

# Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman

Minister of Health



10 May 2016

**Media Statement**

## **New role will free up pharmacists time**

Health Minister Jonathan Coleman says a new technician role will help to free up pharmacists so they can spend more time with patients.

“Pharmacists play an important part in helping to deliver faster more convenient healthcare,” says Dr Coleman.

“Many New Zealanders already benefit from the advice and care of their pharmacist. In order to help pharmacists spend more time with patients a new technician role has been developed.

“Pharmacy Accuracy Checking Technicians will be trained and certified to carry out the final check on a dispensed item, part of a process which currently sits with a pharmacist.

“The pharmacist would still ensure that the prescription is legally correct, clinically safe, appropriate to dispense, and talk with patients.”

The introduction of the new role follows a successful pilot in 2015 run by the Pharmaceutical Society on behalf of Health Workforce New Zealand.

Thirteen trainees took part in the pilot which was run across 12 sites, including four DHB hospital pharmacies (Auckland, Hawkes Bay, Hutt Valley and Christchurch) and seven community pharmacies (Whangarei, Auckland, New Plymouth, Waikanae, Blenheim, Christchurch and

Ashburton).

Pharmacists involved in the pilot reported that they had significantly more time available to spend with patients. In one example, that jumped from 16 per cent of the pharmacist's working day, to 48 per cent.

A framework has been developed to enable the national introduction of the new technician role later this year. The roll-out and training will be managed by the Pharmaceutical Society.

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