



21 November 2022

Open Letter

Hon. Andrew Little
Minister of Health
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Tēnā koe Minister

On The Brink

Our General Practice services are stretched and under threat. People are waiting longer to see their family doctor as a result of workforce shortages and underfunding.

Today, New Zealand's General Practice clinics have united behind their Association, GenPro, to launch a campaign 'Save Your Family Doctor Service' highlighting the significant issues facing family doctor services.

A lack of funding, workforce shortages and increasing workloads are placing the sustainability of essential family doctor services at risk.

It means in lots of places around New Zealand people are waiting weeks to see their family doctor, as General Practice clinics are reducing their hours and reducing services.

This stark situation is outlined in 'On The Brink', a report, as attached, published today by GenPro that sets out a 9-point plan on what is required to save essential front-line family doctor services.

General Practice has been struggling with historic underfunding and is also struggling to attract staff, as doctors no longer want to specialise in General Practice and, like nurses, are better paid if they choose to work in hospitals or in Australia.

The Government's 3% funding increase in July 2022, against inflation of 7.2% and the rising costs of living has been a massive blow to General Practice.

Without swift and decisive action from the government, we risk losing more essential family doctor services around the country, and an ongoing critical shortage of GPs and nurses into the future.

The fact that we need a public campaign to try and get a response from the government shows how urgent things have become. While the government is investing billions in new health bureaucracy, it has lost its focus on essential front-line services and keeping people well in their communities.

We are asking for immediate action from the government to address this crisis and to work with us to develop a clear plan for the future of essential family doctor services for every New Zealander.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Tim Malloy', written in a cursive style.

Dr Tim Malloy
Chair