



FACTSHEET: DIGITAL ACCESS TO 24/7 PRIMARY CARE

March 2025

Description:

A new digital service will provide all New Zealanders with access to video consultations with New Zealand-registered clinicians, such as GPs and Nurse Practitioners, for urgent problems 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Expected benefits:

- People who are not currently enrolled with a primary care provider, or who can't get a timely appointment, or need to speak to a doctor after-hours will be able to get the care they need, when they need it.
- Over time, people will have more control over the health care experiences and it will fit better in their lives. Patient data will be better joined up across the health system.
- Providing better and faster access to primary care helps keep people well and reduce the pressure on hospitals, and particularly emergency departments.
- People will be able to gain expert clinical advice more quickly and better manage their own health care, reducing the impact of health conditions.
- Subsidies for some patients will be available in virtual settings.

Facts and figures:

- This initiative will cost \$164.620 million over five years: \$143.499 million in operating costs and \$21.121 million in capital costs.
- The initial launch will be in the middle of 2025, with more services becoming available offered over time.
- It is estimated up to 1 million New Zealanders may use the service in a year.
- One in four adults (25.7%) and one in five children (18.5%) have reported that 'time taken to get an appointment was too long' as a barrier to visiting the GP, according to the latest New Zealand Health Survey.
- This is higher than the previous year (21.2% for adults and 14.8% for children). This equates to an estimated one million people struggling to access a GP appointment.