

Media release from the General Practice Owners Association

GenPro launches seven steps to restore general practice

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GenPro has today launched its election policy manifesto, *Seven Steps to Restore General Practice*, calling on all political parties to make the long-term sustainability of frontline general practice a priority at the 2026 General Election.

GenPro Chair Dr Angus Chambers says general practice is the foundation of a high-performing health system, but practices across New Zealand are under sustained financial and workforce pressure.

“General practice is the front door to our health system. When people can access the right care, at the right time, in their local community, they are more likely to stay well and less likely to need hospital care,” Dr Chambers says.

“But that depends on having a financially sustainable general practice sector with enough doctors, nurses and other health professionals to meet demand. Political parties have an opportunity at this election to put general practice on a sustainable footing for the long term.”

Generated from the frontline of general practice, GenPro’s manifesto sets out seven practical priorities, with three identified as immediate priorities:

1. Invest in frontline general practice

GenPro is calling for a 30 percent cumulative increase in general practice funding over three years, an independent mechanism to adjust funding for the true cost of delivering care, and a five-year funding pathway to provide certainty for practices. It also wants targeted funding for patients with complex health needs and for rural and remote practices.

2. Support long-term GP–patient relationships

GenPro wants continuity of care recognised as a core quality measure, with every enrolled patient having access to a named GP or Nurse Practitioner. Face-to-face consultations should remain the foundation of primary care, with telehealth used to complement rather than replace in-person care. “Patients benefit when they can build a relationship with a clinician who knows them and their health history,” Dr Chambers says. “Continuity of care is not just about convenience. It contributes to better health outcomes and can reduce avoidable pressure on hospitals.”

3. Strengthen rural and urgent after-hours care

GenPro is calling for increased rural funding, stronger support for rural workforce recruitment and retention, and investment in infrastructure and digital connectivity. “Where someone lives should not determine whether they can access quality primary healthcare,” Dr Chambers says. “The challenges facing rural practices are different and require targeted solutions if we are going to provide equitable access across New Zealand.”

GenPro is also calling for:

4. Less bureaucracy and greater funding transparency – reducing unnecessary administration and ensuring more health funding reaches frontline patient care.

5. Support for independent, community-owned general practice – protecting the owner-operated model providing continuity of care and ensuring government policy supports a diverse, community-based primary care sector.

6. A stronger voice for general practice – ensuring GenPro is meaningfully consulted early on significant changes to funding, service design and primary healthcare policy.

7. A sustainable general practice workforce – improving funding so general practice can offer competitive employment conditions, supporting internationally qualified clinicians and helping the next generation of GPs buy into independent practices.

Dr Chambers says the manifesto is designed to provide political parties with a practical roadmap rather than simply identify problems.

“General practice needs certainty, sustainable funding and a workforce for the future,” he says. “These seven steps would help strengthen access to care, reduce avoidable pressure on hospitals and deliver better value for taxpayers. We are calling on every political party to engage seriously with these proposals and make the future of general practice a priority in their 2026 election policies.”

GenPro is the General Practice Owners Association of Aotearoa New Zealand. We represent the owners of independent general practices and urgent care centres and advocate for policies that strengthen frontline primary healthcare, improve patient access, and ensure the long-term sustainability of community-based general practice.

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