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New Zealand government announces new health targets

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For faster cancer treatment, 90% of patients to receive cancer management within 31 days of the decision to treat



The government in New Zealand has announced health targets for cancer treatment, child immunisation, emergency departments, and wait times for first specialist assessments and elective treatment- i.e. Faster cancer treatment – 90% of patients receive cancer management within 31 days of the decision to treat.; Improved immunisation – 95% of children fully immunised at 24-months of age.

By setting ambitious health targets, the government will stabilise services and provide the focus needed to make improvements. It will be challenging for the sector and take time, but targets will help lift health system performance.

Clinical experts will be expected to provide commentary and advice on performance and what is being done to improve areas that are performing below expectations. Monitoring of health targets will sit within a wider suite of monitoring on health system performance by the Ministry of Health.

The target programme will have an appropriate level of audit mechanisms to ensure there are no unintended consequences as a result of a focus on specific areas.

Previous targets resulted in comparisons across 20 district health boards. New Zealand now has Health New Zealand as the national service provider. The targets will be reported nationally, regionally and by population groups where possible. They will take effect from 1 July 2024 with the first quarterly results available beginning with Quarter 1 2024/25.