

SENIOR CITIZENS

Building a Brighter Future



A brighter future for older New Zealanders

National is working hard to ensure older New Zealanders get the security, wellbeing, and respect they deserve.

Over the past three years, we've focused on building stronger and more sustainable economic growth. This is the only way we will achieve the financial security and brighter future older New Zealanders deserve.

National's strong economic management has ensured all rates of New Zealand Superannuation are increasing regularly. When the economy is growing and after-tax wages increase, rates of Super go up. Our across-the-board tax cuts are also increasing Superannuation payments.

It is in older New Zealanders' interests to support National's stronger economic policies.

Building better frontline public services

We've targeted more funding on the frontline health service and our six clear health targets are helping District Health Boards nationwide to concentrate on priority areas, such as more elective surgeries and shorter waiting times.

We've put more Police on our streets to keep New Zealanders safe and we're cracking down on violent crime.

We're spending more on education than ever before, so our children receive the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in a modern economy, here in New Zealand.

“National will set minimum standards for home and community support providers. We will continue to grow the number of aged care nurses in the Voluntary Bonding Scheme, and further reduce waiting times for elective surgery, cancer treatment, and important diagnostic tests.”

Key facts

- Reduced personal taxes across the board and cut taxes on savings.
- NZ Super is up 19 per cent since April 2008. The married rate is up \$166 a fortnight. The single living alone rate is up by almost \$108.
- More frontline public services:
 - 800 more doctors and 2000 more nurses in our public health system.
 - Provided \$100 million a year more for primary care and GP subsidies.
 - 600 more Police by the end of 2011.
- 23,000 more elective surgeries for over 65s.
- 165,000 home upgrades with insulation or clean heating.
- Crime is down 8.9% per person in the past two years, and the lowest it's been since 1982.
- National Standards in literacy and numeracy in primary and intermediate schools.

National has...



Boosted support for seniors

- ✓ Increased all rates of Superannuation.
- ✓ Implemented trans-Tasman Super portability to allow New Zealand Superannuitants living in Australia to transfer their entitlements to certain Australian Super schemes.
- ✓ Increased funding for the SuperGold Card public transport scheme by \$9 million, taking the total to \$45 million over the next two years.
- ✓ Signed reciprocal SuperGold Card arrangements with Australian state and territorial governments so seniors can get commercial discounts when travelling in Australia and New Zealand.



Built a safer New Zealand

- ✓ Passed 18 new public safety laws, including tougher sentencing, bail, and parole laws.
- ✓ Passed the Three Strikes law for the worst repeat violent offenders.
- ✓ Put 600 more Police on the beat around the country by the end of 2011.
- ✓ Passed new laws to increase sentences for involvement in gangs, and boosted powers to intercept gang communications and dismantle fortifications.
- ✓ Introduced a law to restrict access to methamphetamine (P) precursor chemicals and created dedicated anti-drug taskforces in Customs.
- ✓ Imposed a \$50 levy on all offenders, regardless of the crime they commit, and used it to fund 13 new services for victims.



Provided better healthcare for over 65s

- ✓ Put in place health targets, focusing DHBs on better frontline services – such as elective surgery, and waiting times for cancer and emergency department treatment.
- ✓ \$300 million extra annual funding for Health of Older People, and \$46 million extra annual funding for home support services.
- ✓ Provided an extra \$5 million to support respite care.
- ✓ Increased funding for dementia services, with almost 200 extra dementia beds over the next two years.

Improved aged care

- ✓ Introduced spot audits to strengthen monitoring in rest homes, and published rest home audits online.
- ✓ Introduced regular, personalised assessments for people living in rest homes. Now people living in rest homes will have their health comprehensively assessed at least every six months.
- ✓ Provided an additional \$18 million a year to help rest homes support and retain nursing staff.
- ✓ Provided extra specialised training for 300 aged care nurses.
- ✓ Extended the voluntary bonding scheme to include aged care nurses. 25 per cent of nursing graduates who registered interest in the Scheme in 2011 are either currently working in, or intending to work, in aged care.



Restored confidence in our financial sector

- ✓ Established the one-stop-shop Financial Markets Authority with a sharper focus on enforcing the law.
- ✓ Tightened oversight of those working in the financial markets. This includes financial advisors, trustees, and auditors.
- ✓ Got government spending under control, and set a return to surplus by 2014/15, so that we don't leave growing debt for the next generation of New Zealanders.



Invested in New Zealand's future

- ✓ Allocated \$12 billion for educating children, the highest level of education funding ever.
- ✓ Provided \$1.4 billion this year for early childhood education, a 40 per cent funding increase since 2008.
- ✓ Opened eight trades academies this year, with 13 more to follow, helping young people learn practical skills alongside literacy and numeracy.
- ✓ Providing 11,600 more core places in tertiary education.
- ✓ Maintained interest-free student loans, while getting better value out of the scheme for taxpayers.

Supported Canterbury seniors

- ✓ Telephoned over 23,000 seniors after the September and February earthquakes to ensure they were safe and provided support where needed.



Improved services for senior citizens

- ✓ Moved Senior Services into a dedicated unit within the Ministry of Social Development.
- ✓ Set up a single dedicated line for Senior Citizen's call centre operations 0800 552 002.
- ✓ Introduced online services and applications for superannuitants.
- ✓ Kept our doors open to seniors groups, such as Grey Power and Age Concern, to improve services for seniors.



