



## **Draft Media Release**

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### **NCWNZ thrilled at new Health Policy for Under 6's**

The National Council of Women of NZ (NCWNZ) congratulates the Government on its policy to provide free after hours health care for children under six.

NCWNZ President Elizabeth Bang said, "As an organisation working to improve the quality of life and well-being of women and their families, we're absolutely thrilled at this initiative. It will be of real benefit to many people on low household incomes who have previously been unable to access this service.

"There are many parents who simply haven't been able to afford medical treatment for their children when they need it. If their children fell ill outside regular medical centre hours, parents had no option but to wait until morning and hope for the best.

Elizabeth Bang said that this was a most unsatisfactory state of affairs.

"It was not only extremely stressful for the family, but potentially dangerous for the child. We all know how quickly viruses such as meningitis come on. And we know that these can have tragic consequences if not diagnosed and treated early."

"Parents whose children suffer from delayed medical treatment experience not only the trauma of the situation, but also enormous guilt. They feel that by not taking their child for professional help sooner, they are to blame.

"NCWNZ applauds the Minister of Health for taking a decision which will impact not only on the health of New Zealand children, but on the financial and mental wellbeing of their families as well," Elizabeth Bang said.

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