

# Golden Bay Pharmacy Consultation Feedback

## What the Community told us

### The proposal being consulted on

Nelson Marlborough District Health Board has proposed establishing a dispensary in Golden Bay Community Health. The proposal includes opening the dispensary from Monday to noon Saturday. As well as dispensing medicines and providing the usual advice and services a customer would expect from a pharmacy dispensing service, the dispensary would also be expected to provide extended pharmacy services that would improve and build on the current community pharmacy services available to people in the Golden Bay area.

This would mean there would be no dispensing service in central Takaka and the dispensary would not provide all the retail products that a usual community pharmacy (including associated retail services and products) would provide.

The consultation took place over 7 weeks ending on the 30 July. Respondents could reply by email, phone call, online survey, or by written submission of which there were over 140. A public meeting was also held in Takaka on 4 July 2016 with over 180 attending.

The following provides a summary of the feedback provided over the consultation period, with a further section providing a summary of the public meeting. Not every comment or suggestion is provided on this summary due to the large number of submissions received, but this document aims to give the overall picture of the submissions. An appendix shows the direct questions within individual and group submissions and the response to them.

### Feedback from emails, phone calls, written and online submissions

The clear majority of you told us that **difficulties would be caused by a change in location** for the pharmacy service, and the pharmacy was **best located in the Takaka town centre**.

|                        | <i>Your feedback</i>  | <i>Your suggestions</i>  |
|------------------------|---|--|
| 85% don't want a shift | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elderly patients will find it difficult to get to the new site</li> <li>• Tourists who use public transport will find access difficult</li> <li>• Town is more central and there is nothing to do at the health centre while you wait (i.e. no shops)</li> <li>• There is already insufficient parking at the Health Centre</li> <li>• There is no free space at the Health Centre for a pharmacy so the proposal will incur building costs</li> <li>• No transport for cyclists, mobility scooters or walkers</li> <li>• The current pharmacy will go bankrupt</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't move the pharmacy</li> <li>• Keep the mail out service</li> <li>• Provide new transport e.g. a shuttle</li> <li>• Use existing transport e.g. the Wrinklies Express, Meals on Wheels, rural mail</li> <li>• Provide a courier / home delivery service for elderly at no extra cost</li> <li>• Have a pick-up point in town e.g. the Post Office</li> <li>• Encourage Health Post to take up where the Pharmacy is at present</li> <li>• Improve the footpath and cycle path to the Health Centre</li> </ul> |
| 14% do want a shift    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having the chemist and health centre together means it is a one stop shop</li> <li>• Having the pharmacy at the health centre saves an extra trip when you are unwell</li> <li>• It is more convenient</li> </ul>  |  |

"Town is far more central for all folk, and it's good to do other errands while you wait"

"We made a mistake putting the medical centre outside the town – let's not move the pharmacy which is an integral part of our small community"

"A centralised service would be good because it would save having to drive from the doctor to the pharmacy in Takaka for another wait"

Most of you **have concerns about operating a dispensary model** rather than having a community pharmacy (including associated retail services and products) that provides more goods available for purchase.

|   | <i>Your feedback</i>  |
|---|---|
| 82%<br>want to retain a<br>retail pharmacy  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current pharmacy provides non-prescription health products that aren't necessarily available elsewhere in Takaka e.g. pain relief, cough and cold medication, eye care, low-allergy sun cream, worm tablets, head lice shampoo, anti-histamines, specialist bandages and strapping</li> <li>• The current pharmacy provides other products that aren't necessarily available elsewhere in Takaka e.g. passport photos, photo printing, make-up</li> <li>• The current pharmacy provides advice on product choices and common ailments</li> <li>• Social interaction</li> <li>• Elderly do not use the internet for online shopping</li> <li>• Retail products make the pharmacy service financially viable and provide jobs in Takaka</li> </ul> |
| 17%<br>are happy with a<br>dispensary model | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pharmacy products are available elsewhere in Takaka</li> </ul>   |

"I do not want to travel to Motueka for products I could previously buy in Takaka"

"These goods can be provided by other retailers in Golden Bay"

"I doubt a clinical model Pharmacy would provide a reasonable income for a pharmacist with Golden Bay's population. The front of shop balances the high labour cost / low return of dispensing".

