SECURING THE FUTURE YOU HAVE WORKED FOR

Older New Zealanders are living longer, healthier and increasingly independent lives.

National is committed to ensuring older New Zealanders have the security, wellbeing, and respect they deserve. Older New Zealanders have worked hard and should enjoy their retirement. Ensuring they are able to do so with dignity is important for all Kiwis.

Better, Sooner More Convenient Care

Despite tight financial conditions which have seen many countries freezing or even reducing funding for health services, National has:

- Invested in 1500 more doctors and 3300 more nurses, including in hard-to-staff regions and specialties.
- Prioritised health funding to frontline services.

We’re making each dollar go further and getting great results.

- Improved access to elective procedures, with 21,000 extra patients over the age of 65 are now receiving elective operations each year.
- Shorter waits for cancer treatment, with patients ready for chemotherapy or radiation treatment to 4 weeks - the world gold standard.
- Shorter stays in emergency departments with 94 per cent of patients seen within the six hour target – the highest result since records began.

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

→ National will keep the eligible age for Superannuation at 65.
→ Maintain the link between Superannuation and 66 per cent of the average wage, which means Super increases faster than inflation over time.
→ Continue to grow the SuperGold Card scheme by further expanding the number of businesses offering the discounts that senior citizens want.
→ Continue our policy of responsible spending and economic management.
→ Further reduce waiting times for surgery. District health boards will need to provide surgery to patients accepted onto their elective surgery lists within four months.
→ Speed up cancer care. We want patients with a high suspicion of cancer to see a cancer specialist within a maximum of two weeks and commence their first treatment within 62 days.
→ Increase support for hospices through an extra $20 million a year.
NATIONAL IS...

INCREASING INCOMES & EXPANDING SUPERGOLD CARD

✓ Continuing to increase all rates of Superannuation far ahead of inflation. Since 2008 the married rate is up by $249 a fortnight, and the single living alone rate is up by $162 a fortnight.

✓ Increasing funding for the SuperGold Card public transport scheme for 2015 by $8 million, taking the total to $26 million.

✓ Expanding the SuperGold Card – growing the programme from 876 businesses in 2008 to around 7,200 this year and counting.

✓ Growing the value of the SuperGold Card outside of the main city centres. More than half of new businesses over the last two years come from outside of the main city centres.

✓ Running SuperGold business recruitment campaigns focused on getting more law firms and health related discounts, including; optometrists, dentists, pharmacies, audiologists, physiotherapists, gymnasiums and sports retailers.

✓ 52.5 million trips on public transport have been taken by SuperGold cardholders since the scheme was introduced in 2008.

IMPROVING AGED CARE

✓ Despite tight financial times, which have seen many countries freezing or even reducing funding for health services, National has increased funding to aged residential care by over $240 million.

✓ Introducing dementia care pathways which encourage all health and social services to work together to provide seamless and integrated care.

✓ The number of dementia care beds has increased by 25 per cent since 2008.

✓ Improving the monitoring and auditing framework for rest homes by adding spot audits and third party accreditation of audit agencies.

✓ Improving the transparency of rest home audits by making both full and summary audit reports available through an easy to use website.

✓ Increasing funding for home support by 29 per cent since 2008 – to support older New Zealanders to be healthier and independent in their own homes.

✓ Introducing regular reporting of district health boards’ performance against key health Quality and Safety Markers to drive improvements in patient safety.

SHINING THE SPOTLIGHT ON ELDER ABUSE

✓ By passing the Crimes Amendment Act which makes it an offence not to intervene when vulnerable adult is being abused.

✓ Working with Age Concern to identify locations which could benefit from a greater level of support addressing and dealing with elder abuse and neglect.

✓ Establishing two new Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention services covering Wairoa, Rotorua, and Kawerau – taking the total number of services across the country to 26.

