



## **General practitioners breach the Code for failures in care of older man**

**21HDC00018**

Deputy Health and Disability Commissioner Rose Wall has today issued a report finding two general practitioners at a medical centre breached the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights (the Code) for services provided to a man in his 80s receiving palliative care at home for terminal lung cancer.

Ms Wall found both GPs breached the Code for failing to provide an appropriate standard of care | tautikanga.

The first GP failed to keep full, accurate patient records of a telephone consultation he had with the man. This meant that neither the man's presentation at the time of his consultation or the adequacy of the consultation could be established by this investigation.

The first GP also failed to inform the man of later blood tests results which meant the man was not aware he was mildly anaemic, and the possibility of an iron transfusion was not discussed with him.

Ms Wall found a second GP at the same medical centre also breached the Code for failing to communicate all relevant and/or accurate clinical information during a house call.

She said, "The GP's prescribed treatment with a broad-spectrum empiric oral antibiotic would have been satisfactory provided the man could be monitored by a responsible adult, his antibiotics were accessible in a timely manner, and appropriate safety-netting advice was provided. I am critical that the GP did not ensure that these provisos were in place."

Ms Wall concluded that the second GP failed to provide services with reasonable care and skill and this breached the Code.

Ms Wall outlined several recommendations in her report for both GPs.

7 June 2024

### **Editor's notes**

Please only use the photo provided with this media release. For any questions about the photo, please contact the communications team.

The full report of this case can be viewed on HDC's website - see HDC's '[Latest Decisions](#)'.

Names have been removed from the report to protect privacy of the individuals involved in this case.

The Commissioner will usually name providers and public hospitals found in breach of the Code unless it would not be in the public interest or would unfairly

compromise the privacy interests of an individual provider or a consumer. More information for the media, including HDC's naming policy and why we don't comment on complaints, can be found on our website [here](#).

HDC promotes and protects the rights of people using health and disability services as set out in the [Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights](#) (the Code).

In 2022/23 HDC made 592 quality improvement recommendations to individual complaints and we have a high compliance rate of around 96%.

[Read our latest Annual Report 2023](#)

Health and disability service users can now access an [animated video](#) to help them understand their health and disability service rights under the Code.

Learn more: [Education Publications](#)

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