

Aide-Mémoire

Reimagining Māori health – progress update

Date due to MO:	13 December 2023	Action required by:	N/A
Security level:	IN CONFIDENCE	Health Report number:	H2023034014
To:	Hon Dr Shane Reti, Minister of Health		
Consulted:	Health New Zealand: <input type="checkbox"/> Māori Health Authority: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Contact for telephone discussion

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To: Hon Dr Shane Reti, Minister of Health

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Purpose

1. This note provides background information on the key steps required for the disestablishment of the Māori Health Authority by 30 June 2024; and a longer-term pathway to lift health outcomes for Māori by moving decision-making closer to homes.
2. The background information draws from the discussion with the Ministry of Health (Ministry) and the Māori Health Authority on 12 December 2023, and the in-principle decisions made to date. It also signals upcoming policy advice, providing a timeline of next steps and key messages for further discussion (Appendix 1).

Background

3. The Government has committed in its 100-day plan to disestablish the Māori Health Authority. You have signalled a direction of travel towards improving health outcomes for Māori through an approach centred on lifting every health metric for Māori by moving decision-making closer to home, and strengthening local and iwi input into decision-making.
4. You have agreed to a legislative and policy work programme to deliver on this, and made in-principle decisions about transitional arrangements (H2023032885 and MHA33202 refers). The approach marks a step change from the currently centralised and structure-focused system towards more streamlined and localised arrangements. In summary, the changes will:
 - a. rationalise strategy, policy and monitoring functions within the Ministry as your principal advisor
 - b. shift operations, including operational policy and service delivery to Health New Zealand, along with support for Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards
 - c. refocus the Hauora Māori Advisory Committee as an independent advisor to you on the performance of Health New Zealand and wider system level outcomes for Māori, with secretariat support from the Ministry of Health
 - d. grow the capability and capacity of Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards over time, as a precursor to shifting decision-making around resources closer to home, with further policy advice to be developed on the best mechanisms and resource needed to achieve this intent and the timeframe over which the readiness of Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards would be developed.

5. Ahead of progressing with Cabinet decisions on disestablishment, and recognising the need for some early communication to staff and providers, it is important to discuss the proposed direction of travel and key timeframes to identify any potential concerns or issues with your Ministerial colleagues.

Work underway

6. To meet the Government's commitment to introduce legislation within the first 100 days, legislation to disestablish the Māori Health Authority must be introduced to Parliament by 8 March 2024. The proposed legislation will have a scope that focuses on the changes needed to disestablish the Māori Health Authority and shift key operational functions to Health New Zealand and the Ministry. It will also realign decision-making provisions for Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards to be more locally focused.
7. In tandem with the legislation, work is underway to identify and prepare functions and staff to transition to the Ministry and Health New Zealand and develop policy options to shift decision-making and resources closer to homes, who are best placed to understand and meet local needs in an efficient and effective way, ultimately delivering better outcomes for Māori.
8. The formal disestablishment of the Māori Health Authority is proposed to happen on 30 June 2024, with work able to commence once preliminary decisions are made. Officials (Ministry and Māori Health Authority) have started preparatory work to understand and timetable the transfer of staff as soon as feasible, to facilitate early reform while legislation is progressed.

Upcoming advice

9. On 20 December 2023, the Ministry will provide you with a draft Cabinet paper seeking decisions to progress the legislative change outlined above. At the same time, we will provide further advice on current Waitangi Tribunal claims and seek your steers on:
- a. options to revise the role of the Hauora Māori Committee as a key independent advisor to the Minister of Health, including identification of steps to strengthen the monitoring function, and consideration of lifting their attention towards the performance of Health New Zealand (Te Whatu Ora), and system level outcomes, for Māori. Changes to the appointment process may also need to be considered.
 - b. options for the future role and functions of Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards that will strengthen local Māori say in the health system, along with a developmental pathway that has an immediate focus on building their capability and capacity to fulfil current and future functionality. This recognises the unique role and potential of Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards in representing Māori community needs and aspirations in the health system.



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Group Manager, Māori Crown Relations
Māori Health
13/12/23



Geoff Short
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Transformation Management Office
13/12/23

Appendix 1: Timeline and key messages

Key messages

- I will be bringing advice to Cabinet in January to progress our manifesto and coalition commitments to disestablish the Māori Health Authority and remove co-governance provisions from the health system. Meeting our commitment to introduce legislation within the first 100 days requires quick decision-making based on a shared vision for the future health system.
- This decision has significant implications for Māori. It will be important to share a joined-up vision and direction for our alternative approach to lifting Māori health outcomes and to communicate this with Māori and the health sector.
- It is clear we need to lift Māori health outcomes across every metric, and I have established a programme of work to deliver this at pace.
- Within the next three months, in tandem with the legislative programme, I am proposing to shift critical operational functions to Health New Zealand to ensure continued service delivery. This provides a better platform to achieve more efficient service planning and investment in future. I will also be reintegrating policy and monitoring functions within the Ministry of Health, simplifying the current arrangements.
- I am also progressing options with officials to shift decision-making and resource closer to communities who are best placed to understand and meet local needs within the next three years. This includes strengthening the capability and capacity of Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards to represent the local needs, aspirations and decision-making of Māori in the health system, and maintaining an independent Māori advisory function for the Minister of Health to hear directly how well the system is performing (via a refocused Hauora Māori Advisory Committee) **s 9(2)(f)(iv)**
- Getting these foundations right will position us well for further changes to the way primary health care is designed, planned and delivered in future to better meet local needs and achieve our targets for the health system.

Timeline

11-15 December 2023	Agency consultation on draft Cabinet paper
19 December 2023	Ministry of Health provides draft Cabinet paper and further advice on the future of Māori health including roles for Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards and Hauora Māori Advisory Committee
17 January 2024	Cabinet Committee
22 January 2024	Cabinet Drafting instructions to PCO
31 January 2024	Organisation design work to support transfer complete
21 February 2024	Cabinet Legislation Committee
26 February 2024	Cabinet Introduction
5 March 2024	Anticipated date for first reading and referral to Health Committee
8 March 2024	Final date to meet 100 day commitment
29 March 2024	Function and staff transfer complete
1 July 2024	Formal disestablishment of the Māori Health Authority