



New Zealand First

Policy Response

20 JULY 2017

Addressing dementia starts with a sufficiently resourced health system. New Zealand's health system is struggling to cope with current demand and the number of Kiwis with dementia is rapidly increasing. The Council of Trade Unions and the Association of Salaried Medical Specialists estimate the 2017 Health budget is \$215 million short of what is needed by District Health Boards. New Zealand First would sufficiently fund District Health Boards to ensure dementia care is optimal.

New Zealand First would establish and implement a national strategy for addressing dementia. The strategy would incorporate health education initiatives, improved screening programmes and consultation with the health sector and community.

New Zealand First would also invest in preventative measures, such as free GP visits. Regular check-ups with a GP can help to identify a range of health conditions early on. We would introduce three free GP visits for SuperGold Cardholders, increasing access to primary healthcare. Early intervention benefits us all and ultimately saves the health system money.

Additionally, we would invest in dementia research and focus on workforce planning to ensure there are sufficient numbers to deal with the expected increase in dementia diagnoses.