

# Unconventional Wisdom for Practice Managers



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**PMAANZ Conference 2024**

# ● 9 Pieces of Unconventional Wisdom for Practice Managers

1. Success comes from being who you are, not despite who you are.
2. You don't belong everywhere.
3. Hiring digital natives will not automatically solve a business' transformation problems.
4. Customer insights trump technology to uncover innovations.
5. Solutions come from asking questions, not giving answers.
6. Listen more, talk less.
7. Surround yourself with people who complement you.
8. Qualitative insights may be better inputs to decisions than numerical data.
9. Established businesses aren't complete dinosaurs.

<https://builtin.com/articles/9-pieces-unconventional-wisdom>

## Health NZ can't cut \$1.4 billion without eating into front line - analysis



By Isaac Davison

Senior Reporter, Health - NZ Herald • 23 Aug. 2024 05:00 AM • 4 mins to read

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Commissioner Dr Lester Levy has been tasked with finding \$1.4 billion in savings at Health NZ. New analysis suggests that will be difficult without affecting the front line. Photo / Alex Burton

When the Health New Zealand - Te Whatu Ora board was **abolished last month**, it prompted a political debate about whether the health system was badly managed or underfunded. New analysis suggests it has never been given

However, the currency of Healthcare is creating a possible extinction event for primary care...

## 'Totally bloated': New Health NZ Te Whatu Ora boss Lester Levy lays into bureaucracy

2:09 pm on 23 July 2024

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Health NZ Te Whatu Ora's new commissioner Lester Levy. Photo: RNZ

The new Commissioner of Health NZ Te Whatu Ora says his top priority is reducing waiting times, and he also wants to boost productivity and compassion.

The government on Monday announced Professor Lester Levy, who had been **brought in as chair** of the commission at the end of **May**, must **replace the board** as commissioner.

### Health reform blowout is government's responsibility - Labour

23 Jul 2024

Labour has hit back at the government's accusations its health reforms have been an expensive botch-up with overspend of \$130 million a month.



### Government to replace Health NZ board with commissioner

23 Jul 2024

The government is installing Health NZ Te Whatu Ora's board chair Lester Levy as a commissioner, replacing the organisation's board.