✓ Running a year-long information campaign highlighting the benefits of Enduring Powers of Attorney after a review found that many people didn’t realise these could help prevent financial abuse.
BUILDING A SAFER NEW ZEALAND

✓ By achieving the lowest crime rate in 35 years.
✓ Putting 600 more Police on the front line around the country.
✓ Introducing 34 Neighbourhood Policing Teams to ensure a dedicated and strong police presence in New Zealand’s most vulnerable communities.
✓ Investing in mobile technology for frontline Police staff, so they can spend less time behind desks and more time on the frontline preventing crime.
✓ Passing laws making it harder for boy racers to terrorise our communities.
✓ Cracking down on gangs and organised crime.
✓ Passing the Bail Amendment Act to tighten up on bail and introduced electronically monitored bail.
✓ More than 5,000 victims will receive support from the Victims Offender Levy in the 2012/2013 financial year.

IMPROVING SERVICES FOR SENIORS

✓ Maintaining a single dedicated line for Senior Citizens call centre operations, 0800 552 002.
✓ Enhancing the SuperGold Card online business directory to make it more user-friendly.
✓ Working with the Volunteer Community Coordinators, which is a network of older people throughout the country, who carry out projects to provide older New Zealanders perspective for communications and service development.

INVESTING IN NEW ZEALAND’S FUTURE

✓ New Zealand’s growing economy has created 83,000 new jobs across the country in the past year, with more than 150,000 more jobs forecast by 2018.
✓ Introducing free doctors’ visits and prescriptions for children under 13, from 1 July 2015.
✓ Targeting more than 90,000 school children in Rheumatic Fever Prevention Programme.
✓ Increasing immunisation - we are on track to have 95 per cent of 8-month-olds fully immunised by December 2014.
✓ Continuing to support early childhood centres to remain accessible and affordable.
✓ Ninety-six per cent of children start school each year having participated in early childhood education - rates have increased for Maori and Pasifika to their highest levels.
✓ Investing $359 million in new teaching roles to lift student achievement and teacher quality.
✓ Maintaining interest-free student loans.
✓ Rolling out ultra-fast broadband to 1,420,000 homes, schools, businesses, and health centres by the end of 2019.

MAKING BROADCAST CONTENT MORE ACCESSIBLE

✓ Over the past decade the amount of captioned content has increased from 70 hours per week to 250 hours per week.
✓ 32,000 households switched from analogue to digital television with the help of the Targeted Assistance Package. To be eligible a person had to be receiving Superannuation, Veteran’s Pension, Invalid’s Benefit, or be aged over 75 years.
WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT...

1. MAINTAIN NZ SUPERANNUATION

→ Maintain the link between Superannuation and 66 per cent of the average wage, which means Super increases faster than inflation over time.

Older New Zealanders have worked hard and deserve to enjoy their retirement. Having financial security is a huge part of this.

National will keep the eligible age for Superannuation at 65.

National has got the government’s accounts into surplus – one of the few developed countries to do so. National will build on this good work, and keep the government’s accounts in surplus. We are committed to resuming payments to the NZ Superannuation Fund when government debt falls below 20 per cent of GDP.

2. EXPAND THE SUPERGOLD CARD

→ Continue to grow the SuperGold Card scheme by further expanding the number of businesses offering the discounts that senior citizens value and want.

There was a time when the SuperGold Card wasn’t worth much to older New Zealanders, particularly in the parts of the country with minimal or no public transport. This has changed under National. The number of businesses taking part in the scheme has more than quadrupled in the last two years, and there are now over 7,100 businesses representing over 11,000 outlets.

We will continue to grow the value of the SuperGold Card outside of the main city centres. We will also continue to sign up more businesses which can offer discounts on the goods and services relevant to older New Zealanders.

→ Continue to invest in the SuperGold free off peak public transport scheme.

52.5 million trips have been taken since the card was introduced in 2008. These trips help connect older New Zealanders to their family, friends and the wider community.
3. IMPROVE HEALTHCARE

► **Invest more in health than ever before to reduce waiting times, increase elective operations and ensure older New Zealanders get the healthcare they need.**

National will continue to deliver better, sooner and more convenient care.

We are focused on further reducing waiting times for surgery. District health boards must currently provide surgery to patients accepted onto their elective surgery lists within five months. This will drop to four months by December 2014.

► **Speed up cancer care.**

National will establish a new national health target that will have patients with a high suspicion of cancer see a cancer specialist within a maximum of two weeks and commence their first treatment within 62 days. This is the world gold standard of care.

