

## Opening of the new Mobile Dental Unit

<b>Due to MO:</b>	25 March 2025	<b>Reference</b>	HNZ00082730
<b>To:</b>	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
<b>From:</b>	Danny Wu, Regional Planning, Funding and Outcomes Director		
<b>Copy to:</b>	n/a		
<b>Security level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>Priority</b>	Routine
<b>Consulted</b>	The Fono		

### Contact for phone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Danny Wu	Regional Planning, Funding and Outcomes Director, Northern	S9(2)(a)	x
Deepa Hughes	Principal Service Development Manager, Planning, Funding and Outcomes, Northern	S9(2)(a)	
Sophie Lowery	Regional Media Lead, Northern	S9(2)(a)	

### Attachments

**Appendix 1:** Event Run Sheet

**Appendix 2:** Frequently Asked Questions

**Appendix 3:** Tranche One Schedule for Mobile Dental Clinic Delivery

**Appendix 4:** s 9(2)(a)(i)

**Appendix 5:** Biographies of external attendees

**Appendix 6:** Draft Press Release

## About the event

<b>Purpose</b>	The launch of a new mobile dental clinic with The Fono.
<b>Date</b>	Friday 28 March 2025
<b>Time</b>	6.45am – 8.00am
<b>Venue</b>	The Fono Manurewa Healthcare Centre, 7-9 Halver Road, Manurewa
<b>Expected attendees</b>	Fiugalu Tevita Funaki MNZM, CEO The Fono Nacanieli Yalimaiwai, The Fono Trust Chair Community leaders, church leaders, ECE leaders in local areas Local Labour MPs Hon Jenny Salesa and Note, biographies are attached as Appendix 5
<b>Health New Zealand   Te Whatu Ora representatives</b>	There will be several Health NZ representatives attending from national and regional teams. Your key point of contact on the day will be Sophie Lowery, Regional Media Lead
<b>Media</b>	Media are invited
<b>Speech notes</b>	See Appendix 4

## Background

1. This event briefing provides you with information to support your attendance at the opening of the new mobile dental clinic with The Fono. An event run sheet, frequently asked questions, a delivery schedule for the other six mobile dental clinics, speech notes, attendee biographies and a draft press release are included as Appendices.
2. The event offers an opportunity to formally announce the delivery of the mobile dental clinic from Budget 2022 investment to The Fono in Auckland and celebrate an example of an integrated Pacific oral health service model.
3. Budget 22 included \$12 million capital investment for 20 new mobile dental clinics to expand mobile dental delivery and increase access to assessments and treatment for children and young people in communities with the poorest oral health status, and those with the highest health need.
4. In October 2022, Health NZ approved a business case for investment to be focused on 10 districts with high Māori and Pacific populations and the highest inequities in oral health outcomes. Investment was to be implemented over two tranches.
5. Tranche one investment includes seven mobile dental clinics and has prioritised existing and emerging Māori and Pacific oral health providers. Five of the selected providers currently deliver oral health services, while two providers are existing health providers but are new to delivering oral health services
6. A delivery schedule for the remainder of Tranche One is set out in Appendix 3.

## Discussion

7. The 2024-27 Government Policy Statement on Health identifies the need for working in partnership with local communities, including Iwi Māori Partnership Boards, to ensure primary and community health care services (including oral health services) are tailored to better respond to people's needs.
8. The draft version of the next New Zealand Health Plan | Te Pae Waenga, includes a requirement to develop and implement redesigned oral health services to improve outcomes for Māori and Pacific and children with disabilities.
9. For Health NZ to deliver effective redesign of oral health services and improve outcomes, service delivery solutions must be commissioned that maximise the mix of available local providers. This includes addressing inequities in outcomes for young Māori and Pacific people, tāngata whaikaha, those living in rural areas and in areas of high deprivation.
10. New mobile dental clinic investment is a first step in the redesign of community-based oral health services. These assets are not just an equipment or capital upgrade, but are the opportunity to revisit current mobile dental service models and determine how to better meet local population needs.
11. All mobile dental clinics in Tranche One, are level two or full treatment units. They enables assessments and follow-up treatments to take place in the unit, therefore, increasing access to treatment and reducing the need for referrals or return visits for the person.
12. Budget 22 provided capital funding to support the manufacture of mobile dental clinics, with operational funding for service delivery required to be identified within existing Health NZ budgets. The approach to implementation for Tranche Two is yet to be formalised and is dependent on the availability of operational funding.