### 'Chaotic' Health NZ governance set for refresh

17 Jul 2024

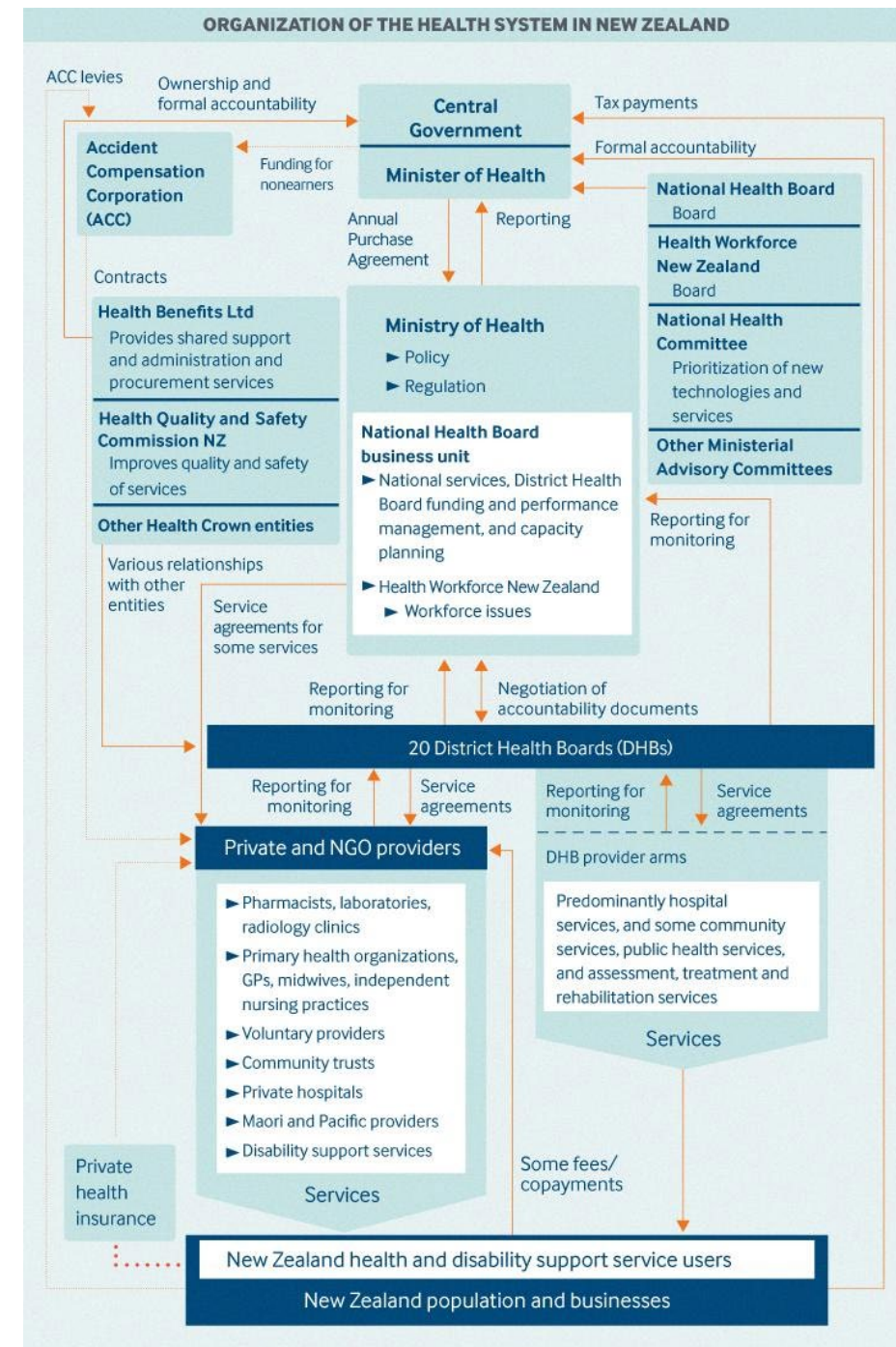
Only two board members are left, after resignations and some opting not to serve another term.



### 'Chaotic' Health NZ governance set for refresh

# • Why not put that money & resources to better use?

1. \$130 million monthly over spend with apparently no benefit to administration, clinical or health outcomes, but we were able to pay it.
2. Why not channel some of that money and/or resources to primary care that is clearly underfunded?
3. \$1 spent in primary care has \$3 downstream benefits
4. With 1,000 GP Practices at \$50,000 per month investment (\$50 million), making it attractive to work in primary care while generating savings of \$150 million downstream benefits per month
5. Intergenerational investment, rather than short-termism.



# ● What is the best way to improve the profitability of a New Zealand General Practice?

ChatGPT said: Improving the profitability of a New Zealand General Practice requires a multi-faceted approach, balancing efficiency, patient care, and strategic investments. Here are some of the best ways to enhance profitability:

## 1 Maximize Capitation Revenue

- **Increase Enrolled Patient Numbers:**  
Actively work to grow the number of enrolled patients, especially targeting populations that may benefit from PHO funding, such as low-income or high-health-needs communities.
- **Engage Patients in Preventive Care:**  
Focus on preventive services (e.g., vaccinations, screenings, and chronic disease management) that align with PHO-funded programs, which can attract additional funding.

## 2 Optimize Billing and Fee Structures

- **Private Services and Additional Fees:**  
Offer additional fee-for-service options like repeat prescriptions, minor surgical procedures, skin checks, or specialized services that aren't fully covered by government funding.
- **Streamline Payment Processes:**  
Ensure efficient billing and payment systems, reducing uncollected fees or delayed payments. Using automated reminders for unpaid invoices can help improve cash flow.
- **ACC and Insurance Billing:**  
Leverage Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) claims and ensure thorough documentation of all reimbursable services. Encourage patients to use private health insurance when applicable.

## 3 Increase Operational Efficiency

- **Reduce Administrative Costs:**  
Use technology such as practice management software (PMS) to automate routine tasks like appointment scheduling, billing, and patient reminders. This reduces the need for additional administrative staff and improves workflow.
- **Telehealth:**  
Offer telehealth consultations to increase the volume of appointments without needing additional physical space or resources. It also allows for more flexible scheduling.
- **Optimize Staff Utilization:**  
Ensure that tasks are appropriately delegated. For example, have nurses or healthcare assistants handle routine health checks and vaccinations, freeing up GP time for more complex, higher-revenue consultations.

