Meeting Briefing

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

Meeting with Professor Sir Jim Mann 16 October 2025

Due to MO:	15 October 2025	**Reference**	**HNZ0010423**
To:	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
From:	Dr Richard Sullivan, Chief Clinical Officer		
Copy to:	n/a		
Security level:	In Confidence	**Priority**	Routine
Consulted:	n/a		
Proactive Release:	This title is not proposed by Health NZ for proactive release		

Contact for further discussion

Name	Position	Phone	1st contact
Pauline Fuimaono Sanders	National Director Pacific Health (Acting)	[redacted]	x

Attachments

Appendix 1:	Biography of Professor Sir Jim Mann
Appendix 2:	[redacted]
Appendix 3:	[redacted]

Appendix 2 and 3 have been withheld in full.

About the meeting

Purpose	You are meeting with Professor Sir Jim Mann to discuss issues relating to the care of New Zealanders living with diabetes.
Date	Thursday 16 October
Time	11:30am - 12.00pm
Venue	Office of the Minister of Health
Attendees	Professor Sir Joel Ivor Mann (Jim), Professor in Human Nutrition and Medicine, University of Otago & Consultant Endocrinology Physician, Dunedin Hospital Note, biography is attached as Appendix 1
Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora officials	Nadine Gray, National Chief Nurse
Media	No media are expected
Talking points	

Background and context

1. This meeting briefing provides you with information to support your meeting with Professor Sir Jim Mann
2. Professor Mann may discuss new diabetes prevention strategies and place New Zealand's diabetes epidemic in a global context, time permitting.

Diabetes in New Zealand

3. Diabetes is one of the most pressing public health challenges in New Zealand, with significant clinical, social and economic implications. The condition disproportionately affects Māori, Pacific and South Asian communities, and its prevalence is projected to rise sharply in coming decades.
4. Diabetes rates among Māori and Pacific peoples are three times higher than for other groups, with significantly poorer health outcomes and increased complication rates. Māori have a diabetes mortality rate 3.5 times greater than that of non-Māori. Half of Pacific and Indian people aged over 75 have diabetes. These groups face earlier onset, higher prevalence, higher mortality and complication rates, and greater health loss. Diabetes is a leading cause of blindness and preventable lower limb amputations, and it significantly affects the mental and physical wellbeing of individuals and their families.
5. As of 2024, approximately 307,000 people in New Zealand live with type 2 diabetes – 4.7% of the population. This number is projected to increase to 390,000-430,000 by 2044, representing 6.6-7.4% of the population. The economic cost of type 2 diabetes is estimated at $2.6 billion annually, or 0.67% of GDP, and is expected to double in 20

years.

6. Diabetes-related inequities stem from complex factors. Barriers to access to healthcare and varying quality of care are recognised as perpetuating inequities, particularly for Māori.

7. Diabetes is a multi-system disease, requiring coordinated care across general practice, endocrinology, nursing, dietetics, mental health and allied health services. Early diagnosis and tight glycaemic control are critical to preventing complications such as amputations, cardiovascular disease and kidney failure.

Diabetes-related amputations in New Zealand

8. Diabetes-related amputations are a growing concern, particularly among Māori, Pacific and Indian communities.

9. In 2023, there were 1,329 diabetes-related lower limb amputations nationwide. Over the past five years, there have been 8,685 total amputations, with 70% (6,124) directly linked to diabetes foot disease. This is an increase of 20% over that period.

10. The economic burden of amputations is significant. The average cost per amputation ranges from $27,913 (foot/ankle) to $52,261 (below-knee). This excludes prosthetics and long-term care. Preventing a single major amputation could save approximately $40,000.

11. Early intervention is critical to address diabetes-related amputation rates. A dedicated Foot Working Group was recently established within the National Diabetes Clinical Network to strengthen diabetes foot care and reduce amputation rates, with a particular focus on improving access to community podiatry services.

Appendix 1: Biography of Professor Sir Jim Mann KNZM, PhD, DM, FRACP, FRSNZ

Professor Sir Jim Mann has been a leading figure in the prevention and management of non-communicable diseases for over three decades. Since 1988, he has held joint appointments in the Departments of Medicine and Human Nutrition at the University of Otago. He also served as a Consultant Physician in Endocrinology at Dunedin Hospital for more than 30 years. Prior to his tenure in New Zealand, he lectured at the University of Oxford and practised at the Radcliffe Infirmary (a hospital in Oxford).

His research - encompassing over 400 scientific publications, 90 book chapters, and several textbooks, including *Essentials of Human Nutrition* - has shaped global approaches to nutrition, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease prevention.

Professor Mann has served on numerous international advisory groups for the World Health Organization, including the Collaborating Centre for Human Nutrition, the Nutrition Guidance Advisory Group, and the Expert Advisory Panel on Nutrition. In New Zealand, he has chaired national committees responsible for developing clinical guidelines on obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular risk assessment.

He is a long-standing Board Member of the Heart Foundation and formerly served as Medical Advisor to Diabetes New Zealand, contributing to both organisations for over 30 years. He was the founding Director and is now Co-Director of the Edgar Diabetes and Obesity Research Centre, which has secured more than $180 million in research funding.

Professor Mann is currently:

- Director of the Healthier Lives–He Oranga Hauora National Science Challenge
- Director of the New Zealand–China Non-Communicable Diseases Research Collaboration Centre
- Principal Investigator at the Riddet Institute, a national Centre of Research Excellence, the premier national centre for fundamental and strategic scientific research in food. Its area of expertise is at the intersection of food material science, novel food processing, gastrointestinal biology and human nutrition.

A Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand, he has received the Society's Hercus Medal and the University of Otago's Distinguished Research Medal. In recognition of his contributions to health and medical research, he was appointed a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2002 and a Knight Companion in 2022.