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Letter
MeNZ Medical

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To Whom It May Concern

Over a number of years the New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union has sought to facilitate regular medical review for its members to improve the chances of early diagnosis of various medical issues for which firefighters are at increased risk. Medical research in the last 25 years has demonstrated increased risk of several medical conditions in firefighters compared to the general population with particularly useful summaries being produced by the World Health Organisation with the International Agency for Research on Cancer Monograph Volume 98 and the article, 'Carcinogenicity of occupational exposure as a firefighter' published in The Lancet with the data from this expected to be published more fully in the upcoming International Agency for Research on Cancer Monograph Volume 132.

Current medical research has focused on establishing the degree of risk to which firefighters are exposed but has been complicated by the highly variable role of firefighters, changes in firefighting practice over the years, the innumerable potentially harmful exposures involved and the vast number of potentially affected medical conditions. No research is currently available on the nature or outcomes of potential screening programs for firefighters given this difficulty with establishing baseline data.

Since 6th January 2020 MeNZ Medical has reviewed a number of firefighters in the Canterbury region consisting of blood tests to facilitate the exploration of conditions that firefighters are increased risk of, vital measurements and spirometry by nursing staff followed by a thirty minute review and production of a report by a GP. Attached to this letter is an example of such a report which may be used as a template for other medical practices to develop their own processes.

Yours sincerely



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