

Establishing an Independent Commentator Panel



Number **two** in a series



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Contents

Introduction	3
Definition and purpose of the Independent Commentator	3
Principles.....	4
Terms of Reference.....	5
Modus Operandi	6
Membership criteria	7
Conclusion.....	7

Independent Commentator Panel

Introduction

Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB) seeks to be at the forefront of a healthcare revolution that begins in the community, is firmly focused on innovation, and is recognised as good as or better than that found elsewhere in comparable health systems around the world. This is their vision, and the primary reason they are embracing a transformational change process which will assist them in achieving it. Ko Awatea is the vehicle for this change, locally and more widely and is well positioned to draw upon expertise within NZ and abroad to achieve the goal.

This paper introduces the concept of an Independent Commentator Panel as a component of that transformational change initiative. The work is intended to positively affect the provision and delivery of best in class healthcare services and improved population health for CMDHB constituent communities. It aims to:

- develop and achieve cutting edge solutions both to improve efficiency and to achieve effective application of high quality healthcare,
- secure maximum patient safety,
- shift from a focus on treatment to one of prevention and early intervention, and
- realise a step change in the health of constituent communities.

Definition and purpose of the Independent Commentator

In order to achieve the vision and aims described above, we propose the establishment of an authoritative and widely drawn expert group to function as an ‘Independent Commentator’ and source of impartial informed opinion for the Board and Executive Team of Counties Manukau District Health Board. The purpose of the Independent Commentator panel will be to work in association with Ko Awatea to assist CMDHB in successfully meeting key challenges, to comment on the progress of current on-going initiatives and to network with recognised cross-sector organisations and individuals in both New Zealand and the international arena which are sources of expert, impartial and informed opinion and practices in the delivery of best in class healthcare and in the general improvement of population health.

The Independent Commentator panel would be a conduit for change by providing CMDHB with:

- A ‘think tank’ and ‘sounding board’ – the panel will provide independent advice to CMDHB and Ko Awatea’s that will inform their work programme;
- A forum for debate and discussion around topics such as:
 - Relevance: emerging health issues and ideas;
 - Speedier improvement in health and social care provisions;
 - Evaluation and advice on best international systems and practices;
- An avenue to provide support for CMDHB initiatives, goals and aspirations;
- Acquisition of information, knowledge and insight in a New Zealand context; and
- Promotion of the need to rebalance and refine the health and social care system within Counties Manukau.

The Independent Commentator panel could also act as the ‘conscience’ for health as the CMDHB addresses issues such as:

- Increased demand
- Higher expectations from constituents
- Financial constraints
- Inability to sustain ‘status quo’
- Lack of engagement and urgency
- Fear of change
- Moral and economic imperative to reduce social inequalities.

Principles

One of the most important first tasks in implementing transformational change is to agree a set of principles. The principles outlined in this proposal represent a whole of health system approach not just the principles associated with the Independent Commentator panel. They are indicative only and reflect the experience from the Bevan Commission in Wales and are informed by consultation with limited CMDHB staff. **Table 1** on the next page provides these indicative principles along with the current vision and values for CMDHB and Ko Awatea. Of note is the high level of similarity and conceptual coherence between the IC indicative principles and the stated vision and values of CMDHB/Ko Awatea.

A formal set of principles would be developed by the Independent Commentator panel once established and would be informed by a wider consultation so that they truly represent the desired state within CMDHB.

Once the principles are determined they will, in turn, help drive the agenda for the Independent Commentator panel and for CMDHB more broadly. They will provide a foundation from which to measure the outcomes of the transformational change and a navigation point from which to innovate and move forward.

Table 1: Principles, Vision and Values

Indicative IC Principles	CMDHB and Ko Awatea vision and values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Universal access, based on need (proportionate universalism); •Comprehensive, within available resources; •A shared responsibility for health between the people of Counties Manukau and the CMDHB; •A service that values people; •Getting the best from the resources available; •A need to ensure health is reflected in all policies; •Minimising the effects of disadvantage on access and outcome; •A high quality service that maximises patient safety; •Patient and public accountability; and •Achieving continuous performance improvement across all dimensions of healthcare 	<p><i>Vision:</i> To work in partnership with communities to improve the health status of all, with particular emphasis on Maori and Pacific peoples and other communities with health disparities. We will do this by leading the development of an improved system of healthcare that is more accessible and better integrated. We will dedicate ourselves to serving our patients and communities by ensuring the delivery of both quality focussed and cost effective healthcare, at the right place, right time and right setting. Counties Manukau District Health Board will be a leader in the delivery of successful secondary and tertiary healthcare, and supporting primary and community care.</p> <p><i>Values:</i></p> <p><i>Care & Respect</i> Treating people with respect and dignity; valuing individual and cultural differences and diversity.</p> <p><i>Teamwork</i> Achieving success by working together and valuing individual and cultural differences and diversity.</p> <p><i>Professionalism</i> Acting with integrity and embracing the highest ethical standards.</p> <p><i>Innovation</i> Constantly seeking and striving for new ideas and solutions.</p> <p><i>Responsibility</i> Using and developing our capabilities to achieve outstanding results and taking accountability for our individual and collective actions.</p> <p><i>Partnership</i> Working alongside and encouraging others in health and related sectors to ensure a common focus on, and strategies for achieving health gain and independence for our population.</p>

