



AUCKLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD

Communications

Ph: 09 630 9952

## **ADHB Media Release**

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### **Diabetes nurses authorised to prescribe**

For the first time a group of registered nurses have been authorised to independently prescribe medication to their patients.

People with diabetes in four North Island regions are to have their medication managed by registered nurses practising in diabetes health.

These nurses now join doctors and nurse practitioners in being authorised to prescribe.

In a significant move, these nurses are taking part in a demonstration that aims to make life easier for diabetes patients and make better use of nursing skills.

The nurses are experienced and specialised in diabetes health care and are already largely responsible for the delivery of diabetes services to patients.

Now they will be the first registered nurses to be authorised to independently prescribe a limited range of medicines to their patients, under the guidance of a medical practitioner.

Launching the prescribing demonstration site at Auckland District Health Board today, Health Minister Tony Ryall said "The number of people with diabetes in New Zealand has almost doubled in the past 10 years and better management of diabetes is one of our key priorities.

"We need to develop smarter and more practical ways of utilising our health workforce to deliver these services, and innovative ways like this are the way forward."

Auckland, Hawkes Bay, Mid Central Health, and Hutt DHBs begin the demonstrations from this week.

The scheme will be fully evaluated before rollout to other parts of the country or to other specialist services.

"This expansion of practice is common in other countries and has been shown to benefit both nurses and patients," Mr Ryall said.

"Patients are likely to need fewer medical appointments and can have more time with the specialist nurse who understands their individual circumstances. At the same time nurses can continue to extend their professional skills.

"This is teamwork and partnership which will lead to more efficient and effective care."

The project is being run in partnership between Health Workforce New Zealand and the nursing team at the Ministry of Health, in conjunction with the Nursing Council of New Zealand and the New Zealand Society for the Study of Diabetes.

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