Made it easier to take a 'Golden Years OE'

- ✓ Passed the Social Assistance (Payment of NZ Superannuation and Veterans Pension Overseas) Amendment Act. Now superannuitants travelling and living overseas can receive up to 100 per cent of their New Zealand entitlement, depending on how long they've lived here.

Our results so far ...

NZ Super has gone up

- All rates of New Zealand Superannuation have increased by 19 per cent since 2008:
 - The married rate is up by \$166 a fortnight.
 - The single living alone rate increased by almost \$108 a fortnight.

Increase in NZ Superannuation fortnightly payments	Labour's last 3 years April 2005 to April 2008	National's first 3 years April 2008 to April 2011
Married couple	\$92	\$166
Single person living alone	\$60	\$108

New Zealand is becoming safer

- Crime is down in every Police district in the country. Per capita crime is now the lowest it's been since 1982.
- 700 criminals have received their first strike under the Three Strikes Law.
- \$30.4 million of P was seized in 2010. This is 46 per cent more than in 2009.
- \$40 million has been seized from criminals to date this year under the new proceeds of crime laws.
- Boy racing offences are down by 15 per cent.
- The Police have issued over 6000 Police Safety Orders, confirming this as an effective new tool to manage family violence situations.

Healthcare is better

- Over 800 more doctors and over 2000 more nurses are working in our DHBs.
- 23,000 extra operations, such as hip and knee replacements, have been completed for patients aged over 65 since 2008.
- 92 per cent of patients are being treated, admitted, or discharged from emergency departments within six hours.
- Patients needing, and ready for, cancer radiation treatment are getting it in the world gold standard of four weeks.
- No patient has had to travel to Australia for cancer radiation treatment since late 2008.

Homes are warmer, drier, and healthier

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 installed with a clean heating device 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...

1. Maintain NZ Superannuation

→ Ensure New Zealand Superannuation for married couples continues to be at least 66 per cent of the after-tax average wage, paid from age 65. All other Superannuation rates will continue to be calculated from this base.

Older New Zealanders deserve financial security in their retirement.

John Key has reaffirmed his promise to all New Zealanders that the age of Super eligibility will not change under National.

2. Set minimum standards for home and community support providers

→ Set a minimum standard for the quality of care that home and community support providers deliver to older New Zealanders.

We want older people who are receiving home-based support, and their families, to know they are getting quality, best-practice levels of care.

Currently, there is only a voluntary standard that providers can choose to meet. A national minimum standard will mean the same level of care is expected from providers, no matter where they are or who they work with.

These minimum standards will be set by Standards NZ and rolled out to cover all providers of home-based support services around the country.

3. Expand the Voluntary Bonding Scheme

→ Continue to grow the numbers of aged care nurses in the Voluntary Bonding Scheme.

National added aged care nursing to the Voluntary Bonding Scheme in 2011, recognising the need for these health professionals across the country.

1800 doctors, nurses, and midwives have already signed up to our Voluntary Bonding Scheme in hard-to-staff areas and specialties, including aged care.

4. Further reduce waiting times for surgery and treatment

→ Ensure that, by December 2014:

- All patients ready and booked for elective surgery get their operations within four months.
- All patients needing a specialist appointment are seen within no more than four months.

→ Expand the four-week maximum waiting-time target for radiation treatment to include chemotherapy treatment.

→ Reduce waiting times for important diagnostic tests such as CT scans, MRI scans, angiograms, and colonoscopies.

These changes will help ensure more older New Zealanders get the essential treatment and operations they need sooner.

5. Confront elder abuse

- Encourage the Police to work closely with partner organisations to share information and improve responses to elder abuse. For example, co-locating Age Concern staff in Police National Headquarters alongside Victim Support and Community Patrols to improve national co-ordination.

Older people who are dependent on others are vulnerable to abuse. Two to three cases of elder abuse are reported to agencies every day. Closer agency relationships and better information sharing allows better support and services for these cases.

6. Support the SuperGold Card

- Continue to expand the commercial benefits and discounts available and accessible to all SuperGold Card holders.

There are over 1,300 New Zealand SuperGold business partners with 5,600 outlets nationwide. National will work with businesses to increase the number and range of commercial benefits available for seniors through the card.

7. Make it easier to apply for Living Alone Assistance

- Pass the Social Assistance (Living Alone Payment) Amendment Bill.

Currently superannuitants who live alone must apply for the living alone payment in addition to their superannuation. This Bill will make a technical change to streamline the process so superannuitants living alone will need to make only one application, rather than two, to receive their full entitlement.

8. Roll out ultra-fast broadband

- Roll out ultra-fast broadband to and connect New Zealand with the world.

We're putting \$1.5 billion towards a nationwide ultra-fast broadband network, including \$300m for faster broadband in rural communities and schools.

Labour would take New Zealand backwards

Labour:

- ✗ Allowed power prices to skyrocket by 72 per cent in nine years. Under National they've gone up a modest 13 per cent.
- ✗ Would impose a capital gains tax on investment properties and family farms, and will send New Zealand back into debt.
- ✗ Would impose six separate personal tax rates on New Zealanders.
- ✗ Was very slow to react as more than \$6 billion was lost from failing finance companies. National has had to fix problems in this area.
- ✗ Culled 30,000 patients off hospital waiting lists before they had received surgery.
- ✗ Abolished minimum staffing levels in rest homes in 2004.
- ✗ Has promised to repeal the Three Strikes law, which keeps the worst serious and repeat violent offenders behind bars.
- ✗ Allowed violent crime to increase 47 per cent.

We can't afford another dose of Labour.