### Information about The Fono

13. The Fono's journey began in 1987 as a humble general practitioners' clinic in West Auckland, born from a vision of Pasifika for Pasifika healthcare. By 1990, they had established the West Fono Health Trust to support Pasifika and other communities to access quality healthcare in a culturally safe environment.
14. Today, as NZ's largest Pacific-owned health and social services provider, more than 200 staff deliver medical, dental, mental health, social services, education, and whānau support from nine locations throughout Auckland.
15. The Fono expanded into dental care in 2012 when The People's Centre Trust merged with them. Today, they operate three dental clinics, including six dental surgery rooms, staffed by dentists and an oral therapist.
16. With an understanding of Pacific cultural needs and community-focused approach, The Fono's initial outreach for the mobile dental clinic will begin with early childhood education centres (ECEs) and local church groups, which serve as important community hubs for many Pacific families. This makes dental care available in familiar, trusted places where community members regularly gather.
17. The mobile dental clinic team includes a dentist, oral therapist, dental assistant, oral

health promoter and a driver.

#### **Other Service Offerings by The Fono**

18. The Fono has a Kahu Taurima, Outreach immunisation services, Smoking Cessation, Pacific Provider Development Fund and Diabetes contract. The Fono is one of the Pacific Providers participating in the Diabetic Retinal Screening packages of care that you recently attended. The suite of service offerings provided by The Fono means Pacific Communities and high-needs patients and whānau have access to a wide range of service provisions in Primary Care.

#### **19. Risks and Challenges**

- a) The three Auckland districts have the highest number of children waiting to be seen and treated for oral health procedures under general anaesthetic, with about 50% of these children living in Counties Manukau. A regional oral health steering group has been set up to work on urgent actions to improve service efficiency and capacity to reduce the number of children waiting to be seen in Auckland hospitals.
- b) This partnership with the Fono is a significant step in improving access and addressing oral health needs in our communities. The new service will offer early access to oral health care to thousands of young children (up to 3,000) in South Auckland and will help reduce the number of children needing dental treatment under general anaesthetic in Auckland hospitals.

## Appendix 1: Runsheet – Opening of a new mobile dental clinic on 28 March

Time	Details	Minister's Office notes
6.45am	Arrival of guests at The Fono Manurewa Healthcare Centre, 7-9 Halver Road, Manurewa Minister to be greeted by Fiugalu Tevita Funaki	
7.00am	Opening Prayer and welcome by Fiugalu Tevita Funaki, CEO The Fono	
7.10am	Opening remarks by Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health	
7.20am	Blessing by Father Soane Vahe of Mobile Clinic and Staff (sprinkling of holy water)	
7.30am	Clinic tour and opportunity to answer any questions from the media	
7.40am	Word of thanks by Nacanieli Yalimaiwai, The Fono Trust Chair	
7.45am	Closing prayer and blessing of refreshments	
8:00am	Minister Brown leaves	



## Appendix 2: FAQs

### **Where has the funding come from for the mobile dental clinics?**

Budget 2022 included \$12 million in the health capital envelope to invest in the manufacture of up to twenty mobile dental clinics.

### **What was the intention of the mobile clinic investment?**

To expand mobile dental service delivery and increase access to assessments and treatment for young people in communities with the poorest oral health status, and those with the highest health need.

### **How were the providers selected to receive a mobile dental clinic?**

They were identified as providers working in communities with high oral health need and in areas of high deprivation. Five of the selected providers currently deliver oral health services and two providers are existing health providers, but are new to delivering oral health services.

### **Why do we need mobile dental clinics?**

Community-based oral health services are free for young people up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. However, access rates to community-based services for this population are low, and data shows inequities in access for Māori and Pacific. The new mobile dental clinics are an opportunity to support service delivery closer to the community and remove access barriers for whānau, particularly for Māori and Pacific young people. Increasing access in the community is likely to reduce the demand for hospital dental treatment.

