



# Health

## Primary Care Navigator

Primary care is the gateway to secondary care and a key stakeholder in delivering care closer to home. More and more is being asked of primary care as a tsunami of mental health and high needs patients make their way towards General Practitioners.

National recognises this increase demand coupled with the benefits of care closer to home and so we will fundamentally alter the nature of the primary care team by funding a new addition.

We will add a primary care navigator to every General Practice location. The primary care navigators will bring a range of skills, and could be a social worker or a lived experience practitioner with appropriate qualifications.

A primary care navigator is a frontline team member in a patient facing role. Their job is to get patients the right support, at the right time, to manage a wide range of needs, and ensure that every New Zealander gets better care, sooner and closer to home.

The primary care navigator boosts the capacity of the team by providing the additional time to talk to patients who need help accessing the right services. They will provide counselling, interface with government agencies, follow up appointments and referrals, do home visits and implement primary care health plans collaborated with each general practice.

The navigator will be an expert facilitator and co-ordinator. Navigators will have a sound knowledge of local services and providers and understands how to access and sign post to services. They are aware of current locality initiatives, including prevention initiatives and able to offer this information to patients and other service users.

This model of primary care team has been established in other international health systems with good effect.

### National will:

- Establish a national programme of primary care navigators.
- Invest so that every General Practice location can get a government funded primary care navigator.

## Q&A

### What is the purpose of the navigator?

New Zealand has a growing, and ageing population putting increased strain on our health sector. National recognises this increase demand coupled with the benefits of care closer to home and so we will fundamentally alter the nature of the primary care team by funding a new addition.

A primary care navigator is a frontline team member in a patient facing role. Their job is to get patients the right support, at the right time, to manage a wide range of needs, and ensure that every New Zealander gets better care, sooner and closer to home.

### What can the Primary Care Navigators help me with?

The navigator will be an expert facilitator and co-ordinator and will boost the capacity of the team by providing the additional time to talk to patients who need help accessing the right services.

They will provide counselling, interface with government agencies, follow up appointments and referrals, do home visits and implement primary care health plans collaborated with each general practice.

The primary care navigator can be thought of as district nursing for general practice but with more of a social services and counselling role.



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### What qualifications will navigators have?

There will be several qualification pathways to become a navigator. They will bring a range of skills, and could be a social worker or a lived experience practitioner with an appropriate qualification.

### Will my local General Practice get a navigator?

Yes, we will fund one navigator for every General Practice clinic in the country. These will initially be rolled out at the Primary Healthcare Organisation level as we recruit the workforce to provide wider coverage. As the workforce becomes available we will move to one navigator per clinic.

### How much will this cost?

Once this is fully rolled out it will cost \$64 million annually.

### Will it cost me to see the navigator?

No, the navigator will be funded by a National Government and this will be included in the General Practice service.

### How many navigators will there be?

There will be approximately 1,000 navigators. This will enable one per clinic, and on average there will be one navigator per 5,000 New Zealanders to ensure that there is sufficient capacity for patients who want to access the service.