"A retail pharmacy is more than just a shop that sells a wide range of goods...the qualified dispensing chemist at a retail pharmacy provides a service that is accessible to the community, right in the township".

Some of you had ideas for other services that could be provided.

| <i>Your feedback</i>  |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticoagulation Monitoring Service</li> <li>• Compliance packaging</li> <li>• Funded Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)</li> <li>• Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP)</li> <li>• Trimethoprim (TMP) for Urinary Tract Infections</li> <li>• Sildenafil for erectile dysfunction</li> <li>• Clozapine for schizophrenia or similar disorders</li> <li>• Methadone to treat opiate addiction and relieve pain</li> <li>• Medico Pak (see-through blister packs with the right dose, for the right time of the day, so you don't forget to take your medication)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medicines Use Review Service (MUR)</li> <li>• X-ray and radiology service</li> <li>• Regular doctor services at Collingwood</li> <li>• Home care for the expanding elderly population</li> <li>• Lactation consultant</li> <li>• Better doctor hours and access to medical care</li> <li>• Medicinal marijuana outlet</li> <li>• Vaccinations</li> <li>• Free delivery</li> <li>• Free blood pressure checks</li> </ul> |

Most of you would like **better operating hours** for the pharmacy service.

| Hours of Operation   | Preferred option | Your suggestions   |
|--|------------------|--|
| 9:00am to 5:00pm week days                                       | 29%              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open until 5:30pm</li> <li>• Saturday service</li> <li>• Public Holiday service</li> <li>• Extended summer hours (October to Easter)</li> </ul> |
| 9:00am to 5:00pm week days and Saturday morning                  | 53%              |  |
| 9:00am to 5:00pm week days and mornings both days in the weekend | 17%              |  |

"If there are no doctors seeing patients then there will be no business for the pharmacy – pharmacy hours should match the doctor's hours"

"If medications are needed, then they are needed NOW"

"The Saturday & Sunday could correspond to the GP clinic – 10:30am to 1:00pm – over the very busy summer months. This would save GP and nurse time preparing drugs for people seen over the weekend"

"Since time immemorial it has been known that monopolies do not provide a climate for good interpersonal service".

"It's insane it is not open on a Saturday. Locals and tourists continually complain and are shocked. I've worked in town on Saturdays and have often heard this feedback."

Opinion was divided over whether or not a funding model of a fixed amount for a range of services was appropriate, although many people admitted they did not understand the question

|                              | Your feedback  |
|------------------------------|--|
| 16%<br>yes to a fixed amount |  |
| 43%<br>no to a fixed amount  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many of the 'additional' services should be provided by the doctor who sees your full medical history</li> </ul>                  |
| 40%<br>no opinion            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maybe</li> <li>• It needs to be recognised it is going to cost more to provide services for a small, remote population</li> </ul> |

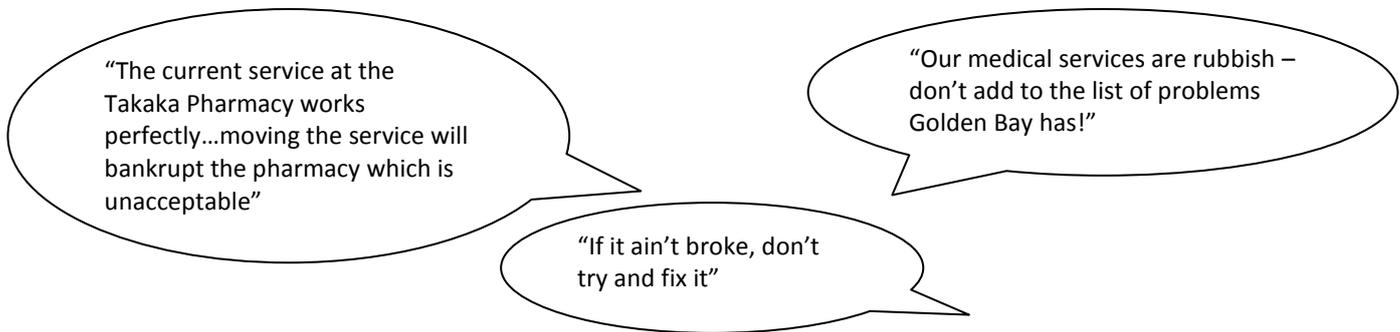
"I would like to see an unequivocal statement that there will be no cost increase for patients"

