

## **FACTSHEET: INTERNATIONAL DOCTORS PATHWAY**

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March 2025

### **Description:**

Up to 100 overseas-trained doctors will be supported in supervised roles in primary care over two years. Health New Zealand will be expanding its existing two-year training programme to give internationally trained doctors the opportunity to gain full registration through a primary care pathway.

This builds on the previous successful pilot programme run out of the Waikato District.

### **Expected benefits:**

- New Zealand will have more doctors working in primary care and in the health system, supporting better outcomes for patients.
- Placements in primary care settings mean doctors connect into those communities and can quickly put their skills to use.
- Primary and community health care plays a critical role in people's health by preventing illness, treating disease early and reducing the impact of long-term conditions.
- Keeping people well improves their quality of life and reduces the pressure on our hospitals.

### **Facts and figures:**

- This initiative will cost \$23.940 million over four years.
- It currently takes 8 years to train to work as a doctor in general practice in New Zealand, and an additional 3 years to qualify as a specialist GP.
- Overseas-trained doctors participating in this initiative have already completed their foundational qualifications, meaning they can support New Zealand communities more quickly.
- The international doctors' pathway into primary care will have rolling intakes throughout 2025 and 2026 as the international medical graduates pass the New Zealand Registration Exam (NZREX).
- This initiative will include supervision and training to complete postgraduate year 1 (PGY1) and postgraduate year 2 (PGY2) in our primary care system.
- 10 of these 100 places are already being funded through Health New Zealand baseline funding.
- The Medical Council of New Zealand's announced in December that it would be tripling the number of places to sit the New Zealand registration exams (NZREX) for internationally trained doctors this year (from 60 to 180 places).