► **Continue commitment to aged care**

New Zealand’s population is ageing. In recognition of this, National has increased health spending to aged care at a higher rate than the overall health spend.

Despite tough economic times, which has seen many countries freezing or even reducing funding for health services, National has increased district health board spending on aged residential care from $744 million in 2008/2009, to $975 million this year.

This extra $231 million now being spent on aged care is a 30 per cent increase over National’s six budgets. National will continue to increase investment in aged residential care, as strongly as can be afforded.

We will continue to work closely with the sector to deliver the best possible care for residents.

We are on track to have all older people receiving home support or in aged residential care assessed at least twice a year using the standardised clinical assessment tool interRAI.

This assessment looks at 22 aspects of health care, and enables personalised care plans to be updated and modified as required.

As our population ages, the number of people living with dementia is projected to increase. It is estimated that around 48,000 New Zealanders have dementia. This expected to triple to nearly 150,000 by 2050.

National will launch a dementia position statement, which will include a nine-point action plan to be completed over the next three years. This plan will continue to build upon the improvements made in this area.

► **Increase support for hospices.**

National will invest an extra $20 million a year to provide more hospice palliative care services.

Last year more than 15,000 people received care and support from hospice services throughout New Zealand and hospice staff made over 145,000 visits to people in their homes. Just over 20 per cent of people using hospice services were aged under 60 and three-quarters had a cancer related disease.

As our population ages, more and more people will need palliative care. This funding boost includes $13 million to help the country’s 29 hospices expand their community palliative care services into better supporting terminally ill people at home and in aged care facilities.

We will also invest $7 million to create 60 new palliative care nurse specialist and educator roles. These nurses will provide training, mentoring and hands on support for staff across aged residential care, GP practices and home-based support services.
4. FOCUS ON THE VICTIMS OF CRIME

We are staying tough on criminals and ensuring the justice system focuses on the rights of victims.

➔ Pass the Public Safety (Public Protection Orders) Bill

National is committed to protecting New Zealanders from the worst serious violent offenders.

➔ Introduce a Child Protection Offender Register.

The register will require child sex offenders released from prison to register with the Police.

➔ Continue to put victims at the heart of the justice system.

National will establish a Victims Code to ensure improved access to information and services for victims. We will also appoint a Chief Victims Adviser to the Minister of Justice to better support victims of crime and improved promotion of the Victims Centre.

5. ADDRESS SOCIAL ISOLATION

➔ Build a toolkit for communities

National is committed to addressing social isolation amongst older New Zealanders. International research shows loneliness can impact negatively on a person’s health, likening it to smoking 15 cigarettes each day.

We will build a toolkit for communities based on the successful Napier Connects programme which fostered grassroots initiatives to help connect older New Zealanders.

We are on track to connect rural public libraries to ultra-fast broadband by 2016, and have homes and businesses all linked up by 2020.

6. UNLOCK NEW ZEALAND CONTENT

➔ Continue to work with broadcasters to utilise digital technology to increase the amount of captioning on television and online.

National is committed to funding television content and interesting New Zealand stories which are accessible for the hearing impaired. We understand that archived material is part of New Zealand’s cultural heritage, the people and places recorded in our archive collections, the histories and stories told, and the collection objects themselves – all as types of taonga.

➔ Increase access to RNZ and TVNZ archives, by unlocking 550,000 hours of television and radio content.

Over time we will make this archived material available online, providing a valuable resource for teachers, students and those with an interest in New Zealand heritage.
DON’T PUT IT ALL AT RISK

Labour and the Greens would:

- Make people work another two years before qualifying for NZ Superannuation.
- Drive New Zealand’s economy downwards through low growth and anti-job policies.
- Waste public money on backroom bureaucracy.
- Offer no coherent strategy for delivering better support for victims of crime. Under the previous Labour government, there was no improvement in services for victims.
- Seriously damage our criminal justice system by introducing an inquisitorial process for sexual violence offences in our courts.
- Impose a capital gains tax on productive businesses, family farms and investment properties, endangering jobs and economic growth.
- See our Police tied up in paperwork and bureaucracy and not out on the streets preventing crime.
- Let waiting lists balloon and end up needing to send patients to Australia for cancer treatment again.