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SECURING SUSTAINABLE GENERAL PRACTICE IN AOTEAROA: SOLUTIONS TO REVERSE THE CRISIS

A report detailing solutions for sustainable general practice has been released today by General Practice New Zealand (GPNZ).

“General practice sits at the heart of primary and community care. If it fails, the health system fails.” says Porirua-based Specialist General Practitioner and Chair of GPNZ, Dr Bryan Betty.

Delivering 20+ million encounters a year, general practice provides continuous, comprehensive, coordinated care that is proven to reduce the need for hospitalisations and urgent care, and reduce mortality.

GPNZ worked with Sapere, well known for its work in the New Zealand health system and specifically general practice, along with the wealth of expertise within its member network to develop a range of solutions that are essential to sustainable general practice and a world-leading health system.

“We’re in a desperate and growing crisis. People are increasingly unable to access the care they need when they need it, and that is felt most sharply by people who need support the most,” says Dr Betty.

“These solutions will enable practices not just to recover but to thrive, delivering the kind of care they desperately want to provide to their communities.”

The solutions fall into a few key and interdependent themes: funding; complexity; models of care; rural general practice; workforce; integration; and primary care development and structures.

“Innovation, changes to the model of care, flexible service delivery - these are key parts of our vision of modern general practice. Our solutions are geared to delivering this,” adds Dr Betty.

“In essence we need that long-awaited new funding model – one that will tackle inequity and truly recognise all drivers of demand and complexity. We also need initiatives to expand, develop and truly value a multi-disciplinary primary care workforce, and support for technology as an enabler.”

The recommendations also place importance on the structures in place that strengthen primary and community care, with services planned around whānau and communities and a collective focus on illness prevention, health promotion and ensuring equitable access to timely, high-quality care and support.

Beyond stabilisation of core services, there is a wider goal – expanding and developing primary care to deliver fully on the promise of Pae Ora, delivering increased wellbeing and equity for all New Zealanders.

“Achieving these things requires a level of sustained investment that has never been available to primary care providers under any government.”

ENDS

For further information

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Dr Bryan Betty will be travelling/in Melbourne and at times will be unavailable for comment. Please leave a voicemail or text on 021 523 047. He will return your call as soon as possible.

Editor’s notes

General Practice New Zealand (GPNZ) is the national voice for primary care organisations in New Zealand. It advocates for the wellbeing of New Zealanders by supporting high quality general practice and community-based services. Its PHO member networks represent the majority of New Zealand general practices and cover an enrolled population of more than 4.4 million New Zealanders, including more than 80 per cent of the enrolled Māori population. www.gpnz.co.nz

In 2024 we’ll transition to our new identity: *Primary Care New Zealand*. This new name aligns with our organisational goals, better reflecting who we are and what we are about. It gives us room to grow and support a wide range of health and care professionals providing comprehensive primary care services that ultimately will deliver pae ora for all New Zealanders.

Alongside our new name we have a new strapline, gifted to us by Ngā Matapihi o te Wairua: *Tuia te here tangata ki te oranga*. This captures the essence of our organisation, speaking to the way we weave together, connect, collaborate and partner – creating unity to achieve community wellbeing.