

4 December 2015

New Zealand Health Strategy Consultation
Ministry of Health
PO Box 5013
Wellington

Dear Colleagues

Consultation Submission: Update of the New Zealand Health Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the consultation draft of the Update of the New Zealand Health Strategy. Please find below our overarching feedback together with specific comments where we wish to respond to selected individual consultation questions you posed.

General comments

We believe the Future Direction paints a clear, high level vision which builds on the 2000 Health Strategy and is based on well rehearsed and well documented evidence regarding New Zealand's demographic and sustainability challenges.

However, we believe history tells us that unless the Strategy is underpinned by a robust and resourced change management framework, we will not deliver the outcomes expected or the level of change required. In this regard, we feel the Strategy and Roadmap are noticeably light on detail regarding the required changes to the current policy and financial framework setting which will be needed to deliver change 'at the front-line'. In this regard, we are pleased to offer our proposals which we reference as appropriate throughout this submission and its attachments.

Q5. Are these the most important action areas to guide change in each strategic theme? Are there other actions that would be better at helping us reach our desired future?

There are a number of action areas within the Roadmap which are consistent with recommendations we made in our February 2015 publication *A time to act: 7 actions which will help sustain the New Zealand health service for future generations* (copy attached). We specifically welcome the Roadmap's focus on:

- Prioritising more services and funding to those most in need
- Re-focusing priorities and health targets towards patient level, evidenced based outcomes
- Strengthening IT leadership and consistent infrastructure standards

We also welcome the following action areas which are essential to provide strong foundations for the change management required:

- The re-emphasis of the Treaty obligations upon all partners
- The strengthening and consolidation of national system leadership and a review of the myriad national boards and committees
- The focus on a financially sustainable 'social investment' approach. We believe this is particularly important to ensure we target more services and resources to those most in need and reduce New Zealand's unacceptable inequalities

- The focus on strengthening quality and safety across the system. In this regard we welcome the intention to clarify individual roles and responsibilities which we believe often become confused in an 'Alliancing' environment and during the development of 'integrated' services

Conversely, we believe that there are some significant gaps in the action areas and we would specifically point to the need to:

- Directly target New Zealand's unacceptable health inequalities experienced by our Maori, Pacific and high needs communities, and particularly with respect to children and the vital first 4 years of life
- Address the out-dated funding frameworks which do not support the required transition towards a 'one-team', patient-centred and integrated primary care based service.
- Address demand-led barriers to access such as making all primary care consultations affordable and removing the perverse 'patient cost' differences between various sectors of the system
- Remove the organisational and system barriers which prevent early intervention by those clinicians best placed to do so (e.g. removing barriers to diagnostic services)
- Address the long-standing inertia preventing the required shift of services and investment from high cost secondary care settings into the domain and direct management of primary care. In this regard, we believe that Action 3 relating to shifting services simply repeats the approach which has consistently failed to deliver the required level of change over the past 15 years.

Q6. What sort of approaches do you think will best support the ongoing development of the Roadmap of Actions? Do you have ideas for tracking and reporting of progress?

Following our publication of *A time to act* in February 2015, we were challenged by the Ministry of Health to develop practical solutions to support implementation of the actions we proposed. In May 2015, in direct response to that challenge, we published *A time to act: Implementation solutions*, which set out 31 recommended solutions to support the direct implementation of the system change required. We attach a copy of that publication which remains relevant and forms part of our direct response to this consultation question.

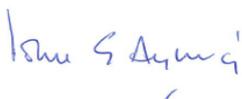
In addition, to directly address the inherent barriers within the existing funding framework, we are pleased to enclose *Targeting Resources: Strengthening New Zealand's primary care capitation funding formula* which we are publishing alongside this submission.

Q7. Are there any other comments you want to make as part of your submission?

We would like to thank you again for the opportunity to comment. This submission and the attached publications have been developed by our member organisations in consultation with a broad range of sector wide partners and stakeholders.

We would repeat our previous offers to make ourselves and our members directly available to help continue the development of the required policy and financial framework settings that will be needed to ensure the Strategy is delivered and we continue to provide a safe, high quality, sustainable and patient focused health service for future generations of New Zealanders.

Yours sincerely



John Ayling
Chairman