



## THE GROWTH BUDGET

# Frontline Services

**BUDGET  
2025**

**Hon Simeon Brown**  
**Minister of Health**  
**18 May 2025**

### New and improved urgent and after-hours healthcare

Kiwis needing urgent health care will benefit from a big funding boost for urgent and after-hours healthcare services across New Zealand, Health Minister Simeon Brown says.

“Strengthening urgent and after-hours care is an important part of our Government’s plan to ensure all New Zealanders have access to timely, quality healthcare,” Mr Brown says.

“Budget 2025 is investing \$164 million over four years to expand urgent and after-hours healthcare services across the country. This means 98 per cent of New Zealanders will be able to receive in-person urgent care within one hour’s drive of their homes.

**The funding will establish a new 24-hour urgent care service identified for Counties Manukau. It will also support:**

- New 24-hour urgent care services identified for larger provincial centres, including Whangārei, Palmerston North, Tauranga and Dunedin.
- New and extended daytime urgent care services identified in other provincial cities and towns, including in Lower Hutt, Invercargill and Timaru.
- Maintaining all existing urgent and after-hours healthcare services across the country.
- Better after-hour services in remote rural locations with 24/7 on-call support to deliver enhanced services.

“Around 5,000 New Zealanders visit urgent care clinics every day, but the availability of after-hours services has declined in recent years, and access remains variable across the country.

“Making it easier to see a doctor or nurse is a key priority for this Government. We’re taking action to ensure Kiwis can access the care they need, when and where they need it.

“Our investment will also support more timely care, reducing pressure on emergency departments, and improving outcomes for patients.

“Urgent care supports patients with non-life-threatening injuries or medical problems not severe enough to require emergency department care, but who can’t wait until the following day for medical attention.

“Expanding community-based urgent care will help ease pressure on hospitals and keep emergency departments wait times down for those with the most serious conditions.

“It also gives people more choice, particularly in rural and remote areas where options have been limited.”

**This investment builds on the Government’s comprehensive primary care package announced in March, including:**

- 100 clinical placements for overseas-trained doctors
- Recruitment incentives for up to 400 graduate nurses annually for five years
- 100 additional doctor training places over the course of this Government
- Up to 50 graduate doctors training in primary care annually
- Up to 120 training places for nurse practitioners in primary care
- Accelerated tertiary education for up to 120 primary care nurses
- A \$285 million uplift to funding over three years for general practice from 1 July, in addition to the capitation uplift general practice receives annually
- Better access to 24/7 digital services.

“This Government is investing more in health than ever before, with a record \$16.68 billion over three Budgets to improve health outcomes for Kiwis.

“Today’s announcement will ensure more consistent access to urgent care across the country, so all New Zealanders can get timely, quality healthcare when and where they need it.”