# • What is the best way to improve the profitability of a New Zealand General Practice?

## 4 Improve Patient Retention and Engagement

- **Patient Loyalty Programs:**  
Encourage patient loyalty with membership schemes or bundled care packages that include a set number of consultations or services for a fixed price.
- **Patient Education and Self-Service:**  
Invest in patient portals where patients can book appointments, check test results, and communicate with the practice. This not only enhances patient satisfaction but also reduces administrative workload.

## 5 Use Data to Drive Decisions

- **Data-Driven Insights:**  
Use data analytics from your PMS to track appointment no-shows, patient retention, or underutilized services. This data can help you adjust scheduling, staffing, and service offerings to maximize efficiency and revenue.
- **Forecast Patient Demand:**  
Use predictive analytics to anticipate periods of high demand and adjust staffing accordingly, ensuring the practice is neither over- nor understaffed.

## 6 Focus on Staff Well-being and Retention

- **Reduce Turnover:**  
High staff turnover is costly due to recruitment and training expenses. Invest in staff well-being and professional development to retain experienced staff, which also improves patient satisfaction and loyalty.

By combining these strategies, a New Zealand general practice can improve its financial health while continuing to provide high-quality care to patients.

# 1. Maximize Capitation Revenue

- **Increase Enrolled Patient Numbers:** Actively work to grow the number of enrolled patients, especially targeting populations that may benefit from PHO funding, such as low-income or high-health-needs communities.
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The image displays three overlapping screenshots from the MedTech Healthier Care system, illustrating the patient registration and management process.

**Left Screenshot: Registration and Enrolment Form**

- Progress Bar:** 1. Eligibility, 2. Proof of Eligibility, 3. Patient Details, 4. Additional Details, 5. Transfer of Records, 6. Terms and Conditions, 7. Review.
- Declaration of Entitlement and Eligibility:** Includes sections for NZ Citizenship and a list of eligibility criteria (e.g., "I am a New Zealand citizen", "I hold a resident visa or a permanent resident visa").
- Patient Details:** Fields for Title (MRS), Surname / Family Name (Person), Residential Address (12 Madden Street, Auckland Central, Auckland 1010), Mobile Number (0210210213), and Email (me@isp.com).

**Middle Screenshot: Patient Register - Not Approved (ABNORMAL Patient (23))**

- Actions:** NHI Data, Consent, Audit.
- Registration and Enrolment Form:** Patient Details 1, Enrolment Funding 2, Account 3, More 4, Contacts 5, Provider 6.
- Personal Details:** Surname: ABNORMAL, Title: Mr, First Names: PATIENT, NHI: ZZZ0032, Date of Birth: 10/09/1958, GMS: Adult (A), Registered: Registered (R), Ethnicity 1: Maori-NZ (21), Ethnicity 2: Samoan (31), Ethnicity 3: Southeast Asian (41), Sex and Gender: Assigned Sex: Male, Gender: Male, Gender Group: Male (M), Pronouns: .
- Contact Details:** Street: 12 Test Madden St, Suburb: Auckland Central, City: Auckland, Country: New Zealand, Home Phone: 721-554-4654, Work Phone: 949-835-5502, Mobile Phone: 02193949400, Email: abnormalpatient@, Chart No: 23, Provider: Alex Api (SFE), Location: , Occupation: .
- Community Service Card:** CSC Holder, Card Type: CSC Holder (1), Number: 67456696, Start Date: 09/08/2022.
- Buttons:** Inactive, Add, Approve, Decline.