"I don't know – funding models are too complicated"

"I'm not knowledgeable enough about this to give an educated reply".

Some of you had thoughts about **other approaches** to the service, service models and contracts

| Your feedback   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change – keep the service as it is, and where it is</li> <li>• Bring prescription charges in Golden Bay down to the same level as other places</li> <li>• Transport options for people without cars</li> <li>• Consider the impact on the environment with increased travel</li> <li>• Better access to health care services at the Golden Bay Health Centre – reduced waiting times to doctors, no extra charges for the duty doctor during the week, continuity of care by the same doctor</li> <li>• Employ a pharmacy assistant / technician to run a depot at the Health Centre, with advice from a pharmacist based outside the Golden Bay area; The assistant will have access via phone, Internet, Skype or fax; Patients can collect their medication from the depot or have it delivered; A Pharmacist could be available one or two days each week for consultations and could link with the hospital for medicines optimisation services; Skype would be accessible to customers and patients to discuss minor ailments, medication changes / queries, prescription queries, and to ask advice from a pharmacist in a private setting.</li> </ul> |



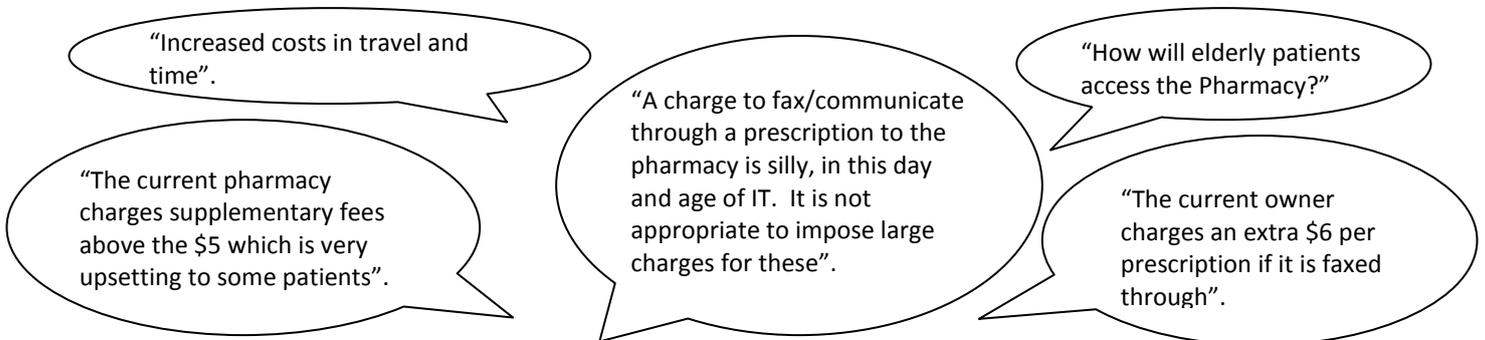
“The current service at the Takaka Pharmacy works perfectly...moving the service will bankrupt the pharmacy which is unacceptable”

“Our medical services are rubbish – don’t add to the list of problems Golden Bay has!”

