



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### COVID-19 Pacific Response Package

**Portfolio** Associate Health (Hon Jenny Salesa)

On 30 March 2020, Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** there are two risks associated with Pacific Peoples that need to be managed as part of the government's response to COVID-19:
  - 1.1 Pacific communities are at higher risk of more rapid COVID-19 spread given their vulnerabilities; and
  - 1.2 Pacific communities are at high risk of also experiencing harm from not accessing care, as service models in primary and hospital care shift from face to face to virtual/telehealth;
- 2 **noted** that on 16 March 2020, Cabinet agreed to set aside funding of up to \$500 million for the COVID-19: Public Health Response [CAB-20-MIN-0110], of which:
  - 2.1 \$238.2 million was appropriated to immediately progress initiatives to delay the onset of community transmission;
  - 2.2 \$23.0 million was appropriated for the COVID-19 Māori health response;
  - 2.3 leaving \$238.8 million remaining in the COVID-19: Public Health Response Tagged Contingency to meet future potential responses;
- 3 **agreed** to draw-down \$14 million from the COVID-19: Public Health Response Tagged Contingency in 2019/20 to ensure that the overall national response to the COVID-19 pandemic delivers equitable health outcomes for Pacific peoples;
- 4 **agreed** to secure the capacity of the Pacific health and disability sector and support a national response to the health and disability needs of Pacific communities as part of the broader national COVID-19 Public Health Response Plan;

- 5 **approved** the following changes to appropriations to provide for the decision in paragraph 3 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net core Crown debt:

	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 & outyears
<b>Vote Health</b>					
<b>Minister of Health</b>					
Non-Departmental Output Expense: Public Health Service Purchasing	14.00	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating</b>	14.00	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Capital</b>	-	-	-	-	-

- 6 **agreed** that changes to appropriations for 2019/20 above be included in the 2019/20 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increases be met from Imprest Supply;
- 7 **agreed** that the expenses incurred under paragraph 3 above be charged against the “Public Health Responses to COVID-19 – Tagged Contingency” described in paragraph 2 above, leaving \$224.8 million available in the tagged contingency to meet future potential public health response expenses and demands;
- 8 **authorised** the Minister of Finance and Minister of Health to transfer any unspent funding in Vote Health agreed under paragraph 3 to the 2020/21 financial year, as required, with no impact on the operating balance and net core Crown debt across the forecast period;
- 9 **agreed** that up to \$3 million of funding from Vote Health baselines be reprioritised for the Pacific Health COVID-19 response;
- 10 **invited** the Minister of Finance, Minister of Health and Associate Minister of Health (Hon Jenny Salesa) to finalise the details of the proposed expenditure and to report-back to Cabinet or the COVID-19 Ministerial Group.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet