

## WHY IS TREATMENT NOT ALWAYS AVAILABLE?

Public hospitals have a set amount of funding for elective treatments with demand for public hospital services often greater than the ability of the hospital to meet that demand.

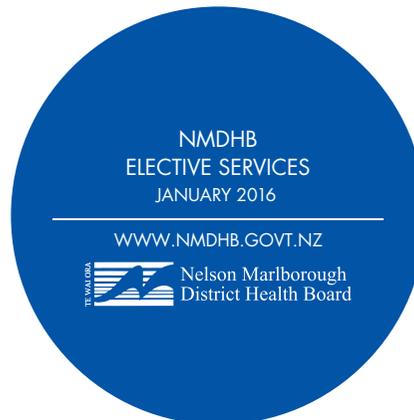
Public hospitals need to treat those with the greatest need first. Specialists use guidelines and national scoring tools to help decide which patients require treatment first, so that fair and consistent decisions are made within the resources available.

## WHAT OTHER OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO ME?

There may be a range of services available to you depending on your particular circumstances. This may include returning to your GP who can advise you on suitable alternatives including private options.

## WHAT DO I DO IF MY CONDITION WORSENS?

If at any time your condition worsens you should see your GP. Your GP will seek a specialist reassessment if they think your condition has changed. This reassessment may include a review of your priority for treatment.



# A GUIDE TO ELECTIVE SERVICES AT NELSON MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD





You are receiving this brochure because your doctor has indicated you may benefit from elective surgery.

Elective services are hospital services for patients who do not need immediate treatment.

Common conditions in this category include hip and knee joint replacement, hernia and cataract surgery.

## WHAT DOES THE SPECIALIST DO?

The specialist will make an assessment and determine the best option of care for you.

If surgery is determined to be the best option you will be prioritised against a nationally recognised tool to determine how urgent your need for treatment is and how much you will benefit from it compared to others with the same condition.

The tool may be applied during the clinic visit or following your visit.

If based on your level of need, publicly funded elective services are **not available** to you at this time your General Practitioner (GP) will care for you. The specialist will provide you and your GP information on the outcome of your assessment.

If publicly funded treatment **is available** then you will be either:

- » Given a treatment date within the next four months; or
- » Told that you will receive treatment within four months and the treatment date will be provided closer to the time.

## HOW LONG WILL I HAVE TO WAIT FOR TREATMENT?

If you are offered publicly funded hospital treatment, you should receive it within four months. Some patients will be treated more urgently than others, for example those people in severe pain or with a likely cancer diagnosis.

Your treatment or surgery may be carried out in either Wairau or Nelson Hospital. You will be notified of the location once your treatment is scheduled.

## WHAT CAN I EXPECT FOLLOWING MY OUTPATIENT ASSESSMENT?

- » **Clarity** – You will receive written information about assessment and treatment options and whether or not they will be available to you.
- » **Timeliness** – You will know within 30 days whether you will receive access to treatment, and if treatment is offered to you, you will receive it within four months.
- » **Fairness** – You will be assessed on the basis of your level of need relative to other people with similar conditions.

## WILL MY GP KNOW THE RESULTS OF MY VISIT TO THE SPECIALIST?

Yes. Your GP will be told the results and whether you have been booked for treatment.

**If you are unable to attend your appointment it is important you notify the specialist as soon as possible. We may be able to offer the time slot to someone else while your appointment is rescheduled.**

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

