Appendix A

THE GOVERNMENT MINUTE

The Government's Response to the Report of
The Standing Public Accounts Committee (PAC)
On the Report of the Auditor General entitled:

HSA Outpatient Pharmacy Services (November 2021)

April, 2024

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1. BACKGROUND

Section 77(7) of the Legislative Assembly Standing Orders (2018 Revision) states that the Government Minute shall be laid on the Table of the House within three months of the laying of the report of the Standing Public Accounts Committee ("the Committee") and of the report of the Auditor General to which it relates.

This Government Minute constitutes the Government's response to the Report of the Standing Public Accounts Committee tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 8th June, 2022 on the following Report prepared by the Auditor General:

- **HSA Outpatient Pharmacy Services (November 2021)**

The Government Minute lists any additional PAC recommendations made in relation to the Auditor General's report, together with Management Responses submitted by the relevant Government Ministry/Portfolio to which each recommendation relates.

2. MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO PAC RECOMMENDATIONS

In its report, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) endorsed and supported the recommendations of the Office of the Auditor General ("OAG") and made seven (7) additional recommendations.

The additional PAC recommendations and the Management Responses to these recommendations are provided below.

PAC Recommendation 1 Responsibility: CO, Ministry of Health and Wellness

The PAC recommends that the Government ensures that the revised Pharmacy Act adequately covers the importation and use of alternative or complementary medicines.

Management Response:

Amendments to the revised Pharmacy Act (now with Legal Drafting) do not cover the importation. This is due to the fact that additional research is required. In partnership with the Pharmacy Council and other relevant stakeholders, the Ministry will conduct thorough research on recommendations for amendments.

PAC Recommendation 2 Responsibility: CO, Ministry of Health and Wellness

The PAC recommends that the Government revise the Pharmacy Act at least every five years to ensure that it is in line with international best practice and industry standards.

Management Response:

The Ministry acknowledges the recommendation and will carry out reviews of the Pharmacy Act

at least every five years to ensure that it is in line with international best practice and industry standards.

PAC Recommendation 3	Responsibility: Chief Pharmacist and Deputy Medical Director (DMD)

The PAC recommends that the HSA revisit the 2014 recommendations made by the Consultant that were not accepted at the time (reference OAG recommendation 10) and implement them for the majority, if not all, pharmacy patients.

Management Response:
Some pharmacy systems dispense 28-day, 60-day or 90-day supplies of medications taken for chronic illnesses. Each supply framework has its pros and cons. The CIHSA agrees with the benefits to patients associated with frequent transiting to and from the hospital when supplies of a shorter duration are dispensed, especially within the elderly and at-risk groups, and has put in place a delivery system to address this need. However:

1. Current drug shortages have again reduced our ability to fulfil the suggestion of moving to a 90-day framework. These shortages are primarily due to COVID-19 associated raw material/ manufacturing delays.
2. The number of current patients and subsequent new patients attending the hospital limits our ability to consistently dispense quantities in excess of 1 to 2 month's supply.
3. Three-month supplies are given to patients traveling overseas for treatment or students studying overseas.

Please note:
In addition to these factors, as previously outlined to the OAG auditors, the HSA Pharmacy management observed situations where:

1. Patients presented several months of untaken drugs when asked to do so for verification (some of which may have been expired based on the dispensing date).
2. Referred to the large number of a particular drug(s) at home, not taken.
3. This has represented serious wastage.

PAC Recommendation 4	Responsibility: Chief Pharmacist and Deputy Medical Director (DMD)

The PAC recommends that the HSA publishes the KPIs for pharmacies in all pharmacy locations so that the public are aware of these.

Management Response:
This recommendation was completed. Lists of the KPIs are displayed in all CIHSA Pharmacies.

PAC Recommendation 5	Responsibility: Chief Pharmacist and Deputy Medical Director (DMD)

The PAC recommends that the HSA regularly publishes performance against the pharmacy KPIs. This could be done by publishing the actual performance against KPIs in each pharmacy location.

Management Response:
To fulfil this recommendation, data is currently being compiled via a number of systems. It is agreed that quarterly publications be made available via the HSA's newsletter and other media. This is set to commence at the end of the 4th quarter of this year.

PAC Recommendation 6 Responsibility: CO, Ministry of Health and Wellness

The PAC recommends that the Chief Officer of the Ministry of Health and Wellness provide a formal update to the Committee as at the end of March 2022 on progress with the development of a national health strategy and revising the legal framework for healthcare.

Management Response:
The Ministry commenced work and began looking into forming a steering committee. Research is being conducted by the Ministry's policy team. The Ministry has met with PAHO Representatives to start the process with them as a facilitator as they were in the past.

PAC Recommendation 7 Responsibility: Deputy Governor

The PAC recommends that the Deputy Governor reports back to the Committee on whether the process for submitting Government Minutes via the Cabinet has been changed. If the process has not changed, the Deputy Governor should explain how he will ensure that Government Minutes are submitted within the timeframe required by the Parliament's Standing Orders.

Management Response:
The Deputy Governor will be laying Government Minutes in the House of Parliament after they have been reviewed by Cabinet. Personnel within the Office of the Deputy Governor have been designated to collaborate with Chief Officers and other government entity leaders to provide the information required for the Government Minute.