

**OFFICE OF THE  
MINISTER OF HEALTH**

**MEMORANDUM TO CABINET SOCIAL POLICY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE**

**COMMUNICATING CHANGES IN HEALTH POLICY AND STRUCTURES**

**PROPOSAL**

1. This paper seeks Cabinet Social Policy and Health Committee agreement to the Communications Strategy

**BACKGROUND**

2. Effective communication of the Government's health policy, its objectives and the structural changes to achieve them is a high priority for a range of agencies with roles and responsibilities in the sector. The multiplicity of agencies, the differing natures, scopes and timeframes for aspects of the changes suggest the most effective approach is definition of overall objectives, indicative timeframes and key messages, underpinned by more detailed communications plans for discrete projects.

**COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

3. To provide a framework within which individual agencies can communicate the Government's health policy, which balances the need for flexibility with that for overall direction and consistency. Within that we will develop communications plans specific to:
  - development of the NZ Health Strategy
  - sector design
  - integration of the Ministry of Health and the Health Funding Authority
  - establishment of District Health Boards.

**COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES**

4. To generate understanding within the health sector of Government's health policy and the timing of changes
5. To generate public understanding of Government's health policy and the timing of changes
6. To generate understanding by Maori of the changes, timing and opportunities for participation
7. To identify and generate understanding of the opportunities for sector and public input.

**INDICATIVE TIMEFRAMES**

8. The attached table collates information on those events likely to attract media interest in the four key projects nominated above. More detailed work in developing objectives, key stakeholders/audiences, messages and measures of effectiveness for each is being pursued.

## **KEY MESSAGES**

9. The Government's objectives for health and disability are to:
  - raise the health and independence of the population and reduce inequalities
  - meet the health and disability support needs of local communities
  - ensure more effective use of the available resources
  - increase community involvement in decision-making about health and disability support services
  - have a non-commercial, collaborative and accountable culture in the publicly funded health sector
  - ensure clear accountabilities.
10. These objectives will be developed in more specific goals and targets in the NZ Health Strategy. The NZ Health Strategy will reflect a shared vision, following consultation with the health sector, with Maori, and with the community at large.
11. Some structural changes are being made to further these objectives. These will:
  - disestablish the Health Funding Authority and merge its current functions with those of the Ministry of Health
  - establish District Health Boards.

## **CONSULTATION**

12. This report was prepared in consultation with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit, the Health Funding Authority, the State Services Commission, the Treasury and Te Puni Kōkiri.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

13. The financial implications will be minimal and will be managed within existing agencies' budgets.

## **LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

14. There are no legislative implications.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1993**

15. The proposals do not have Human Rights Act implications.

## **PUBLICITY**

16. This paper sets out the framework for managing the publicity for the wider sector changes.

## **CABINET:**

- a agreed to the communications strategy for health sector changes outlined in the submission attached to SPH (00) 32, which has the following communications objectives:
- i to generate understanding within the health sector of Government's health policy and the timing of changes;
  - ii to generate public understanding of Government's health policy and the timing of changes;
  - iii to generate understanding by Maori of the changes, timing and opportunities for participation;
  - iv to identify and generate understanding of the opportunities for sector and public input;

**Secretary's Note:** *The indicative timetable of key events from SPH (00) 32 is attached as Annex 1*

- b agreed that no information (e.g. Cabinet papers) about proposals for health sector changes will be released until after Cabinet has considered and made decisions on the proposals.

## Indicative timetable key events health sector changes

**Note:** More detailed strategies will be developed around milestones, identified in the attached timetable, for

- sector design phase
- development of NZ health strategy
- merger of Ministry of Health and Health Funding Authority
- DHB establishment and for Maori

