

# Aide-Mémoire

Health New Zealand  
Te Whatu Ora

## International Recruitment Process Overview V2

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To:	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
From:	Fiona McCarthy, Interim Chief Human Resources Officer		
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## Purpose

1. This aide-mémoire provides information on international recruitment and attraction for Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora (Health NZ) and the international attraction team, often referred to as the International Recruitment Centre (IRC). This includes information on the attraction team's purpose, service model, approach to attracting international talent and its performance.

## Background

2. The global competitive landscape for specialist healthcare workers is fierce, and we expect competition for this finite resource to grow in the coming years. While some of our larger workforces (e.g., general nursing) have less demand for recruitment services currently, attracting Senior Medical Officers and specialist health workers is challenging and requires targeted attraction.
3. When Health NZ was established, it became clear that a streamlined approach to attraction and recruitment was needed. The decentralised approach saw districts and regions competing for talent, which was not cost effective and led to duplication.
4. A centralised international attraction team, the 'International Recruitment Centre', was established in 2022 to address critical workforce shortages by attracting and facilitating the arrival of overseas candidates.
5. In November 2023, the team was established with 27 roles. Table 1 shows currently filled roles. There are several vacancies that we are not intending to fill as originally envisioned.

**Table 1 – International and attraction team roles**

<b>Position</b>
GM Attraction Strategy & Specialised Recruitment
Manager International Recruitment
<b>Kiwi Health Jobs Team</b>
Candidate Kaitiaki Recruitment
Candidate Kaitiaki Recruitment
Candidate Kaitiaki Recruitment
Candidate Kaitiaki Recruitment
Project Manager
Team Lead Health Immigration
<b>Health Immigration Team</b>
Coordinator - Health Immigration
Licensed Immigration Advisor
Licensed Immigration Advisor
<b>International Recruitment Team</b>
Senior Project Manager

## The International Attraction and Recruitment Team's objectives

6. The objectives of the international attraction and recruitment team are to:

- a) **Streamline international recruitment:** simplify hiring for Health NZ and candidates, ensuring a consistent and efficient single system approach.
- b) **Fill workforce gaps:** focus on recruiting for roles experiencing shortages, as determined by a clinician-led regional decision processes.
- c) **Promote New Zealand as a top healthcare destination:** market New Zealand globally as a place to work, live, and thrive, highlighting quality of life, cultural diversity, and its unique work environments.
- d) **Work with candidates who directly approach Health NZ:** ensure candidates receive the support and information they need to fill high-priority relevant vacancies.
- e) **Provide immigration advice:** employ licenced immigration advisors to provide prompt and targeted immigration advice to potential candidates.
- f) **Support international conference attendance to promote Health NZ:** support international conference attendance to promote Health NZ and attract candidates.

## The attraction and recruitment team's service model

- 7. The attraction and recruitment team serves as a central hub, managing all international talent sourcing and attraction. This shifts the burden from clinical leaders and local recruitment teams, who may not have the expertise to attract, source and access international markets, to a single service.
- 8. The attraction and recruitment team plays a crucial role in supporting both rural and urban facilities by connecting global talent with opportunities across the country, and helping that talent relocate to areas where they are most needed, including to places an international arrival may not have considered living.
- 9. Beyond attracting talent, the team also supports candidates to better understand our health regulations and our system needs, as well as navigate immigration settings.
- 10. The team runs 'Kiwi Health Jobs', an online job board owned by Health NZ. The board is available for funded and primary health sector providers to advertise New Zealand-based roles internationally<sup>1</sup>. The IRC also works with Chief Medical Officers and National Clinical Leads to ensure future workforce requirements are well planned, as the lead time for international talent to apply, relocate and commence can be 10-18 months.
- 11. The team sits within the National People Servicing function, connecting it closely to local recruitment teams across the country, which are part of the wider National People Servicing team.

## Attracting international talent and elevating the Health NZ brand

- 12. The attraction and recruitment team has been able to create a single brand for Health NZ's international recruitment, and a 'single front door' for health workers wanting to live and work in New Zealand.

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<sup>1</sup> Plunket, residential aged care (ARC) facilities, Hato Hone St John, and West Coast Primary Health all have current listings on Kiwi Health Jobs.

13. This creates a national pipeline of talent who have indicated a high likelihood of working in New Zealand but have yet to arrive. Talent may be interested in New Zealand as a destination but have little knowledge of New Zealand's geography or health system. The team helps candidates navigate information and guide them to make informed decisions about relocating to ensure a successful transition.
14. The team uses three broad approaches to attract talent:
  - a) working with candidates who approach Health NZ directly.
  - b) proactively direct sourcing (head hunting) candidates.
  - c) developing and implementing international attraction / advertising strategies and promoting the Health New Zealand brand.

### **Working with candidates that directly approach Health NZ**

15. Candidates are directed to Health NZ via job boards or campaigns. Those who express an interest in a role are assigned a candidate manager, who screens the candidate and provides initial candidate care (e.g., advice for obtaining registration). if appropriate.
16. The candidate is then directed to high priority and relevant vacancies, and referred to a local recruitment team for consideration. If the candidate is a good fit, a formal application process follows. The local recruitment team manages panel interviews and reference checks, to ensure decisions are made by those closest to the delivery of care. The offer process is identical for domestic or international candidates.
17. If a candidate is selected for a role, the international attraction and recruitment team would then help the candidate, and any appropriate family members, with free immigration advice and visa services.