**Right Screenshot: Patient Register - Not Approved (Mouse Mickey (16))**

- Actions:** NHI Data, Consent, Audit.
- Registration and Enrolment Form:** Patient Details 1, Enrolment Funding 2, Account 3, More 4, Contacts 5, Provider 6, Care Plus 7, Notes 8.
- Enrolment Details:** Enrolment Status, Date Confirmed, Method of Enrolment, Enrolment ID, Enrolment Start Date, Enrolment ID, Enrolment Expiry Date, Enrolment End Date, Enrolment End Reason.
- Funding Details:** Funding Status, Funding Start Date, Funding End Date.
- Eligibility Details:** Eligible Doc Type, Eligible Doc Status, Visa Type, Visa Expiry.
- Enrolment and Identity Records Table:**

Tick	Date/Time Received	Date/Time Submitted	Form Name	Comment	Location
<input type="checkbox"/>	08 Jan 2020 11:15 AM	08 Jan 2020 11:54 AM	Scanned Document		Loc A
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 Sep 2019 10:45 AM	10 Sep 2019 11:00 AM	Online Form		Loc B

**Buttons:** Sync, Re-enrol, End enrolment, Full enrolment, Inactive, Add, Approve, Decline, Close, Help.

# ● 1. Maximize Capitation Revenue

- **Increase Enrolled Patient Numbers:** Actively work to grow the number of enrolled patients, especially targeting populations that may benefit from PHO funding, such as low-income or high-health-needs communities.
- **Engage Patients in Preventive Care:** Focus on preventive services (e.g., vaccinations, screenings, and chronic disease management) that align with PHO-funded programs, which can attract additional funding.

Income	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	278,910,724	513,773,302	352,219,734
Other income	79,416		
Covid Testing / Vax	65,664,585	284,420,222	91,986,420
<b>Adjust Income</b>	<b>213,325,555</b>	<b>229,353,080</b>	<b>260,233,314</b>
<i>Adj Increase</i>		107.5%	113.5%
First Level Services to GPs	155,090,304	164,809,013	179,857,762
<i>Increase</i>		106.3%	109.1%
Expenses	2021	2022	2023
Clinical costs	247,205,777	476,243,394	304,055,083
Covid Testing/Vax	65,664,587	282,630,884	89,974,459
Adjust Clinical	181,541,190	193,612,510	214,080,624
<i>Increase</i>		106.6%	110.6%
First Level Services to GPs	153,146,162	157,362,271	170,909,208
<i>Increase</i>		102.8%	108.6%
Administration	31,472,715	36,128,022	46,359,767
<i>Increase</i>		114.8%	128.3%
Employee costs	17,519,660	20,891,303	27,748,189
<i>Increase</i>		119.2%	132.8%
% Adj clinical expenses/ Adj income	85.1%	84.4%	82.3%
% Admin expenses/Adj income	14.8%	15.8%	17.8%

## Work with your PHO to get more funding for your practice population

1. Work with your PHO about how you can maximise Services to Improve Access, Careplus, and Health Promotion funding.
2. Some PHOs pay practices at higher rates for system level fundings, with some PHOs holding onto the funding for internal use. PHOs are required to pay out 50% of the system level measures funding to practices as a requirement of the PHO services agreement.
3. Talk to your PHO on what financial contributions the PHO can make towards the overhead costs of the Health improvement practitioner and Health Coach roles that they place in your practice. The PHO can be providing funding to support the costs of rooms etc.
4. Its pays to speak with your existing and other PHOs to get a feel for what best aligns with you practice aspirations.



## • 2. Optimize Billing and Fee Structures

- **Private Services and Additional Fees:** Offer additional fee-for-service options like repeat prescriptions, minor surgical procedures, skin checks, or specialized services that aren't fully covered by government funding.
- **Streamline Payment Processes:** Ensure efficient billing and payment systems, reducing uncollected fees or delayed payments. Using automated reminders for unpaid invoices can help improve cash flow.



The entire payment process and workflow from patient initiation to bank settlement is automated

**Patient payment:**  
Patient submits payment on their personalised Pay by Link webpage

Outstanding Invoices			
<p><b>Auckland &amp; Matakohu Practice</b>                      1000 Building, 17000 Street, New Zealand, 1000</p> <p>Our dedicated team of doctors and nurses are here to help you with your health and wellbeing needs. Let us know if you have any questions or need support, we are here to help you. Please contact us on 09 222 2222 or visit our website at www.aucklandandmatakohu.co.nz</p> <p>A list of your outstanding invoices is provided below. Please make the payment on the date of your outstanding invoice. You can choose to pay for the outstanding amount in complete full payment.</p>			
Account Details			
Practice Name	Auckland & Matakohu Practice		
Practice Phone No	09 222 2222		
A/C Number Name	Whoa! You're Done!		
A/C Number Practice No	123 456789		
Outstanding Invoices			
21 Mar 2022	Ref No: 01	Consultation	\$50.00
		Lab Test	\$50.00
		Physio	\$50.00
		Immunisation	\$50.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>
			<b>\$ -</b>
11 Apr 2022	Ref No: 02	Consultation	\$50.00
		Lab Test	\$50.00
		Physio	\$50.00
		Immunisation	\$50.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>
			<b>\$ -</b>