### **Who else is receiving mobile dental clinics?**

New mobile dental clinics are being rolled out in two tranches. Seven mobile dental clinics, rolled out as part of Tranche One, are allocated to the following providers:

- Raukura Hauora o Tainui (Waikato)
- Te Manu Toroa (Bay of Plenty)
- Ora Toa (Porirua)
- The FONO (Auckland)
- Best Care Whakapai Hauora (Manawatu)
- Kahungunu Executive ki Te Wairoa Charitable Trust (Wairoa)
- Bay of Plenty Health NZ Community Oral Health Service.

### **What is happening with the Tranche Two mobile dental clinics?**

Budget 22 provided capital funding to support the production of mobile dental clinics. Operational funding for service delivery needs to be identified from within existing Health NZ budgets. The approach to implementation for Tranche Two is yet to be formalised and is dependent on the availability of operational funding.

### **Can treatment be provided in the mobile clinics, or only assessments?**

The seven (7) mobile dental clinics are all level two or full treatment units. This enables assessments and treatments to take place on site, therefore increasing access to treatment for young people and reducing the need for referrals.

### **How much does a mobile dental clinic cost?**

Depending on the size and specification of each clinic, including required dental fit out such as chairs, sterilization equipment and lighting, a clinic costs around \$400,000 – \$700,000.

**How long does it take to produce a mobile dental clinic?**

There is currently an 18-month production timeframe to build service-ready mobile dental clinics through the current supplier.

**What company is manufacturing the mobile dental clinic units?**

Action Manufacturing, based in the Waikato, was awarded the contract through a request for proposal process for the production and supply of service-ready mobile dental clinics.

**What company is providing the equipment for the mobile dental clinics?**

Both Henry Schein and Ivoclar are suppliers of the dental equipment used in the mobile clinics. Providers can choose which supplier they wish to use, to ensure compatibility with existing equipment across their services.

### Appendix 3: Tranche one schedule for mobile dental clinic delivery

#	Provider name	Delivery date	Location	Region	Description
1	Raukura Hauora o Tainui	Delivered	Waikato / South Auckland	Te Manawa Taki	2 Chair towable
2	Kahungunu Executive ki Te Wairoa	Delivered	Wairoa	Central	2 Chair towable
3	Te Manu Toroa	Delivered	Bay of Plenty	Te Manawa Taki	1 Chair towable
4	Ora Toa	March 2025	Porirua	Central	1 Chair drivable
5	The FONO	March 2025	Auckland	Northern	1 Chair drivable
6	Best Care Whakapai Hauora	April 2025	Manawatu	Central	1 Chair drivable
7	Bay of Plenty Health NZ Community Oral Health Service	June 2025	Bay of Plenty	Te Manawa Taki	2 Chair towable



Proactively Released

## Appendix 5: Attendee list and biographies

### **Fiugalu Tevita Funaki MNZM**

Fiugalu Tevita Funaki MNZM has dedicated his entire career to promoting Pasifika health and wellbeing. His contributions were recognised in the New Year Honours 2024 when he was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM).

Born in Auckland and raised in Tonga, Tevita completed his education in Dunedin, obtaining a Bachelor of Commerce from Otago University.

#### **Experience and specialist areas**

Tevita has been CEO of The Fono Trust since 2010. Before joining The Fono Trust, he was the Pacific Health Manager for ProCare Health Ltd and the National Pasifika Liaison Advisor for Massey University.

Tevita also contributes to Pacific health in a wide range of advisory positions. He is a Director of ProCare Network (Co-Op) Ltd and Chairman of the ProCare Health (PHO) Ltd Board, the Ministry of Social Development Pacific Reference Group and the Oceania Career Academy.

He is also a member of the Health NZ | Te Whatu Ora Health Services Committee, the Police Commissioner National Pacific Forum, and the Waitematā District Commander Pacific Advisory Group. He also sits on the Sector Reference Group for Te Hiringa Mahara Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission and the Te Poutoko Ora a Kiwa Inaugural Governing Council.

Tevita has developed strong networks and relationships with Pasifika communities across New Zealand, and around the region.

