

Meeting with Health Accelerator 23 October 2025

Due to MO:	21 October 2025	Reference	HNZ00098044
To:	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
From:	Martin Hefford, Director Living Well, Planning, Funding and Outcomes		
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Contact for further discussion

Name	Position	Phone	1st contact
Martin Hefford	Director Living Well, Planning Funding and Outcomes		x
Astuti Balram	Group Manager, Primary Care Living Well		

Attachments

Appendix 1: Biographies of attendees

About the meeting

Purpose	You are meeting with Health Accelerator to discuss the purpose of the organisation and its progress towards improving efficiency, productivity and quality in general practice.
Date	Thursday 23 October 2025
Time	11.30am to 11.50am
Venue	EW 6.6.
Attendees	Bindi Norwell, Co-Chair Health Accelerator Justine Thorpe, Co-Chair Health Accelerator Note, biographies are attached as Appendix 1.
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora officials	Martin Hefford, Director Living Well, Planning, Funding and Outcomes
Media	No media are expected

Purpose

1. This meeting briefing provides you with information to support your meeting with Health Accelerator on 23 October 2025. The Co-Chairs have asked to meet with you to discuss the purpose of their organisation and its progress towards improving efficiency, productivity and quality in general practice.

2. 

Background and context

3. Health Accelerator (HA) is a collaborative innovation hub that has been established to fast-track the development of digital solutions and Artificial Intelligence in primary care across New Zealand to support a more connected, equitable, and sustainable health system. HA is a joint venture between four of the country's large primary care networks; Pegasus, Pinnacle, ProCare, and Tū Ora Compass Health and collectively supports more than 500 General Practices across New Zealand. It was launched on 28 July 2025.
4. HA is looking at ways healthcare can be simpler, more connected, and more patient focused. HA aims to address some of the challenges in primary care by developing scalable, tech-enabled solutions that improve clinical workflows, enhance patient experiences, and reduce administrative burden on healthcare teams.
5. HA is a partner with Heidi, the AI scribe tool Health NZ is rolling out in Emergency Departments across New Zealand. Heidi listens and transcribes clinical conversations, helping doctors complete notes faster and more accurately. This roll out builds on the successful prototype piloted in the Hawke's Bay ED where ambient AI reduced documentation time by over 80% and improved clinician workflow and wellbeing. Health NZ did not partner with HA on the Heidi pilot.

Health Accelerator is introducing digital tools

6. HA have an established clinical governance review process for the tools they develop, and a process for practice teams choosing to adapt the tools to ensure appropriate clinical buy-in.
7. HA has introduced several digital tools, including digital assistants (robots) and two inbox management assistants. The robots have reportedly had measurable impacts on practices that have taken up these tools:
 - a) ACC Claims Robot: Increases revenue by scanning practice records to identify unclaimed ACC consultations.
 - b) Cardiovascular Risk Assessment Robot: Automates complex decision-making to calculate risk scores, saves nurses' time (6 minutes per score).
8. HA has additional tools in development including updating the Cervical Screening Robot to differentiate between HPV and smear testing, and updating the Breast Screening Robot to accommodate varied patient screening schedules.
9. Currently robots are offered as a subscription package to practices using the Indici Patient Management System (PMS). HA are working with Medtech on integrating robots into the Medtech PMS (widely used in New Zealand practices).
10. HA is also working on evaluation criteria for new robots to ensure they are scalable across practices, address quality/equity gaps, and show return on investment for practices.
11. Health NZ has met with HA Chief Executive Paul Roseman informally to discuss their work. These discussions have not confirmed any formal involvement between Health NZ and HA. Health NZ remains open to the opportunity to support the work of HA to expand the use of technology in health care.

