

## Provider responses to the Primary Health Care Strategy

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## Evaluation of the implementation of the Primary Health Care Strategy

- Health Services Research Centre, Victoria University
- CBG Health Research Ltd.

## Funding

- Health Research Council
- Ministry of Health
- ACC

## The Primary Health Care Strategy

- Refocussed care to the primary sector
- Goal = to reduce health inequalities
- Established PHOs
- Introduced
  - Capitated funding
  - Population based approach

## Methods

- Analysis of practice data of a random sample of practices
- Interviews 2004 & 2006 with PHC providers, PHOs and stakeholders
- Surveys – PNs, GPs, Practice Managers
- Interviews 2006 with nursing leaders

## Sample

- Participants drawn from
  - 20 purposively sampled PHOs
  - 1,462 eligible practices
- Interviews with 8 from each PHO plus DHBs, MoH and professional organisations
- Survey with Practice Managers and 50% of GPs and PNs

## Findings

- 80 PHOs established
- 95% of population enrolled in PHOs
- Capitation funding -> little reduction in patient fees
- Supplementary funding for special projects - Care Plus, RICF, SIA, VLCA

## GP responses

- Little business incentive for pop-based approach
- Views of PHOs ranged between distrust and enthusiasm
- Despite increased funding small and inconsistent decrease in fees
- 2.5% increase in visits

## Nurses' responses

- Expansion of some nurses' roles where PHOs and providers embraced the intentions of the Strategy
- Role expansion linked to additional funding for specific programmes
- GPs key to expansion of nurses' roles
- Barriers to expansion:
  - GPs' and nurses' attitudes
  - Funding models at practice level
  - employment arrangements

## Nurses' responses continued ...

- Increased paperwork has led to decreased clinical time
- Only 15 Nurse Practitioners registered for PHC
- NPs cannot independently enrol pts in PHOs
- NPs cannot access PHC funding except through GPs

## Policy and practice implications

- Rationalise PHO numbers and function
- Support doctors and nurses to take on management and governance functions
- Provide incentives to:
  - Adopt a population-based approach
  - Improve clinical quality
  - Develop collaborative teamwork
  - Recruit and retain GPs and nurses