

Briefing for decision

All of Government Health Targets – December 2025/26 reporting for endorsement

Date due to MO: 22 January 2026 **Action required by:** 27 January 2026

Security level: IN CONFIDENCE **Reference:** H2026077416

To: Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health

Consulted: Health New Zealand:

Proactive release: This **title** is proposed by the Ministry of Health for proactive release:

Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
Tim Herbert	Director, Performance and Governance	s 9(2)(a)
Hayden Luscombe	Manager, Monitoring Analytics, Performance and Governance	

Minister's office to complete:

Approved Decline Overtaken by events

Needs change Seen

See Minister's Notes Withdrawn

Comment:



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All of Government Health Targets – December 2025/26 reporting for endorsement

Security level: IN CONFIDENCE

Date: 22 January 2026

To: Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health

Purpose of report

1. This briefing seeks your endorsement of the attached All-of-Government (AoG) health target reporting templates, for submission to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC).

Summary

2. Each quarter you endorse reporting to the Delivery Unit within the DPMC on the AoG targets for which you are the lead Minister¹. Appended are the latest AoG target reporting templates.
 - a. **Data** in the reporting templates is from **Quarter 1 (July – September) 2025/26**, published online by Health New Zealand and included in press releases by your office on 16 December 2025.
 - b. Commentary on **actions, insights, issues** and risks is based on activity undertaken in Quarter 2 (October to December 2025).
3. We recommend you endorse the contents of this reporting as correct, for submission to the Delivery Unit by **29 January 2026**. The DPMC Delivery Unit will then:
 - a. consolidate reporting into a Quarterly Target Report and Target Factsheets and consult with lead Ministers from 25 February – 4 March November 2026
 - b. publish online on 9 March (subject to finalisation by the Prime Minister’s Office).
4. Across both targets our monitoring focus is on ensuring:
 - a. sustained momentum and implementation of key initiatives
 - b. understanding district level activities and impact of initiatives.

Key points to note from the AoG templates (consistent with published quarter 1 data)

5. **SSED** performance in the quarter ending September 2025 is higher than the same quarter last year, even with a 7.4% increase in ED presentations. This improvement in performance means 14,675 more patients were seen within six hours.

¹ These targets are Shorter Stays in Emergency Departments (SSED, Target 1) and Shorter Wait Times for Elective Treatment (Electives, Target 2).

6. The decline in this quarter's performance from the June 2025 result (from 73.9% to 68.9%) is in line with historical seasonal variance. 5 of 20 districts met the Year 2 milestone of 77%.
7. Work to implement **SSED accelerate funding** of \$20 million in 2025/26 is underway. Initiatives are focused on strengthening senior decision-making at the front door, improving patient flow through EDs and wards, expanding advanced nursing and allied roles, and boosting weekend capacity. Key achievements to 31 December 2025 include:
 - a. development of 79 targeted acute flow initiatives for implementation in 19 hospitals
 - b. recruitment for initiatives is underway and 11 were implemented prior to Christmas.
8. Monitoring of these initiatives, including impact where possible, will commence in the quarter ending March 2026.
9. **The Electives target** achieved 65.9% for the September quarter, an improvement of 2% on the last quarter. This is Health NZ's best performance for elective treatment since September 2021, despite service delivery being impacted by five days of industrial action. 8 of 20 districts met the Year 2 milestone of 70%. Performance was driven by:
 - a. improved booking performance and a focus on long wait patients – booking in order, prioritising patients waiting longer than four months
 - b. optimised outsourcing capacity and internal theatre productivity (electives boost).
10. National Inpatient and Day Case waitlist management guidelines are also operational within all regions and will undergo audit in early 2026.
11. Outsourcing was below plan for Quarter 1, but Health NZ expect this to recover significantly as delivery and outsourcing volumes increase through Quarter 2. The total elective treatment waitlist **increased** by around 2,200 patients to ~77,700 patients. However, the number of people waiting >four months **reduced** by around 700 patients to ~27,300. This focus on reducing the number of long wait patients to mitigate the impact of reduced delivery drove the improvement in health target performance over the quarter.
12. A dedicated advisory group for Te Waipounamu (the most challenged region, with performance <60%) has been brought together to give additional oversight and rigour to recovery efforts – this includes two board members, and an independent expert. Focus areas include additional theatre lists, booking performance, outsourcing, theatre productivity and waitlist validation.
13. Health New Zealand's ongoing national focus remains on treating long wait patients through initiatives like weekly waitlist monitoring, standardised management guidance, and validation processes, as detailed under Progress of Key Initiatives.

Recommendations

We recommend you:

- a) **Endorse** the contents of the appended All-of-Government health target reports as correct for submission to Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. **Yes/No**

Tim Herbert
Director, Performance and Governance
Performance and Governance
Date: 22/01/2026

Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Health
Date:

All of Government health target reports are not appended as these are now available at: www.dpmc.govt.nz/publications/government-targets-quarterly-reports-december-2025

PROACTIVELY RELEASED