Payment request sent to patient's bank

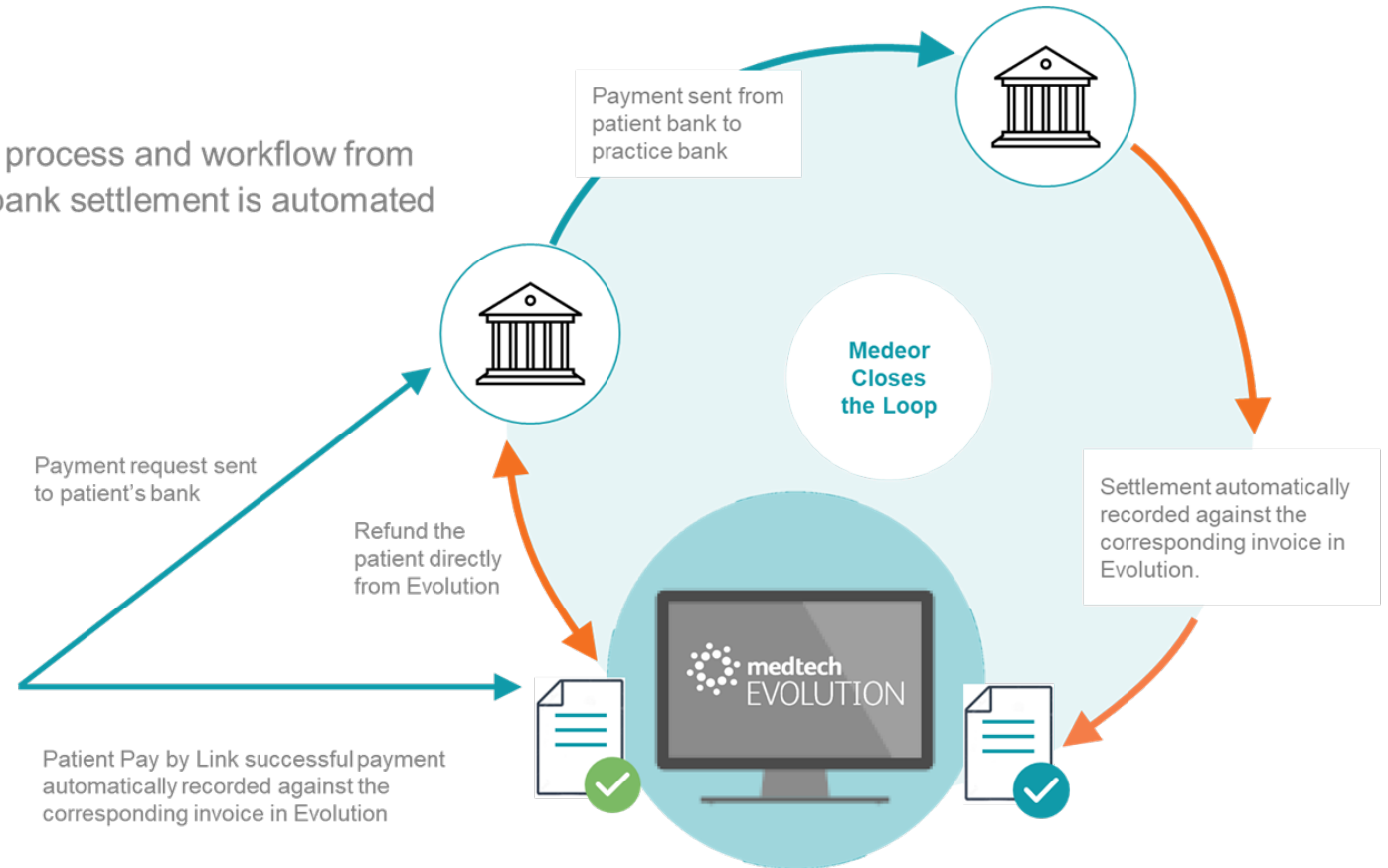
Refund the patient directly from Evolution

Patient Pay by Link successful payment automatically recorded against the corresponding invoice in Evolution

Payment sent from patient bank to practice bank

Medeor Closes the Loop

Settlement automatically recorded against the corresponding invoice in Evolution.



