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| **Towards Medicines Access Equity - Reflections on a Paradigm Shift in New Zealand’s Pharmaceutical Management Agency** |
| **Conference sub-theme addressed**Ensure health equity throughout the life course, within and among countries, making each member of the global society an empowered lifelong learner. **Relevant experience or practice**The legislative mandate of PHARMAC (New Zealand’s pharmaceutical management agency) is ‘to secure for eligible people in need of pharmaceuticals, the best health outcomes that are reasonably achievable from pharmaceutical treatment and from within the amount of funding provided’. This mandate cannot be achieved while access to medicines remains inequitably distributed between different population groups in New Zealand. In 2017, PHARMAC adopted a strategic goal of eliminating inequitable access to medicines by 2025. The setting of this ‘Bold Goal’ has galvanised organisational change and highlighted the need for strong leadership to incorporate an equity lens throughout all aspects of PHARMAC’s medicine funding decision-making. Creating the case and foundations for a paradigm shift towards equity of medicines access has been an ongoing and challenging process. **Implications for health promotion**PHARMAC’s reflections on this emerging journey may provide useful lessons for government agencies or other organisations working to improve health equity. **Implications for sustainable development**Many New Zealanders are missing out on the opportunity to improve their health through the use of medicines – which is a waste of human potential, and a major health sector concern. PHARMAC’s work on medicines access equity contributes towards the Sustainable Development Goals of ‘good health and well-being’ and ‘reduced inequalities’.  |