

# Hon Simeon Brown

Minister of Health  
Minister for State Owned Enterprises  
Minister for Auckland



11 September 2025

Professor Lester Levy  
Board Chair  
Health New Zealand  
s 9(2)(a)

Dear Lester,

I am writing to set out my expectations in relation to Health NZ's budget for 2025/26 and engagement with stakeholders.

### ***Delivering health services for New Zealanders***

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. I expect the Board to continue to be relentless in its pursuit of delivery of improved health services for New Zealanders.

I expect Health NZ to continue to meet the milestones necessary to deliver on:

- the Government's Health Targets
- faster access to primary care
- support the development of both physical and digital infrastructure
- continue to grow the workforce and prioritise recruitment to frontline clinical roles

Patients should be at the heart of every decision and care prioritised based on clinical need. I expect the Board to hold the organisation to account for achieving these outcomes.

Health NZ's accountability arrangements must be stabilised to enable the organization to focus on delivery which is to be nationally planned and locally delivered. There must be clear and singular lines of accountability in place at a national executive level, with those accountabilities flowing out to the frontline. Any regional function is to focus on coordination only.

Health NZ must partner with Primary Health Organisations, non-government organisations, the community, and private providers to maximise delivery for New Zealanders.

### ***Budget***

Health NZ must deliver to the financial plan for 2025/26 and return to a breakeven financial position from 2026/27. I expect to see continued improvement in financial controls, devolution of responsibility for budgets and resourcing, and the implementation of the recommended actions identified by the Deloitte report.

In addition to this it is important that I receive forward visibility of Health NZ's plans to make targeted and prudent investments in the Government's priorities especially with a focus on achieving our Health Targets. These investments will include additional frontline staff for which the Government has invested \$1.37 billion for 2025/26. I expect the Board and

Management to prepare a plan that sets out how these investments will be made this financial year and rapidly implemented.

While I expect the Board to ensure that Health NZ operates within its budget, I expect you to identify and drive change that improves productivity, maximising outcomes from the funding provided (for example, for diagnostics, first specialist assessments and emergency departments).

### **Engagement**

I have appointed a Crown Observer to keep a close watch on performance, particularly on Health NZ's financial position and the delivery of health targets. During this re-establishment phase, I have directed the Crown Observer to ensure the Government's priorities are regularly communicated to you and to your executive leadership team and regional leadership.

I expect the Board to ensure Health NZ prioritises providing timely responses to information requests made by the Crown Observer or Ministry of Health, as monitoring agency. This includes providing information about the operations and performance of Health NZ.

The Ministry of Health and the Treasury will also continue to support the Minister of Finance and myself to closely monitor Health NZ's financial and operating performance.

I expect you to place a priority on attending sector engagements. It is important that stakeholders hear directly from system leaders and that you make yourselves available to hear from them. I also expect you to build strong relationships with the Hauora Māori Advisory Committee, and the Infrastructure Advisory Committee.

I look forward to your response to these expectations. I expect regular progress updates and to be advised early if you have any concerns about progress. I look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts to improve health outcomes for all New Zealanders

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Yours sincerely

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is a stylized, cursive 'S' followed by a horizontal line, representing Simeon Brown. The second signature is a cursive 'B' followed by a horizontal line, representing Dale Bramley.

Hon Simeon Brown  
**Minister of Health**

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