There is an appetite for the use of AI in primary care settings

12. The Collaborative Aotearoa AI in Primary Care Working Group (the Working Group) is a collaborative group from across multiple primary care organisations, supported by IT experts CIO Studio, working together to support the evolution of AI in primary care.
13. Between 31 January and 28 February 2025 the Working Group undertook a second six-monthly survey which showed an increase in AI adoption across practices. 256 participants responded to the most recent survey and of these:
 - a) 68% of respondents now use AI tools – up from 52% in the first survey in July 2025
 - b) AI daily use has risen from 24% to 40%
 - c) GPs and Nurse Practitioners are the main users (46%) followed by practice managers (23%)
14. Transcription tools were seen as the most beneficial AI application, due to their ability to streamline clinical documentation with:
 - a) note-taking and scribing tools most popular – used by 50% of respondents; and
 - b) virtual assistants and chatbots – used by 16% of respondents.
15. The initial survey provided a benchmark, and the Working Group will repeat the survey every six months to track the uptake of AI tools.

Sector wide support for uptake

16. While uptake is growing, there is still a need for improved AI literacy among healthcare providers, as well as regulatory guidance and trust-building efforts to facilitate AI adoption.
17. Many primary care organisations are also working to support the sector in various ways by providing demonstrations, webinars, PHO conducted privacy impact assessments and guides to assist uptake. Most recently WellSouth Primary Health Network developed a comprehensive guide for General Practices which they have made available nationwide through the Collaborative Aotearoa AI in Primary Care Working Group and can be accessed on the General Practice New Zealand website.
18. The guide provides simple explanations, a summary of the regulatory framework for AI in New Zealand and a discussion on the potential medicolegal considerations, opportunities, and benefits. It also looks at the risks and mitigations when using AI and provides some step-by-step guidance on how to introduce generative AI in general practice. You may want to ask HA about how they are encouraging and support the use of AI amongst clinicians and practices in the primary care sector, including how they are reducing barriers to uptake of digital technology.
19. Health NZ has begun engagement with the General Practice Leaders Forum on AI and robotic process automation. We see opportunity to reduce the burden of clinical administration time on GPs and nurses. The group indicated that funding to support tool development and an information resource on the growing numbers of digital tools available could facilitate adoption, along with change management support.
20. Health NZ is open to exploring opportunities to work with HA and other stakeholders to support the adoption of AI another digital technology to reduce clinical administration on GPs and nurses. We welcome continued engagement with HA on this.

Appendix 1: Biographies of attendees (where applicable)

Bindi Norwell: Health Accelerator Co-Chair.



Bindi has more than 25 years' experience working across a range of sectors including property, professional services, telecommunications and aviation.

Previously CEO of the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand (REINZ), Bindi has extensive commercial and leadership experience, is strategic and supports collaboration and stakeholder engagement.

Along with being Co-Chair of Health Accelerator since July 2025, Bindi has been Chief Executive Officer of ProCare since 2021 where she has a passion for health and relishes

the opportunity to utilise her strategic and leadership strengths to improving the health outcomes for all New Zealanders, with a key focus on equity, digital transformation and putting people at the centre of the health experience. Bindi is also a board member of CareHQ and holds an MBA with Monash University.

Justine Thorpe: Health Accelerator Co-Chair.



Justine is an experienced health sector leader with 21 years' experience in primary health organisation senior roles, including 3 years on the Wairarapa DHB Executive team in her role as Integration Programme Director.

Along with being Co-Chair of Health Accelerator since July 2025, Justine has been Chief Executive Officer of Tu Ora Compass Health since 2021. She is currently Chair of Practice Plus, A board member of General Practice New Zealand and Papakanui Iwi Land Trust and Director of Latitude Health.

Justine has a natural ability to engage people in a vision and take them on a journey of change. Justine's genuine passion for making a difference to the community she serves and commitment to achieving Māori health equity is well respected by her colleagues across the sector.

As an industry leader, Justine has built effective networks and a reputation for getting the job done. Justine's ability to deploy strategy into operations coupled with sound financial and Government contracting knowledge support effective business management and accountability.