

# INFORMATION FOR CORRECTIONS STAFF

## Te Ara Whakapuāwai Health Services Programme

### Connecting people with local GP services

People are eligible for this service if:

**They have been recently released from prison into Canterbury**  
**OR They are returning to Canterbury from Australia under a section 501 order.**

Te Ara Whakapuāwai offers them access to

**3 free general practice (GP) consults for a 3-month period following release or return,**  
**for a maximum of 3 consultations**

Te Ara Whakapuāwai programme aims to help people connect with Canterbury General Practices (GPs) community health services. It is funded by Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand - Waitaha Canterbury in partnership with local health providers and Ara Poutama Aotearoa.

It recognises that the first few months of reintegration are often the most challenging and aims to:

- *Help people access appropriate medicine and services to support their mental and physical health*
- *Increase Primary Care enrolment and ongoing engagement with community health services for this difficult to engage population and improve overall health equity*
- *Help people leaving prison to maintain the health improvements they have made*

### **How eligible people can access this service and free medical appointments:**

**Corrections staff member or PARS** provides a voucher and information on *Te Ara Whakapuawai* to eligible people. (NB: The person does not need their voucher with them to access this service).

Information has been sent to health practitioners to remind them of this service.

**Make an Appointment:** The person will need to phone their GP or medical centre to make an appointment. This could be their current practitioner or, if they do not have a GP or Medical Centre, they can phone any GP or medical centre in Canterbury (local to their new home or otherwise) to make an appointment. If they have trouble accessing services or need more information, they should contact the PCW service on the number below.

**Tell the Receptionist:** when they make their appointment, they will need to tell the receptionist that they are part of *Te Ara Whakapuawai* (or *People on Release programme*) to ensure that they are given a longer first appointment and that they are not charged for the appointment.

**Individuals will need to be enrolled (or enrol on initial attendance) with the practice that they attend for their appointments.** If they are not a current patient, they can enrol at their first appointment (they may need to take ID and should check with reception). The free visit does not include free pharmacy charges. There are pharmacies which do not charge prescription fees.

✉ [PCWService@pegasus.org.nz](mailto:PCWService@pegasus.org.nz) ☎ (03) 379 1739 ☎ (022) 010 3296

**Te Whatu Ora**  
Health New Zealand  
Waitaha Canterbury



christchurchpho



**NOTE: Free visits within specific constraints are at the discretion of the General Practice,** i.e. First consultations with a General Practitioner can be at twice the timeframe of a standard 15-minute consultation to enable full discussion of the person's health needs; including mental health, AOD issues and chronic health conditions.