



## Media Release from General Practice Owners Association (GenPro)

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### **GenPro welcomes appointment of Commissioner to run Health New Zealand**

GenPro has given a cautious thumbs up to the appointment of a commissioner to run Health New Zealand and agrees with Health Minister Dr Shane Reti's assessment of poor financial performance and inflated back-office bureaucracy.

"The previous government's reforms produced perfect conditions for centralised inefficiency that diverted precious resources at the expense of front-line services," said Dr Angus Chambers, Chair of the General Practice Owners Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (GenPro).

"The reforms also caused paralysis in decision making that contributed significantly to the crisis in primary and other healthcare," Dr Chambers said.

GenPro welcomes a new focus on reducing back-office operations to release funding. These savings must be applied to frontline services such as general practice.

GenPro reminds coalition parties to honour their manifesto commitments to sustainably fund general practice.

"General practices are starved of government funding at a time of greatest need in our communities. This results in poorer health outcomes and more expensive system for taxpayers and patients."

Dr Chambers said cuts to Te Whatu Ora spending should not force general practice to take on work currently carried out at hospitals. This would further limit patient access to an already stretched general practice workforce.

GenPro expects the appointment of the commissioner to improve performance of the health bureaucracy, and fully supports the Minister's intent to 'bring the frontline closer to decision making'. GenPro looks forward to contributing to that successful goal.

"We also support the Minister's strategy to undo the unwieldy systems at Health New Zealand and refocus on funding accessible, high-quality care for New Zealanders."

New Zealand has a growing and ageing population, and inflationary pressures, creating a need to invest more in health alongside the Minister's immediate goal of system improvement.

Health New Zealand last week confirmed it will increase base level funding for general practice by only 4 percent despite a strong message from the health sector that much more is needed to ensure general practices remain viable and continue to provide services to their patients.

#### **For more information:**

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