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference (ToR) for the Independent Commentator Panel should clearly describe the purpose and structure of the panel and should include details of the group’s vision, objectives, scope and deliverables (i.e. what has to be achieved). The ToR may also define who will take part in the group (stakeholders, roles and responsibilities), how it will be achieved (resource, financial, and quality plans) and when it will be achieved (work schedule and structure).

A ToR for the Independent Commentator panel may resemble the ToR for the Bevan Commission (adapted below).

- The Independent Commentator Panel is supported by CMDHB and Ko Awatea but is independent from CMDHB and the Ministry of Health. Its role is to observe, interpret, analyse and comment on health-related matters in Counties Manukau and outside and advise the Board and Executive on actions to address this.
- In particular it will advise the Board and Executive on:
 - the performance of CMDHB in relation to their vision, values, and principles,
 - how CMDHB is tracking in terms of addressing the key challenges,
 - how to assess whether CMDHB is achieving its ambition of building health and human services in Counties Manukau that meet the needs of their constituents and are comparable with the best anywhere.
- The Independent Commentator panel will operate under the Chatham House rule.
- The group may commission papers, request advice and seek information.
- The group will inform the Board through its Chair of the work it is doing.
- The group will be expected to maintain its own website where it can publish reports.

Modus Operandi

The Independent Commentator panel will be an independent body supported by CMDHB and Ko Awatea. The panel will have no formal role in relation to the routine management or governance arrangements of Counties Manukau District Health Board or the Ministry of Health.

The way the Independent Commentator panel will work includes:

- Free and open discussion under the Chatham House Rule;
- Agree remit and written constitution;
- Sound governance;
- Regular plenary sessions;
- “Electronic” working between meetings;
- Preparation and approval of specific papers:
 - advice and recommendations
 - ‘think pieces’
 - informing policy-makers; and
- Feedback from Board and Executive.

We propose that members of the panel be selected and appointed by a group consisting of the CMDHB Board Chair, Professor Sir Mansel Aylward and the CEO of CMDHB. We recommend that panel members not be paid for their participation – however, costs for travel and other incidentals should be covered. The New Zealand based Chair will be expected to participate in Panel business 3 days per month but will not be paid if the position is held by the Board Chair.

The panel will be made up of not more than 10 members chosen based on the criteria outlined below. Members will predominantly reside in New Zealand, however, international representation is encouraged if their membership would add value and credibility to the work of the group. We propose 3 members from Auckland, 4 members from New Zealand but outside Auckland, and 3 international members.

Membership criteria

Members of the Independent Commentator panel should be chosen based on their merit. They should have the ability to offer an authoritative view of health and healthcare systems that would be of value to CMDHB and should be people who have made a difference in their chosen area of expertise either in New Zealand or internationally. They should be highly respected by their peers and others, they should be influential on a local, national or international stage, and they need to have the ability to provide independent advice, thereby ruling out CMDHB or Ministry of Health employees.

In addition to the attributes outlined above, the panel must represent a mix of sectors in the health and human services field. Specifically, Table 2 below includes disciplines that should be considered in choosing panel members:

Table 2: Disciplines to consider for Panel membership

Population Health	Voluntary and/or charitable sector	Education
Hospital Services Administration	Local Government	Integrated Services
Representative Physician Body	Primary Care	Elderly
Health Economics	Secondary Care	Nursing
Academia	Maori and Pacifica Health	Child Health and Wellbeing
Hospital Services Administration	Health Inequities	Social Services (e.g. housing, transportation, ECE, child protection, WINZ, etc)

Conclusion

Following Board approval of the concept of an Independent Commentator panel, we will further develop the topics in this paper and provide more details in each of the sections. We will seek input from a variety of knowledgeable people both within and outside CMDHB.