

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
P.O. BOX 5013,
WELLINGTON.

8 February 1973.

CLINICAL SERVICES LETTER NO. 119*
TO MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

Dear Doctor,

**LABORATORY DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES:
GROUP TESTS PROVIDED BY PRIVATE PATHOLOGISTS**

Changes in the laboratory services diagnostic benefit, which came into operation on 1 October 1972, provide for a 20 percent reduction in the rate of benefit for certain standard tests ordered as a group. These groups are:

Liver function tests.
Myocardial enzymes.
Electrolytes.
Lipid tests.

Thyroid function tests.
Antenatal group.
Neonatal group.
Coagulation screen.

To assist in the administration of this change, the New Zealand Society of Pathologists arranged for all private laboratories to standardise their request forms as far as possible, for use as from 1 October 1972. All doctors are asked to co-operate by using only the new request forms.

It is emphasised that doctors are still at liberty to ask for any test or combination of tests which they consider to be clinically indicated. The only effect of the change is that the benefit payable to laboratories will be reduced by 20 percent when a standard group test is requested.

Yours faithfully,



(A. W. S. Thompson)

Director, Division of Clinical Services.

*This letter was first issued in cyclostyled form on 20 September 1972. For convenience, it has now been reprinted, with minor amendments.

TEMPORARY PERMITS: VISITORS FROM PACIFIC AREA

The Department of Labour is concerned at the number of requests for extensions to temporary entry permits on medical grounds, which are being received from persons visiting this country from Tonga, Western Samoa, and other Pacific territories.

For many years the Department of Labour has made the procedure for visits to New Zealand from the Pacific area a relatively simple and straightforward process. In general, any national of Tonga, Western Samoa, or Fiji may visit New Zealand for a maximum period of 3 months, provided return tickets are produced and the applicant has sufficient funds to maintain himself in this country.

It is not intended that this system should be used for the purpose of obtaining medical treatment. There is an established procedure whereby persons requiring to enter New Zealand for medical treatment may make prior application to do so, with the support of the medical authorities of their own country.

The Department of Labour is finding that many persons, particularly Tongans and Western Samoans in the Auckland and Wellington areas, are travelling to New Zealand as visitors, and are then seeking to extend their stay by obtaining medical certificates shortly before the expiry date of their temporary permits.

While it is recognised that there will always be genuine cases where visitors become ill or suffer accident while here, many of the medical certificates submitted to the Department of Labour describe conditions which are common in the Pacific area, and for which treatment is readily available in their home countries. For this reason doctors are advised to view requests from such visitors for medical certificates with some circumspection.

GENERAL PRACTICE VACANCY: NGARUAWAHIA

At least one additional doctor needed for pleasant town on State Highway 1, 10 miles north of the city of Hamilton.

Designated rural area. Population 4,000. Surgery to rent and housing available.

Fuller particulars from the Mayor, Council Offices, Ngaruawahia.

GENERAL PRACTICE VACANCIES: OPUNAKE

Two-man rural practice available in Opunake, from June 1973.

Practice population about 4,000, with 100 deliveries per year in an 8-bed maternity hospital. Taranaki base hospital $\frac{3}{4}$ hour's drive away. Ambulance stationed in town.

Two men should net \$10,000 each—a conservative estimate assuming light duties. Rural practice incentives apply. Good primary and secondary schooling in Opunake town.

Houses and new medical centre available from county council at reasonable rentals. Finance available for purchase of medical and office equipment with guarantee of repurchase.

For details apply: County Clerk,
Egmont County Council,
P.O. Box 19,
Opunake,
Taranaki.

POST-GRADUATE STUDY LEAVE FOR SPECIAL AREA MEDICAL OFFICERS

It is important that doctors working for long periods in the inevitable professional isolation of Special Areas should be encouraged to keep their medical knowledge up to date.

The Minister of Health has therefore approved of a scheme providing for post-graduate study leave for Special Area medical officers. This scheme provides for:

- (a) The granting of 2 weeks' post-graduate study leave on full pay for each year of Special Area service, after completion of 5 years' service. The maximum leave which may be granted is 14 weeks.
- (b) Service already credited for a Junior Medical Officers Study Bursary will not be counted as qualifying service.
- (c) Leave to be taken in New Zealand or overseas, for a programme of post-graduate study approved by the Department of Health.

- (d) If a post-graduate course is taken in New Zealand, reasonable fares to and from the study centre, for the practitioner only, will be paid by Government, together with a subsistence allowance of \$10 per day.
- (e) If a post-graduate course is taken overseas, return economy class air fares to New Zealand will be payable, for the practitioner only, together with subsistence allowance of \$10 per day.
- (f) A bond to give 1 year's service in a Special Area after completion of the post-graduate study programme must be executed by the practitioner, before embarking on study leave.