

MeNZMedical

912 Colombo Street, Christchurch, 8013, New Zealand
Phone: +64 (0)3 981 8181, Fax: (03) 981 9191
Email: recep@menzmedical.com
Website: www.menzmedical.com

Letter
MeNZ Medical

Date

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To Whom It May Concern

The following is a guide for GP Practices to facilitate baseline blood screening/health checks of firefighters, trainers and fire investigators with the New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union.

The equipment requirements for a GP Practice to be able to provide a 'New Zealand Professional Firefighters Review' over and above standard equipment are expected only to consist of a spirometry machine capable of producing a report including functional vital capacity, forced expiratory volume over one second and a flow loop.

In terms of funding it is advised that the total cost of providing a 'New Zealand Professional Firefighters Review' be the cost of a 30 minute Nurse appointment plus the cost of a 30 minute Doctor appointment with a potential additional cost for the provision of spirometry. Patients will pay for the cost of their appointment at the time of review and be provided with a receipt to seek reimbursement from their employer. The funding available to reimburse the patient is \$250 once per year or the Patient can opt for reimbursement of \$500 once every two years, so it is advised to aim to maintain costs within these amounts.

The below is the framework for the programme which can be utilised for the local eligible NZPFU members to be part of the programme as a group, or where individual's approach their GP. It will be efficient to engage with the Union's local representatives as they can assist with the efficient implementation of the programme.

In providing the 'New Zealand Professional Firefighters Review' it is expected that the sequence of events will be as follows:

- 1) GP Practice is informed of the details of patients that would be eligible for the 'New Zealand Professional Firefighters Medical Review'. The patient or New Zealand Professional Firefighters' representative will initiate the first request for blood screening. If the patient is a career firefighter, trainer or fire investigator employed by Fire and Emergency New Zealand they are eligible. Any questions or clarifications please contact the NZPFU via wellington@nzpfu.org.nz.

2) GP Practice sends out text messages to eligible patients advising them to contact the practice to arrange medical review. Depending on the number of patients eligible for a given practice this message may be sent out in a step-wise approach to smaller groups of patients on a weekly or monthly basis to spread the expected service load on the practice of patients seeking review.

3) GP Practice is contacted by patient and a time for review is arranged including a 30 minute appointment with a Nurse and a 30 minute appointment immediately afterwards with a Doctor. **Note that it is possible that patients not included in the list provided by the New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union may contact their GP Practice to arrange review and they can be reviewed as service demand allows.** Those not on the Union's list will not be eligible for the reimbursement from the employer.

4) At the time of the patient's initial contact with the GP Practice fasting blood tests are arranged to be completed at least three days prior to the patient being seen in clinic. As these blood tests are being completed for the purposes of investigation of potential health issues in a population at increased risk it is expected that the laboratory costs of such blood tests would be covered by the standard funding available to patients who are eligible for funded healthcare in New Zealand.

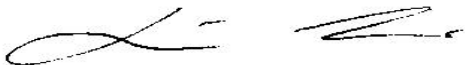
5) At the time of the patient undergoing the 'New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union Review' it is intended for the patient to be supplied with a copy of their report and a copy sent to their enrolled GP if applicable. Additional documents are attached providing information on the details of this report.

6) Depending on the cost of providing the 'New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union Medical Review' arrangements should be made to recall the patient for repeat review every one to two years.

Please contact MeNZ Medical if additional information is required.

The NZPFU has representatives to assist with the implementation and easy implementation of this programme. They will contact you directly. Any queries can be sent to the Union's national office via wellington@nzpfu.org.nz or to the National Secretary Wattie Watson on 021 928 819.

Yours sincerely



Dr Lewis Ball
MeNZ Medical
912 Colombo Street, Christchurch, 8013