“If it ain’t broke, don’t try and fix it”

Most of you thought there were **other considerations** in relation to costs for patients.

|   | Your feedback   |
|---|---|
| 63%<br>yes there are other considerations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No extra charges</li> <li>• Courier costs to patients; Free delivery (like Health Post)</li> <li>• Travel costs e.g. taxi costs for elderly</li> <li>• Health of vulnerable people - Catching an illness at the Health Centre waiting room when you only need a repeat prescription</li> <li>• A thorough and independent cost-benefit analysis of the proposal</li> </ul> |
| 20%<br>no other considerations            |   |
| 17%<br>no opinion                         |   |



“Increased costs in travel and time”.

“The current pharmacy charges supplementary fees above the \$5 which is very upsetting to some patients”.

“A charge to fax/communicate through a prescription to the pharmacy is silly, in this day and age of IT. It is not appropriate to impose large charges for these”.

“How will elderly patients access the Pharmacy?”

“The current owner charges an extra \$6 per prescription if it is faxed through”.

Most of you agreed that only **one provider was viable** in Golden Bay.

| Your feedback                           |
|---|
| 66%<br>only one provider is viable      |
| 20%<br>more than one provider is viable |
| 14%<br>no opinion                       |

"Maybe. As long as it is in the Takaka commercial centre."

"Only one [Pharmacy] could survive"

"If the pharmacy is to be located at GBCH, could a pharmacist from the existing pharmacy attend a branch of the existing pharmacy? Keep employment and money in the Bay!"

Half of you thought it was appropriate to **offer only one contract** for the provision of NMDHB-funded community pharmacy services in Golden Bay, or had no opinion.

| Your feedback               |
|-----------------------------|
| 53%<br>yes, only 1 contract |
| 24%<br>no                   |
| 27%<br>no opinion           |

"The current contract which pharmacies operate under has seen the proliferation of small, low quality pharmacies open...limiting contracts should be for all pharmacies in the DHB area"

"Insufficient population at present"

"Yes, though of course the ideal situation is to have more than one - therefore allowing some competition. Currently there is a monopoly, and GB citizens pay for it"

"I doubt if the market in the Bay is big enough to support more than one contract, but perhaps offering two or more contracts would allow the market to decide on this".

### Other Comments: For the Proposal

- "We find the present model very frustrating to work with, especially as are a user of multiple life sustaining medicines".
- "Repeat prescriptions being filled at the hospital is not an issue as you have to go there to get the script, then take it to town. So, so much better to have in one place. Well done, finally".
- "I think having the chemist at the medical centre is much needed and a fantastic idea. I hope that the usual locals that don't like change don't put a stop to this. I find the services in GB highly inadequate at the best of times and try to go over the hill at times to avoid the local chemist. It needs to be open on the weekends too. I could not believe that this year the chemist was shut the whole of Easter weekend and holiday makers were speechless, it affects them too. It clutters up GPs valuable time after hours, etc, when these people could just go to the chemist. I also would love to go to one place to see GP and collect prescription. I think this would be a really positive thing for the community".
- "Being adjacent to the patient's GP has advantages in communication if there are any queries re dose rate, repeats, etc. There are many anecdotal incidents of lack of connection between the commercial dispensary and the patient's GP".
- Many people commented on the opening hours and additional fees of the current pharmacy.

## Other Comments: Against the Proposal

- Access to over the counter medication products, and the choice of products, needs to be retained
- Access to the GBIFHC is perceived as an issue for those people who do not drive: “The road from Takaka to GBIFHC is fast and busy for cyclists like myself and therefore an additional threat to good health”; “An appropriate cycle / walkway must be provided”
- Increased travel costs for patients was perceived as a key issue for many people: “Yes, you’re disadvantaging elderly and the ones that find it hard to pay now”
- Access to services at the GBIFHC was commented on, with comments about waiting times: “The doctors are under enough pressure at present without an additional pressure on their doorstep”
- People also commented on the quality of service at the GBIFHC: “I really feel strongly that the Medical centre is a MESS.... You need to support your public. You are here to serve us, not the other way around”
- People also commented on the good service received from the current pharmacy: “The staff are incredibly friendly and informative - and know regular customers by name!”; “Keep the chemist where it is as well as keep jobs...and the service is great”; “The pharmacists provide good professional advice - free of charge, reassuring, recommending over the counter products and referring to GPs”
- Many people commented on the need to keep services in the Takaka town centre, with the associated benefits of increased foot traffic in town and jobs
- The reason for the proposal and its benefits were unclear to most people: “Just leave Golden Bay alone, we are happy with our services”.
- A sign up sheet located at Golden Bay Health Centre asking whether people whether they supported the pharmacy being relocated garnered 41 signatures against this, some of whom had responded to the consultation individually.