Timeframe	Event	Audience(s)	Communications	Spokesperson	Lead Agency
Jan - June	NZ Health Strategy Development	All health providers, interest/advocacy/professional groups Media MOH/HFA staff	Speaking engagements conferences/AGMs etc Viewpoints trade press Metropolitan dailies Health Moves (AK newsletter) newhealth (website) Media release(s), interviews	Minister of Health DG of Health  Chief Advisors	MOH/HFA
Feb - April	Set-up transitional DHBs	All board chairs, boards, providers, communities Media	1. HHS chairs 2. HHS boards/primary providers/provincial media	Designated person (Keith Marshall)	MOH
18 Feb	Hui for Maori providers	Maori providers Maori media trade press	Health Moves Media release, interviews Maori media	DDG TKH Chief Advisor TKH	MOH
19 Feb	Advertisements for nominations transitional DHBs	All	Media release	Minister of Health	MOH/CCMAU
Feb-April	Setup transitional DHBs	All HHS boards, providers, communities, media	1. Engagement with board chairs 2. Engagement boards/primary providers and provincial media	Designated person (Keith Marshall)	MOH
21-25 Feb	DG of Health visits to HFA localities	Staff	Informal	DG of Health	MOH
March	Papers to ad hoc ministerial committee - <i>DHB role/governance</i> - <i>Maori issues</i>	MOH/HFA staff Health sector	newhealth Health Moves		MOH
March -	Decisions on Cabinet papers	All	Media conferences, releases, interviews as appropriate	Minister of Health	
March	Launch Primary Care Strategy discussion document	All primary health providers - Maori, mental health, DSS	Media release/interviews Launch IPA conference Trade press coverage Speaking engagements Health Moves	Minister of Health " DG of Health DG/Chief Advisors	
March - June	HFA contract round with providers	All providers	Information kits HFA contract team personnel Media release(s) trade press		

Timeframe	Event	Audience(s)	Communications	Spokesperson	Lead Agency
7 March	Cabinet decision on CCMAU health future	media staff	media release/interviews newhealth(extended to incorporate CCMAU)	Minister of Health	
9 March	Tabling CSO for HFA	media MOH/HFA staff	Media release minister newhealth Health Moves	Minister of Health	MOH/HFA
15 March	Announcement overall MOH structure, appointment process for tiers 2/3 managers	staff HFA/MOH Central agencies Media	staff announcement/newhealth Health Moves media release	DG of Health CEO HFA	MOH
31 March	papers to ad hoc ministerial c'tee - <i>accountability arrangements</i> <i>DHBs</i> - <i>future HBL, Pharmac, blood</i> - <i>hospital investment (CCMAU)</i>	central agencies sector Staff	Health Moves newhealth	DG of Health as Chair of Officials' Group	MOH/HFA/CCMAU
April -	decisions on Cabinet papers	All	media conferences, releases, interviews as appropriate	Minister of Health	
late March/early April	5-6 regional hui on health strategy/sector changes	Maori providers	media release Maori media/interviews/coverage? viewpoint assoc minister,	Minister of Health Assoc M0inister of Health	MOH
11 April	Appointments to transitional DHBs	All	media conference, releases, interviews as appropriate	Minister of Health *involvement HHS comms mgrs	MOH/CCMAU
15 April	Announcement successful tier 2 mgrs	MOH/HFA staff sector media central agencies	staff announcement/newhealth Health Moves media release		MOH
30 April	Signing of amended Funding Agreement (minister/HFA chair)	sector via media MOH/HFA staff	media release OR Health Moves newhealth		MOH/HFA
1-7 May	Announcement successful tier 3 managers Announcement detailed structure for staff	MOH/HFA staff sector	staff announcement/newhealth Health Moves		MOH
May	Introduction NZ Public Health and Disability Services Bill	all	Health Moves media release inviting submissions, setting out timeframe all media (key, trade, Maori)	Minister of Health	MOH
May-Sept	Bill before select c'tee, consultation	all	as appropriate (media coverage select c'tee)		
30 June	papers to ad hoc ministerial c'tee • <i>legislation</i>				MOH/TSY

Timeframe	Event	Audience(s)	Communications	Spokesperson	Lead Agency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>fiscal implications of chances (Tsy)</i></li> <li>• <i>funding</i></li> </ul>				
July-	Decisions on Cabinet papers	all	media conferences, releases, interviews as appropriate	Minister of Health	
1 July	New MOH structure fully operative	all	Health Moves media release	Minister of Health	MOH
Nov	Disestablishment HFA board  Establishment transitional DHBs		Health Moves media release  Health Moves media release/interviews/photo opportunities as appropriate	Minister of Health	MOH
Nov 2001	Election DHBs				MOH/DIA

Health Moves = Minister of Health's newsletter  
newhealth = secure website for MOH/HFA staff which can be extended as appropriate to other users

Note 1: underpinning this are ongoing communications including:

- dialogue with central agencies, key sector groups, HHSs (Minister, DG of Health, MOH Chief Advisors, DDGs)
- addresses Minister(s) of Health, DG of Health, DDGs and chief advisors as appropriate at significant conferences, AGMs of sector groups etc. A calendar of such events has been compiled.
- ongoing engagement with HFA locality managers
- articles for trade press, major metropolitan dailies
- an itinerary of sector visits for Minister(s) of Health, DG of Health, others as appropriate.
- a sector change page on the Ministry of Health website.

Note 2: most dates are indicative only