

98% of New Zealanders to access in-person urgent care within one hour’s drive of their homes

What’s happening and why

- Getting care quickly is key to better urgent care health outcomes for people.
- Access to urgent care services can vary depending on location, and some people face long wait times or drives to get care.
- New and improved services will be introduced, giving New Zealanders faster, more convenient access to urgent care services.
- These will be phased in over the next two years to match service readiness and workforce availability.



What’s rolling out when

- 2025
- Dunedin will have a new 24/7 urgent care service to help manage increasing demand.
  - Twizel and Tākaka given improved services as part of the rural and remote rollout teams

2026

- Invercargill and Timaru after-hours services will expand to provide daytime services.
- Improved services will be rolled out across rural and remote communities in areas like Kaikoura, Balclutha and Stewart Island

2027

- Up to 30 rural and remote South Island services will be improved, alongside a further seven provincial and urban services. Includes places like Haast, Reefton, Ashburton, Gore

Why it matters

Benefits for your family



- More care available closer to home
- More health tests done locally
- More medicines available locally
- Extended evening and weekend urgent care options
- 24-hour on-call clinical support
- More convenient healthcare with reduced need to go to ED or travel long distances for prescriptions and non-life-threatening health conditions

Better resources for health services

Benefits for health professionals



- Rural clinicians paid to be on-call for improved service locations
- Access to more diagnostic tests so clinics can provide more treatment locally
- Less pressure on local EDs
- Strengthened primary care teams through expanded digital health and smarter of other health professionals’ skills

What’s new

Key improvements



- New 24/7 service for Dunedin, Invercargill and Timaru after-hours will expand to provide daytime service
- 24/7 on-call clinicians for rural and remote communities
- More key diagnostic tests, equipment and common medicines available locally
- 24/7 online GP consultations (separately funded)
- Primary care, urgent care and emergency ambulance services collaborate to make better collective use of the skills and resources they have

Invercargill – Smaller city

It’s 10am in the morning. Joan’s 1 year-old son has developed a fever, has a rash and has started vomiting. Joan can now take him to the city’s urgent care clinic, avoiding a long wait at Southland Hospital’s busy ED.

Kurow – Remote

It’s Friday night and Rihia thinks she has a urinary tract infection. She gets an online GP appointment within 15 minutes and is prescribed an antibiotic. Instead of a long drive to a pharmacy the next morning, she picks up the medicine at a depot 20 minutes from her home.

Tākaka– Remote

It’s Wednesday morning and 62-year-old Graham presents at a Tākaka clinic with chest pain. The nurse completes a Troponin test to check for heart damage and an electrocardiogram (ECG) is completed. Both show no signs of heart damage and there are no other serious symptoms. He goes home with advice on managing symptoms and when to seek further medical attention. Because the clinic now has access to an ECG and the Troponin test, Graham has avoided a minimum one hour wait for the ambulance to arrive, a 1 hour 40-minute drive to Nelson Hospital and an ED wait.



Case studies