## The Consultation Meeting in Takaka

The consultation meeting in Golden Bay was attended by over 180 people. No one at the meeting spoke in favour of the proposed model of pharmacy services. The main concerns noted at the meeting were:

- The difficulty of accessing Golden Bay Community Health
- The loss to the town centre of a business and the social benefits of a community pharmacy with retail goods.
- The loss of retail goods available at the pharmacy
- That the service is excellent as it currently exists
- Parking at Golden Bay Community Health is difficult
- Concerns that the DHB will not listen to the community
- Concerns that the proposal is about cost cutting
- That the consultation provides only one option and doesn’t provide all information such as costs and other details
- That it was positive the DHB wants to explore additional services, but that this approach will not achieve it
- The loss of jobs in Takaka
- Concerns about who will pay for establishing in Golden Bay Community Health
- Most did not seem concerned about opening hours at this meeting.

Many other issues and concerns were aired of which the DHB has noted. The common single view expressed was that this proposal should not proceed.

## Overall Summary

The people of Golden Bay want to keep a community pharmacy (including associated retail services and products) in the Takaka town centre.

The location of pharmacy services in Golden Bay dominated the feedback, with the vast majority of respondents telling the Nelson Marlborough DHB that difficulties would be caused by a change in location for the pharmacy. The mostly cited reason was the difficulty in accessing Golden Bay Community Health. The Golden Bay Community Health Centre is 2.5km from the town centre with no footpath, cycle lane or public transport, and this was believed to be unsafe, difficult or costly to access by many respondents.

There was strong opposition to any change that would reduce foot traffic and jobs and social vitality in the Takaka town centre.

There was also major concern about a loss of the retail goods and services provided at the current pharmacy.

The community has mixed views on opening hours, although a number would appreciate the pharmacy being open on Saturday, particularly for tourists. There was concern expressed about current charges for pharmacy services. In general there is a desire for utilising the skills of the Pharmacists further, but not at the expense of the current retail service in central Takaka.

## Where to from here?

Nelson Marlborough District Health Board is evaluating this feedback and will be making a decision on how to proceed in early to mid September. This will be communicated, as soon as a decision is made, to the current provider and then through community newspapers and correspondence direct to consultation submitters.

There has been a strong response to the consultation and this will be represented in the decisions made.

## Appendix 1. Direct Questions from Submissions and Answers

Q: Why not work with the current owner rather than going through this process?

A: The proposal does not preclude the current owner being involved in the service going forward. In changing the model we are obligated to look at whether other service providers are interested in providing the service.

Q: What consideration to the current pharmacy contractor has been given? Has the DHB given the current contractor (financial) assistance to upskill in order to provide the services sought?

A: Golden Bay pharmacy services receive greater financial support than other health services as a result of the rural location. The current contract with the pharmacy outlines what services are required. If the proposal was to proceed in the current format the current owner has the opportunity to provide the services.

Q: Health care needs to be affordable to all. It used to be that community card holders got a discount - but no longer - why? Is health care only for the rich? In most cases, a community services card allows 'out of area' visitors a discount on 'out of area' doctors services, but not in Golden Bay! Why?

A: The decision to provide community services card holders a discount is made by the Ministry of Health, and is not a local Nelson Marlborough choice.

Q: Is this "chance for us to express our opinions" actually going to count as to final decision, or has the final decision already been made? Am I going to get an answer to this question?

A: Yes, the Nelson Marlborough DHB will listen to the community, and will work with providers to ensure that health services in Golden Bay are right for the community and are sustainable.