

Hon Simeon Brown

Minister of Health
Minister for State Owned Enterprises
Minister for Auckland



3 June 2025

Professor Lester Levy
Commissioner
Health New Zealand

By email to: Lester.levy@tewhatauora.govt.nz

Dear Lester,

In March 2025, I communicated to you my overarching expectation that Health NZ is relentless in its pursuit of the delivery of more and better health services for New Zealanders. This included specific expectations to enable faster access to primary care.

I am now writing to communicate my specific expectations in relation to strengthened urgent and after-hours care.

As you are aware, this Government is committed to improving health outcomes by providing New Zealanders with timely access to high-quality services, delivered by a financially sustainable health system. To support this, I recently announced a four-year, \$164 million, investment in new and improved urgent and after-hours healthcare. This investment will enable a more nationally consistent service and support Health Target performance.

My specific expectations of Health NZ in relation to new and improved urgent and after-hours care are as follows:

- 1. Delivery against the urgent and after-hours framework:** I expect Health NZ to implement the changes in urgent and after-hours healthcare as described in the urgent and after-hours framework¹, progressively over the next two years. I expect Health NZ's priority is on delivering enhanced services, with an immediate focus on services in Dunedin and Counties-Manukau. I also expect that any risks will be identified and mitigated so the delivery of the services within the agreed timeframe and budget is not compromised.
- 2. Reporting on urgent and after-hours healthcare:** I expect Health NZ to report to me monthly on the implementation of each of the initiatives in the framework and any other measures as appropriate.
- 3. Fiscal responsibility:** I expect Health NZ to operate efficiently and effectively, with clear financial plans and reporting for the delivery of these services. This

¹ Dated May 2025 and published on the Health NZ website on 23 May 2025.

includes ensuring that any underspends from funding allocated in the first year are carried forward and spent on delivering against the urgent and after-hours framework in out years.

I look forward to your response to these expectations, and to continuing our collaborative efforts to improve health outcomes for all New Zealanders.

Yours sincerely,



Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Health

Copy to: Dr Dale Bramley, Acting Chief Executive, Health New Zealand
Audrey Sonerson, Director-General, Ministry of Health

PROACTIVELY RELEASED