

HEALTH: PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE

Building Better Public Services



Better prevention and early intervention

Effective preventive healthcare plays an important part in preventing disease and giving Kiwis the best chance for a healthier life. It also helps to improve the performance of our public health service.

In difficult economic times, National is investing heavily in disease prevention and health promotion. Smart investment benefits more people and the health service in the longer term.

Health targets focusing on important areas

National has selected a discrete number of high impact, high return preventive-health targets – immunisations for under-twos, smoking, and heart disease/diabetes. This was intentional. Public health dollars had been spread too thinly, on too many projects over a decade, with very little health gain to show for it.

Results in our target areas have been immediate. Child immunisation rates are at all-time highs. More people are trying to quit smoking. Heart disease risk assessments have increased. Focus and accountability are achieving results.

Although we've seen great progress, there's still more to do to improve frontline preventive health services and give Kiwis the best chance for a healthier life.

We're investing in better immunisation, targeting rheumatic fever, providing more support for people to quit smoking, insulating homes, and improving support for new mums and babies.

“National will ensure that, by the end of 2014, 95 per cent of all eight-month-old children are fully immunised with three scheduled vaccinations. We'll also roll out a nationwide rheumatic fever programme, improve cancer screening, and continue to make further gains tackling heart disease, smoking, and unhealthy weight.”

Key points

Child immunisation rates at all time high



A record 91 per cent of two-year-olds are fully immunised; up from 73 per cent.

More progress on tackling smoking



We've increased tobacco tax by 30 per cent, and calls to Quitline are up by half. 85 per cent of patients in hospitals are offered help to quit smoking. Use of smoking cessation treatments, such as patches, is up 82 per cent in just 18 months.

Better diabetes and cardiovascular services



Targeted improvement in the detection, risk assessment, and management of these diseases has seen many more eligible patients risk-assessed for heart disease and diabetes.

National has...



Supported child health

- ✓ Boosted immunisation rates for all two-year-olds to record levels.
- ✓ Provided \$12 million to help significantly reduce rheumatic fever in vulnerable communities.
- ✓ Worked with industry to more than double 'food advertising free zones' during children's TV.
- ✓ Funded extensive school nutrition programmes including Fruit In Schools.
- ✓ Boosted physical activity in schools through Kiwisport.



Provided more support for mums

- ✓ Fully funded PlunketLine 24 hours-a-day, seven days a week.
- ✓ Provided extra WellChild/Plunket Tamariki Ora maternity visits for mums – targeting first-time mothers.
- ✓ Invested in longer stays in birthing facilities for new mothers in need.



Funded early intervention services

- ✓ Increased cardiovascular and diabetes screening and management.
- ✓ Established a four-year bowel screening pilot, to help identify bowel disease early.
- ✓ Committed \$347 million to insulate 188,500 Kiwi homes and provide clean-heating devices to make homes warmer, healthier, and more energy efficient in our *Warm Up New Zealand: Heat Smart* scheme.



Tackled smoking

- ✓ Increased quit-smoking support and encouraged more people to give up.
- ✓ Raised the tobacco tax by 30 per cent.
- ✓ Banned smoking in prisons.

Our results so far – better prevention

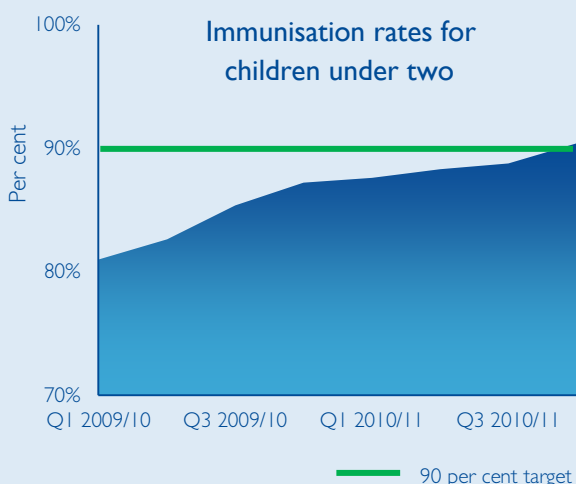
We're making each health dollar go further with a focus on efficiency and less bureaucracy.

More children getting a healthy start

Imunisation rate at record high

– Plunket press release, 14 Feb 2011

- A record 91 per cent of two year olds are fully immunised - up from 73 per cent three years ago.



- 100,000 B4 School Checks completed to ensure children are ready, and healthy, to start school.
- 22,000 children to benefit from National's focus on rheumatic fever.

More new mums getting support

- Three extra WellChild visits for 18,000 mothers – with a focus on first-time mums.
- 41,000 more calls were made to PlunketLine in 2010/11 – after the government funded it as a 24-hour service – than in 2007/08.

More screening for bowel cancer

- 130,000 people are in the four-year bowel screening pilot.

More progress on quit smoking

- 50 per cent increase in calls by smokers to Quitline, and an 82 per cent increase in smoking cessation support.

More homes are warmer and drier

- More than 130,000 homes are warmer, drier, and healthier under our new *Warm Up New Zealand: HeatSmart* scheme.
- Over 29,000 homes have been converted to clean heat devices.

Progress in insulation, space heating, and water heating	Labour after 9 years	National in just 3 years
Homes insulated with government grants	50,264	135,390*
Homes converted to clean heating with government grants	800	29,151
Homes installed with solar heating or heat pumps for water heating with government grants	1971	7462

* Includes *Warm Up New Zealand: HeatSmart* and other government grants.

