

FPHANZ Calls For Increased Funding of Primary and Community Care

A gaping hole.

That's how the [Federation of Primary Health Aotearoa New Zealand](#) Executive Director is describing the lack of primary and community care funding in the current health reform programme.

Angela Francis says **the Federation board and members welcome and support the recent release of the interim Government Policy statement however is concerned that there is not enough focus or funding committed to keeping people well in their communities.**

"Three of the key goals presented by the Government in its interim health priorities are supporting improving equity in health outcomes, keeping people well in their communities and achieving a financially sustainable health sector. The Budget 2022 health funding allocations will not enable these things to happen, and they are absolutely critical to the success of the reforms," Ms Francis says.

Andrew Gaudin, Federation board member, agrees and says Budget 2023, at the very least, must address the issue.

"The Government will already be putting together the 'bids' for the next budget, and so we are signalling now that they must take notice of the concerns coming from the primary and community health care sector. We are concerned with the increase in annual funding of \$1.482 billion to address cost, volume and deficit pressures for hospital and specialist services equating to a 13.9% annual funding increase. The increase in annual funding of \$305 million to address cost and volume pressures across primary, community, public health and population services only equates to a 4.1% annual funding increase. This continues a concerning and longstanding trend that needs to be reversed and rebalanced as part of Budget 2023," he says.

A Federation member, Philip Grant, says the Government is investing billions of dollars into the restructure of management tiers and additional bureaucracy whilst imposing real-terms funding cuts on front-line services.

"Patients will increasingly be unable to access essential services unless the gross historic underfunding is addressed and our vital front-line health workforce are paid fairly, to prevent the growing exodus overseas," he says. "The Federation expects a proportionately greater investment in primary, community, public health, and population health services over time however sooner rather than later is preferable as this is vital to achieving a sustainable workforce and also underscoring an emphasis on wellbeing and enabling all New Zealanders to keep healthy, well and out of hospital," he says.

Angela Francis says that as well as seeking a Budget in 2023 that addresses the primary and community care funding inequity, FPHANZ looks forward to working with the government to inform a robust service commissioning framework at a national level, rather than the current model of silos of different organisations.

“This comprehensive commissioning model should include the full range of primary and community health services and help solve funding barriers that a number of services, such as midwifery, have struggled with for decades”.

“The Federation needs to be part of the solution as our relationships and focus on people in communities is critical to the success of new health system,” says Ms Francis.

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