

# Shorter stays in emergency departments

95% of patients to be admitted, discharged, or transferred from an emergency department within six hours.

**LEAD MINISTER**

**Hon Simeon Brown**, Minister of Health

**LEAD AGENCIES**

**Ministry of Health**, Director-General of Health, Audrey Sonerson

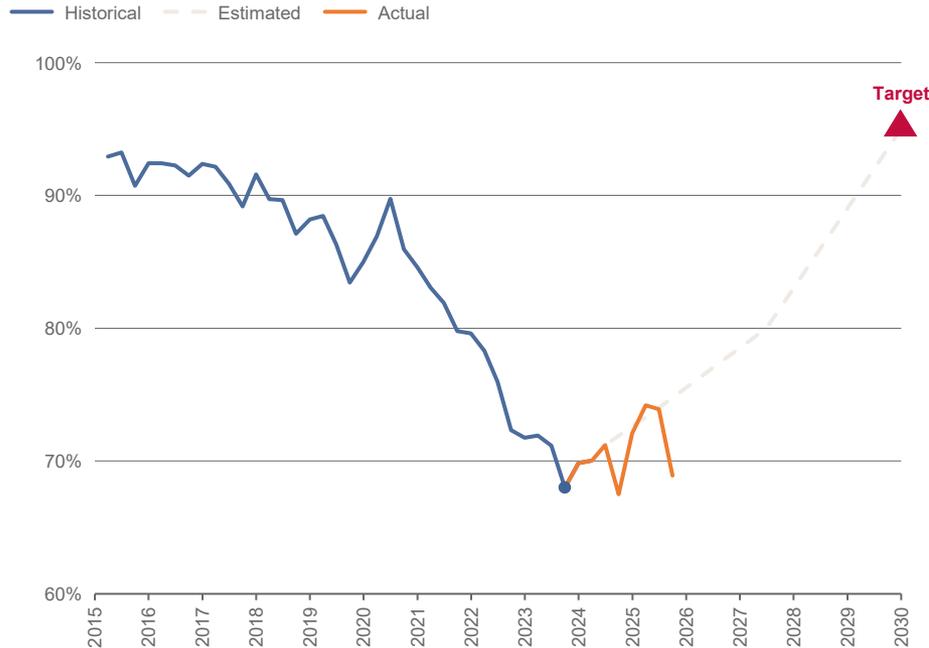
**Health New Zealand**, Chief Executive, Dr Dale Bramley

**TARGET DELIVERY PERFORMANCE - QUARTER ENDING DECEMBER 2025**

Target	Baseline (September 2023)	Current (September 2025)	Status
95%	68.0%	68.9%	Feasible

**PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGET**

Proportion of patients to be admitted, discharged, or transferred from an emergency department within six hours



**TARGET DELIVERY ACTIONS**

**The Government is committed to providing timely, high-quality healthcare for all New Zealanders.** Results declined since the last quarterly report due to increased winter demand (in line with historical patterns), and have improved compared with the same quarter in the prior year.

**Patient demand is increasing.** In the quarter ending September 2025, 68.9% of patients who attended an emergency department were admitted, treated, or discharged within six hours - an increase on the same quarter last year (67.5%). Despite demand continuing to increase, doctors and nurses are getting patients seen faster than the same quarter in the previous year.

**The Minister of Health** is focused on driving action to ensure that all New Zealanders have access to timely high-quality healthcare. Improvements across the whole system of care are needed to reduce the unacceptable wait times at emergency departments.

**Initiatives to help improve results for this target include:**

- \$20 million in 2025/26 to improve flow through EDs and wards, and to enable improved weekend decision making.
- A \$14.455 million project to expand and upgrade Palmerston North Hospital’s emergency department, which will increase emergency department capacity by around 40%, delivering 15 additional points of care, a new mental health assessment room, and redesigned spaces that support better patient flow, privacy, and safety.
- The Government’s fast-tracked hospital wards programme will deliver 140 new inpatient beds in 2026 across Hawke’s Bay, Nelson, Middlemore, Wellington Regional and Waikato Hospitals.
- \$24 million over four years (Budget 2025) to increase Aged Residential Care capacity and ease hospital discharge delays.
- \$164 million over four years (Budget 2025) for new and improved urgent and after-hours healthcare, which aims for 98% of New Zealanders to live within a one-hour drive of in-person urgent care. A new Lower Hutt daytime urgent care service opened on 1 December and the Dunedin 24/7 service opened on 17 December. Increased hours at the Counties Manukau urgent care service started on 17 December with a 24/7 service starting from 19 January 2026.

**HOW TO FIND OUT MORE**

Health agencies will report on progress each quarter. National and regional results will be published so New Zealanders will be able to see how their local hospital is performing.

Performance information about the health system is available at the Health New Zealand and Ministry of Health websites [www.tewhātuora.govt.nz](http://www.tewhātuora.govt.nz) and [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)

For more information on the Government Targets go to [www.dpmc.govt.nz](http://www.dpmc.govt.nz)

\* Where data is sourced from National Collections, previous results may differ depending on the date of extraction as data is revised and updated live. Due to a new patient management system in Auckland District, results published may show slight variations in future reports.