### **Nacanieli Yalimaiwai**

Nacanieli was appointed as The Fono's Board Chair in 2022. Born and raised in Fiji, he has a strong connection, knowledge and experience of the social, cultural, political and economic contexts of our Pacific communities.

Previously, Nacanieli was the Chair of The Fono's Finance, Audit and Risk Committee from 2018. A chartered accountant and lawyer by profession, he holds LLB and BMS (Accounting) degrees from the University of Waikato and an MBA from the University of Auckland, and is currently a member of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand.

Nacanieli has 20 years of experience at senior levels in large New Zealand private and public sector entities, including Fletcher Building, Mainland, Fonterra, Masport, Auckland Regional Council, and Auckland Council. He has extensive experience in financial management, organisational strategy, policy and framework development, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

Nacanieli is a Fijian community leader and past President of the Fiji Community Association of Auckland. Currently, he is one of the leaders of the Fijian Advisory Council of Aotearoa's working group

He is also passionate in uplifting and advancement of marginalised communities. He is also interested in diversity and inclusion.

### **Hon Jenny Salesa, MP for Panmure-Ōtāhuhu**

Hon Jenny Salesa is the Local Member of Parliament for the Panmure-Ōtāhuhu electorate. She has also served as the Assistant Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives and Chair of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committees.

Jenny graduated from the University of Auckland with a BA/LLB in 1996. She has 25 years' experience working as a public servant in the New Zealand health and education sectors, with NGOs and as a politician. She has also spent time living and working in America, where she implemented and spread to other cities an evidence-based health initiative developed in Michigan.

She was the MP for the Manukau East electorate from 2014 to 2020 and, following the 2020 boundary changes, was elected as the MP for Panmure-Ōtāhuhu. She was Aotearoa New Zealand's first Tongan-born Member of Parliament and Cabinet Minister.

### **Arena Williams, MP for Manurewa**

Arena Williams has been a Member of Parliament for the Manurewa electorate since 2020. She is affiliated with Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki, Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūhoe. She grew up in South Auckland. Her father served as a Papakura City councillor for many years, and her mother continues to work as a GP.

Williams studied law and commerce at the University of Auckland and has previously worked as a probations officer in Panmure. She has also worked for a leading corporate law firm Chapman Tripp.

She is currently the spokesperson for Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Building and Construction, and Youth for the Labour Party.

## Appendix 6: Draft Press Release

### **New mobile dental unit opens in Counties Manukau**

*28 March 2025*

Communities in Counties Manukau will have better access to dental treatment thanks to a new mobile dental unit launched by Health Minister Simeon Brown today.

The unit new mobile dental clinic, operated by Te Fono, NZ's largest Pacific-owned provider of health and social services, will provide essential oral healthcare directly to children in communities across Auckland. The purpose-built clinic will help people who face barriers to dental care, such as transportation challenges, financial constraints or busy schedules.

The mobile clinic will provide dental assessment, treatment and oral health education across diverse communities.

The Minister said the new unit will improve the low rates of access across the region.

“Oral health is a cornerstone of that drive for overall health. Ensuring people can access oral health services will have much wider positive benefits.

“We know that Tamariki here in Counties Manukau are in real need, with one of the highest rates of children needing to be seen and treated under general anaesthetic.

“These new units are an opportunity to support service delivery closer to the community, and to remove access barriers.”

By offering earlier access to children, this initiative aims to reduce the number of young children needing dental treatment under general anaesthetic in Auckland hospitals. The Fono will work strategically with other providers, including the Auckland Regional Dental Service (ARDS), to improve timely access and oral health outcomes for children and adolescents across the region.

Through The Fono's integrated oral health service model, the new clinic is expected to reach up to 2,000 patients in the first year with many needing multiple appointments due to their high-treatment needs.

The initiative is part of a broader government commitment to improving oral health.

Budget 2022 included \$12 million for 20 new mobile dental clinics to increase access to oral health services for children and adolescents with the highest health need.

Tranche One of the investment includes seven mobile dental clinics and has prioritised using existing and emerging Māori and Pacific oral health providers. Five of the selected providers currently deliver oral health services while two providers are existing health providers but new to providing oral health.