What we will do next...

I. Continue to support child health

→ Introduce a new immunisation target. By the end of 2014, 95 per cent of all eight-month-old children will be fully immunised with three scheduled vaccinations.

Now that we are on track to meet the national immunisation target for 95 per cent of two-year-olds being fully immunised by June 2012, it's time to set a new goal.

Children are more likely to complete all immunisations if they begin early. They are more likely to be enrolled with their GP and in regular contact with them, helping set healthy foundations for life. National will ensure children are enrolled at birth with a GP or WellChild/Tamariki Ora provider.

Children are most vulnerable to infections like whooping cough and pneumococcal disease between the ages of 3 to 18 months old. That's because immunity built up from their mother begins to reduce, and they're unable to respond quickly to diseases. Early vaccination helps a child's immune system become more responsive and react quickly to infections.

Three sets of vaccinations are given at six weeks, three months and five months to protect children against polio, whooping cough, Hepatitis B, and pneumococcal disease.

→ Roll out a \$12 million nationwide rheumatic fever programme targeting vulnerable communities.

Rheumatic fever is an entirely preventable disease that can have serious consequences for children during childhood and throughout their lifetime. For example, a simple sore throat can lead to permanent heart damage.

The problem is serious and, after years of inaction by the previous government, National is doing something about it. In Budget 2011 we have funded a four-year programme to significantly reduce rates of this third-world disease in vulnerable communities.

→ Ensure more children receive B4 school checks.

See our [Maternity and Child Health policy](#)

Proportion of eight-month-olds immunised	Our target dates
70%	Now
85%	July 2013
90%	July 2014
95%	End of 2014

2. Build on our health targets

- Improve care further for eligible patients with diabetes and cardiovascular conditions.

National has lifted the number of people getting cardiovascular and diabetes services. Cardiovascular disease (CVD) and diabetes are preventable diseases that, with better management, can greatly improve health outcomes of patients.

The recent 'Diabetes Get Checked' review showed the need for an improved programme. Experts believe we can do better and we are supporting them to develop an alternative programme. A CVD check at an eligible age has been shown to reduce heart disease and improve diabetes management.

This will be funded from within existing health budgets, including the \$8 million per annum existing 'Get Checked' allocation.

- Further expand smoking prevention and reduction, including increased screening in primary care.

One of the best ways to discourage smoking is for a doctor or nurse to talk to a patient about their smoking.

Over the past two years the number of smokers in hospitals given advice and help to quit has risen from none to 85 per cent. Now we want more GPs to offer similar advice to their patients.

National has increased tobacco tax by an unprecedented 30 per cent. This has resulted in a 50 per cent jump in calls to Quitline, and increased uptake of smoking cessation treatments, such as patches – up 82 per cent in 18 months. We also banned smoking in prisons.

Extra advice for patients will be funded from within existing health budgets.

3. Improve prostate health services

- Implement the recommendations of the Health Select Committee on Prostate Cancer Screening to improve services.

The Committee recommended the development of evidence-based information and resources for men, so they can make more informed decisions about prostate testing, and have fair access to good quality care. There are no plans to introduce a national screening programme at this stage.

4. Target unhealthy weight early

- Target the risk factors of unhealthy weight early, with expanded nutrition education through maternal and ante-natal support services.

In Budget 2011, National invested an extra \$54 million into maternity services. This includes extra WellChild visits for around 18,000 mothers, with a focus on first-time mums.

Research by the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Sir Peter Gluckman, points to the importance of maternal and ante-natal nutrition in the campaign against unhealthy weight.

National will improve the nutrition component of ante-natal education. It's important that expectant mums are informed about the effects their eating habits have on their unborn child.

Midwives already inform mums-to-be about how to eat right and we want to make sure ante-natal education also responds to their needs.

More nutrition education will be funded from the \$6 million revamp of maternal and ante-natal education announced in Budget 2011.

5. Bring the health service into the digital age

- Ensure there is one central electronic health record for every person by 2014.

Having one central place for your medical history could save your life.

We want health professionals to be able to access a single record about your history, no matter where you are – but only with your permission. This would mean information about medications, health conditions, allergies, immunisations and recent visits to the doctor would be in one place. It would also mean that you would only have to tell your story once.

And there are benefits to the health sector. One central record saves money and time, and makes healthcare safer.

Establishing central electronic health records will be funded from the capital budget of DHBs.

- Complete the rollout of the digital upgrade of mammography screening.

70 per cent of women aged 50 to 69 are being screened for breast cancer. The aim of the screening programme is to reduce the number of women who die from this common cancer by 30 per cent.

Better screening means cancers can be picked up earlier and treated sooner.

Digital mammography brings 21st century technology to DHBs, and better services for patients. Benefits include a better screening process, clearer pictures, and faster results for the patient.

This will be funded by District Health Boards.

Labour would take New Zealand backwards

Labour:

- ✘ Means more bureaucracy, more committees, and endless visions that don't deliver.
- ✘ Promised in 2001 that reducing the impact of rheumatic fever was a priority. They did nothing over the following seven years in government and rheumatic fever rates have increased.
- ✘ Failed to establish a bowel cancer pilot over nine years, despite saying it was a priority.
- ✘ Allowed 27 per cent of under twos to miss out on vital immunisations – meaning more children were catching preventative diseases like whooping cough or mumps.
- ✘ Cut funding for Plunketline in 2006, despite demand from parents. National reinstated and fully funded the 24-hour service.

We can't afford another dose of Labour.