

PRESS RELEASE for immediate use, January 31, 2018

National PRIME Committee convenes

The newly-formed National PRIME Committee held its inaugural meeting following a year-long review of the service.

The committee, chaired by Wellsford GP Dr Tim Malloy, was established in late 2017 following a comprehensive review of the Primary Response in Medical Emergency (PRIME) service in 2016.

Held on January 19, the inaugural national committee meeting was attended by representatives from New Zealand Rural General Practice Network, St John (PRIME administrator), ACC, Ministry of Health (NASO), PRIME providers and practitioners (medical and nursing), regional PRIME committee chairs, Emergency Care Co-ordination Teams, Rural Service Level Alliance Teams, RNZCGP and NZCPHCN.

Dr Malloy says a work plan has been developed to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the review. NASO, St John (as the PRIME administrator) and the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network are currently working with the wider National PRIME Committee to achieve this.

As well as establishing the national committee, other initiatives from the review already implemented include employing additional St John support to focus on the PRIME programme, introducing a bi-monthly newsletter with useful tactical updates and considerations for PRIME practitioners and the release of a new 'smart device' application to aide PRIME clinical decision making.

Other initiatives being implemented by July 2018 include a comprehensive plan to ensure all recommendations within the Review are met, new health and safety bundles for PRIME sites (helmets, gloves, reflective gear etc), purchase of AEDs for PRIME providers (where the practice does not have access to an AED currently), PRIME education material updated and the implementation of a new funding model.

For comment contact PRIME National Committee Chairperson Dr Tim Malloy 027 476 7152.

Notes to editors

In 2016, the National Ambulance Sector Office (NASO), on behalf of ACC and the Ministry of Health, commissioned a formal review of the PRIME service through a steering group with work streams based on the following areas:

- Funding
- Administration
- Clinical governance
- Training and syllabus
- Equipment, kits and medicines

The scope of the review was limited to recommendations that can be implemented within the existing funding envelope.

The project expected to realise the following key outcomes and benefits.

- PRIME will continue to be relevant and add value to rural ambulance services.
- PRIME practitioners will feel well supported in their role.
- PRIME will continue to meet its objectives in a sustainable manner.
- PRIME funding arrangements will be well understood, with improved use of available resources.

Following two rounds of sector consultation a final report was presented to the NASO Leadership Team (the joint ACC and Ministry of Health governance group that oversees NASO) in May 2017.