dr Debbie Ryan and provided a brief description of the rapid review being carried out by the CICRIAG to identify lessons from the response to Omicron, with a focus on capabilities.

11. The Panel reflected on lessons based on their perspectives and experiences which included:
- a. Gaps forming where communities have needed to step in to fill, such as:
 - i. Issues where people are too sick to go and be tested (and consequent delays in access to support services)
 - ii. Delays in availability of information in other languages
 - iii. Anxiety caused by requirements to provide private information to access food parcels (such as names and phone numbers)
 - b. Issues for people to access support where they have become overstayers due to border settings and travel issues
 - c. Lack of rainbow-friendly policies and guidance resulting in people experiencing homophobic behaviour when seeking support and a lack of feedback mechanisms to report and track these issues
 - d. Good collaboration and an integrative approach not seen before in terms of government agencies and non-government sectors
 - e. Pressure points around contracting caused lags in procuring sufficient workforce capacity, and rigid protocols in contracts inhibited pace
 - f. Capability to undertake strategic analysis of communications was a gap, and while the government did their best with the resources available, there is a great opportunity to build a workforce to incorporate into routine business-as-usual activities
 - g. Tangata whenua need to be included from the beginning with the right protocols so they can be a part of problem solving processes
 - h. Inequity of access to tools with, for example, rapid antigen test distribution being tightly controlled by central government. It was further raised that these types of approaches have led to providers feeling they are not trusted
 - i. Insensitivity of the system towards people with disabilities who are being left behind (for example, a lack of priority service in recognition that a disabled person may not be able to wait on hold for an extended period of time to access phone-based call centres)
 - j. Data needs to be used in a smarter way to develop nuanced strategies and delivery approaches to target those disproportionately impacted, as well as better access to data for those responding on the frontline
 - k. Business as usual has been neglected which is causing concern in areas such as childhood vaccination rates, flu vaccination rates, cervical screening and mammograms, delays in wait times to see specialists
 - i. It was raised further that the question of who is going to cover the cost of the workforce within service providers to deliver influenza vaccinations is becoming an issue for tangata whenua that needs to be addressed.

Item 6: NZ Customs Service update on NZ Traveller Declaration

Refer to 13 April 2022 New Zealand Traveller Declaration presentation

12. Sarah welcomed Glenn Patrick and Mariana Pobornikova from the New Zealand Customs Service and invited them to provide an update to the Panel on the New Zealand Traveller Declaration (NZTD) work. Glenn talked through a presentation that covered:
 - a. Description and detail of the declaration
 - b. Changes for travellers
 - c. Improvements in accessibility
 - d. A friends and whanau toolkit
13. Sarah opened discussion up to the Panel for their whakaaro.
14. There was discussion on the following areas:
 - a. The requirement for all travellers to complete the form (including babies and young children), noting there are different vaccination requirements for different age brackets
 - b. High compliance with requirement to complete the declaration to date
 - c. Costs associated with the declaration including the requirement to undertake a supervised pre-departure test. It was noted this was already a requirement prior to the implementation of the NZTD
 - d. Time out periods on the website and the duration to complete form with this comment related to whether it is fit for purpose for disabled persons
 - e. Alternative options to ensure digital access does not prohibit people's ability to complete the NZTD
 - f. The iterative nature of the process and the acknowledgement that the process will continue to evolve.

Item 7: Review of the COVID-19 independent advisory groups/panels

15. Sarah updated the Panel that there is work underway at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to review the future of the independent ministerial advisory groups and the Panel beyond June 2022. She suggested to the Panel that she send out a survey to the Panel members for their feedback. The Panel members were agreeable to the survey concept.
16. Sarah raised that she would like to hear from officials in key agencies on their experience with the Panel and their needs for such a rōpū.

Item 8: Meeting closure and karakia

17. The meeting closed with a karakia from Aram.
18. The next meeting will take place on 4 May 2022, 6.00 – 8.00pm.