

## **News Release**

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### **Janssen responds to Pharmac Independent Review panel final report with three-step-plan to improve medicine's access**

**Auckland, New Zealand, 01 June 2022** – Janssen's New Zealand Country Manager Amy Wilkinson today welcomed the release of the Independent Pharmac Review Panel final report and commended the Panel for their thorough and comprehensive assessment and their strong focus on addressing equity.

The report highlighted troubling gaps in access to life saving medicines, and the widening disparity that New Zealanders face compared to many other developed countries. It also highlighted the need for more meaningful engagement with patients and their whānau and bring patients into the decision-making process.

Janssen has outlined a three-step-plan that would enable sick and vulnerable New Zealanders to live longer, healthier, and happier lives.

"This review has shown New Zealanders deserve better. It is unacceptable that our friends, whanau, and community don't have access to life saving medicines that are available in all other developed countries," Ms Wilkinson said.

"That is why we must clear the backlog, fix the funding model, and give patients a seat at the table.

"We do not believe this plan would involve additional overall expenditure by government. Rather, we believe that a strategic investment in medicines would be more than offset by a reduction in hospital admissions, social welfare, and an increase in workforce participation rates."

Ms Wilkinson said there are three immediate actions the government can take in response to the review:

### **Clear the backlog**

- Immediately fund the growing list of 73 medicines which are currently included on Pharmac's own prioritised waiting list. There are New Zealanders waiting right now who's lives depend on these medicines
- Commit to funding medicines that have been assessed as having a high clinical benefit, unmet need and are cost effective

### **Fix the funding model**

- Update Pharmac's statutory objective. Enable Pharmac to invest in cost effective medicines that improve health, societal and economic outcomes and remove legal requirements that lead to an excessive focus on cost containment
- Outline a pathway to sustainable investment in medicines and develop a long-term strategy, drawing on international best practice, that determines the critical role lifesaving medicines can play in the lives of all New Zealanders

### **Give patients a seat at the table**

- Ensure that funding decisions are made by those who are impacted by them and give patients, including Māori a formal role in decision-making processes
- All funding decisions made by Pharmac must be accompanied by a formal Patient Impact Statement that transparently details how patient's views were considered as part of the process

"Janssen believes this three-step-plan will ultimately save lives and create healthier and happier communities. We recognise the role and responsibility that we have to provide cost-effective solutions and to closely collaborate with government, Pharmac and patients to improve health outcomes for all New Zealanders. We look forward to discussing these opportunities," Ms Wilkinson concluded.

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