### **Proactively direct sourcing (head hunting) 'passive' talent**

18. The international attraction and recruitment team creates a talent pool of qualified overseas candidates (including New Zealand trained workers living overseas) by proactively identifying and engaging with 'passive' candidates who may be a good fit for Health NZ but who have not directly contacted or applied for a role.
19. The team identifies candidates by using targeted keyword searches (e.g., on networking sites like LinkedIn) and cross-referencing data across workforce key words, university data, registration bodies, demographics and locations. It then emails and communicates with passive candidates about working in New Zealand, Health NZ, and possible future vacancies, keeping them engaged and informed until a job opportunity arises.
20. Passive candidates can take longer to convert into hires, as they may not be actively considering an international move.
21. Direct sourcing (head hunting) provides a higher success rate of conversion to hire, as the candidate has been selected based on the unique set of skills, experience, and knowledge required for a position. However, it is labour intensive.

## Developing and implementing attraction/ advertising strategies

22. The international attraction and recruitment team uses a range of attraction strategies in addition to social, digital and media advertising, including leveraging staff travelling to international conferences. At conferences, it provides print advertising, collateral for conference packs, face-to-face interview scheduling, immigration advice, and webinars. If members cannot attend a conference, it launches geo-mapped digital advertising.
23. While international attraction and advertising campaigns are often effective in gaining awareness, the system-wide approach ensures Health NZ gains financial efficiencies when procuring advertising, benefits from commercial-level actions from the international attraction and team's expert recruitment marketing and sourcing people, and leverages the team's knowledge of roles across Health NZ.
24. The team's current focus is on direct sourcing/head hunting. However, ongoing Health NZ awareness campaigns and targeted workforce campaigns are still required for high-priority roles. For example, in the week ending 14 March 2025, the team ran targeted awareness campaigns for two workforce roles, oncology and pharmacy, on social media platforms in countries with comparable health systems to New Zealand<sup>2</sup>.

## Key deliverables and key performance indicators

25. The key deliverables of the international attraction and recruitment team are:
  - a) promoting brand awareness of Health NZ in comparable healthcare markets overseas
  - b) ensuring overseas candidates have the information they need to make informed decision about a potential career at Health NZ
  - c) providing licensed immigration advice to candidates to expedite the immigration process
26. Key performance indicators (KPIs) for attraction and brand awareness include viewed advertising and clicked on ads. These are reported to you via the Weekly Report (see Figure 1 - Health NZ Overseas Campaigns & Hire Data).
27. The effectiveness of international recruitment efforts, as distinct from brand awareness, is less easy to discern. KPIs in this area include:
  - a) expressions of interest from direct sourced candidates.
  - b) candidates referred to regional recruitment teams to apply.
  - c) candidates who Health NZ has hired or made an offer to.

## Results

28. In the last eight months, the international and attraction recruitment team have sourced 4,784 possible candidates, referred 953 candidates to the recruitment team, and

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<sup>2</sup> Responsible authorities set comparable territories for experience. The United Kingdom and Ireland are comparable territories for most professions.

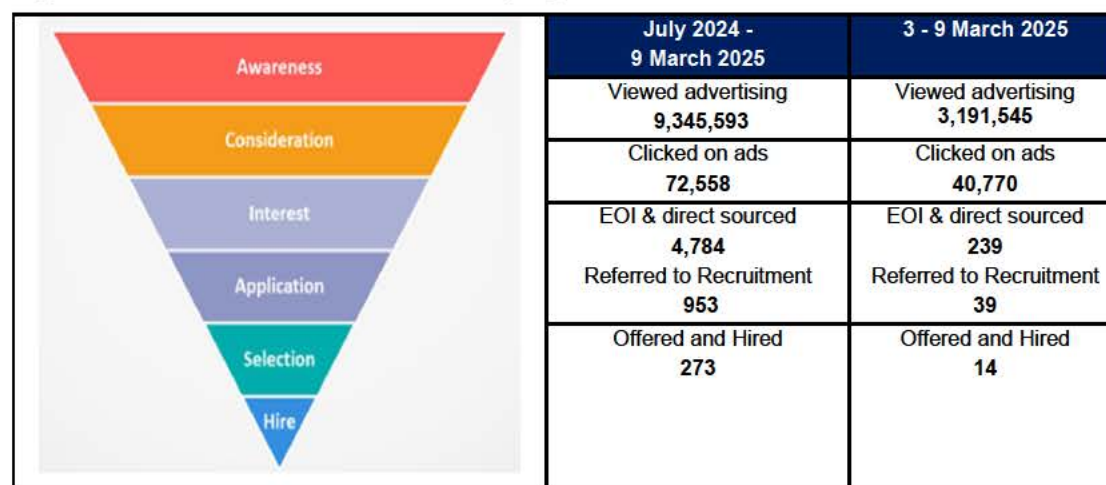


contributed to 273 newly employed hires across the country ('Offered and Hired'). This makes for a conversion rate of approximately 29% from referred to newly employed. We report these results to you as part of the Weekly Report.

29. On average, the IRC direct sources between 130 possible candidates each week and refers between 30-45 candidates per week to local recruitment teams. It is not always possible to determine where a candidate originated from.

30. If externally sourced, it would cost around \$25,000 in placement fees for each new hire.

**Figure 1 - Health NZ Overseas Campaigns & Hire Data**



31. As opposed to outsourcing international attraction and recruitment work to external agencies, having an internal attraction and recruitment team means our recruiters are better equipped to find the right fit for Health NZ's unique culture and hiring needs.

32. Having an internal team also means campaigns yield more than just immediate hires – they help build a talent pool, ensuring that candidates who may not fit current openings are considered for future opportunities.

## Next steps

33. We are happy to discuss the international attraction and recruitment team further and provide additional information if required.