

Shorter wait times for elective treatment

95% of people wait less than four months for elective treatment.

LEAD MINISTER

Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health

LEAD AGENCIES

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

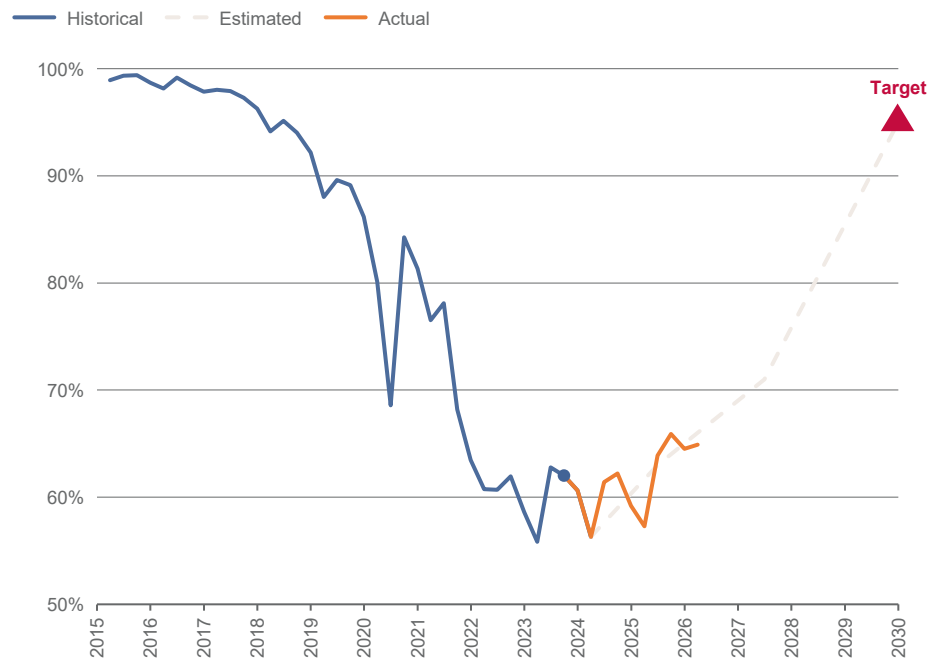
Health New Zealand, Chief Executive,
Dr Dale Bramley

TARGET DELIVERY PERFORMANCE - QUARTER ENDING JUNE 2026

Target	Baseline (September 2023)	Current (March 2026)	Status
95%	62.0%	64.9%	 Probable

PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGET

Percent of patients waiting less than four months for elective treatment



TARGET DELIVERY ACTIONS

The Government is committed to providing timely access to quality healthcare for all New Zealanders. Status has improved from Feasible to Probable. Current performance (64.9%) improved by 7.6 percentage points compared with the same quarter last year (57.3%), and by 0.4 percentage points compared with the previous quarter (64.5%). In total, 51,089 people were treated from the elective waitlist, up 5.5 per cent on the same quarter last year (48,389). Since peaking in January 2025, the total elective waitlist reduced by 8 per cent by the end of March 2026.

These improvements were supported by a sustained focus on delivery, including summer planning initiatives that increased production over the period. Other contributing factors included increased in-house activity, greater use of outsourced capacity, improved theatre utilisation, and better booking performance for long-waiting patients in the most pressured services.

The Minister of Health is focused on driving action to ensure that all New Zealanders have access to timely high-quality healthcare. This includes lifting the volume of surgeries to reduce the elective surgery backlog.

Initiatives to help improve results for this target include:

- Health New Zealand continues to partner with the private sector to deliver the Elective Boost through to June 2026. This includes an additional 21,000 hip, knee, cataract and other procedures.
- A focus on long waiting patients including weekly scrutiny of the longest-waiting patients' booking status for elective treatment. The number of patients waiting >one year has reduced by ~10% over the quarter.
- Additional outsourcing and in-house theatre sessions - districts have been running additional in-house weekend and twilight theatre lists in the most pressured services with a focus on long-waiters.

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.healthnz.govt.nz and www.health.govt.nz

For more information on the Government Targets go to www.dpmc.govt.nz