

10 November 2021

Digital Strategy Joint Agency Team
C/o Department of Internal Affairs
Wellington

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Tēnā koe

Te koke ki tētahi Rautaki Matihiko mō Aotearoa | Towards a Digital Strategy for Aotearoa

Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa, New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the development of a Digital Strategy for Aotearoa New Zealand.

NZNO is the leading professional nursing association and union for nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand, representing 51,000 nurses, midwives, students, kaimahi hauora and health workers on professional and employment matters. NZNO embraces te Tiriti o Waitangi and contributes to the improvements of the health status and outcomes of all people of Aotearoa New Zealand through influencing health, employment, and social policy development.

Furthermore, we share the intent of the Ministry of Health's definition of equity which equally applies to NZNO work across professional, industrial and member activities.

NZNO has consulted with members and staff in the preparation of this response.

NZNO supports an aspirational Digital Strategy for New Zealand that includes being an early adopter and world leader in the digital world. Furthermore, one that is resilient, sustainable, and future proofed.

NZNO encourages connectivity, wherever individuals, family and whānau live and work, they need to be able to connect and use digital tools. We know that there are issues with a connectivity in some rural and remote communities, preventing individuals from being digitally included and this needs to be addressed so that the communities are not left behind.

Digital literacy, including a nationally consistent standard and agreement on what is digital literacy needs to be considered. Additionally, the ease to be connected in a digital world will motivate access, support skill development, and build trust to operate online.

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NZNO also requires certainty for individuals, family and whānau that they can trust their private information is safe. New Zealanders must have trust in how their information / data is stored and shared.

Adequate resourcing is a requirement to deliver a Digital Strategy, hence all parts of the Strategy need to be considered and costed regarding their financial viability before work commences.

Opportunities for Māori need to be developed in consultation with Māori that includes using a co-design process to develop a Digital Strategy. Affordability is also key. Unaffordable internet and devices are a primary barrier to digital inclusion within Māori communities. Breaking through these obstacles, in addition to improved skills, motivation, and trust, will contribute to overcoming barriers that will improve outcomes for Māori. We also support Māori leadership to work with others to improve include digital inclusion, and in turn the Government also needs to partner with Iwi to support the delivery of a Digital Strategy.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the consultation process.

Nāku noa nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lucia Bercinskas".

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