## ● 3. Increase Operational Efficiency

- **Reduce Administrative Costs:** Use technology such as practice management software (PMS) to automate routine tasks like appointment scheduling, billing, and patient reminders. This reduces the need for additional administrative staff and improves workflow.
- **Telehealth:** Offer telehealth consultations to increase the volume of appointments without needing additional physical space or resources. It also allows for more flexible scheduling.



The screenshot shows a news article from 'New Zealand Doctor'. The article is titled 'CareHQ shows 78% rise in telehealth consults' and is categorized under 'BUSINESS'. It is dated 'Wednesday 28 August 2024, 02:30 AM' and is attributed to Stephen Forbes, with an email address 'sforbes@nzdoctor.co.nz'. The article has '3 minutes to Read' and '0' comments. The main image shows a person with white hair sitting at a desk, using a laptop. The laptop screen displays a video call with a healthcare professional. There are medical supplies like a stethoscope and a pillbox on the desk.



- Medtech is the first to deliver an integrated video/consultant telehealth platform with integrated devices
  - Many practices do not have the resources to do this themselves
  - Practices are losing business and patients to telehealth companies
- There is a need for this type of technology
  - Doctor and Nurse shortage, work can be shared amongst healthcare workers
  - Remote care is on the increase
  - Patient access can be addressed
  - It delivers to many sectors of the healthcare ecosystem

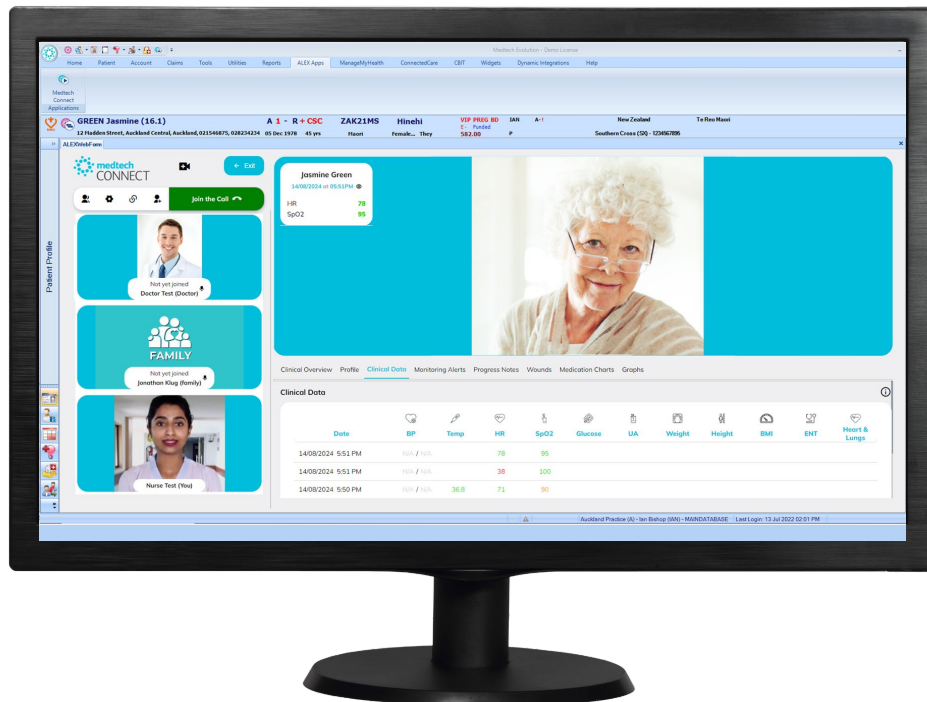
- **Medtech Connect has two components**

### Virtual Consultations in Evolution

Medtech Connect is an ALEX® integration so no apps or software updates are needed to get started, it's just a PMS configuration.

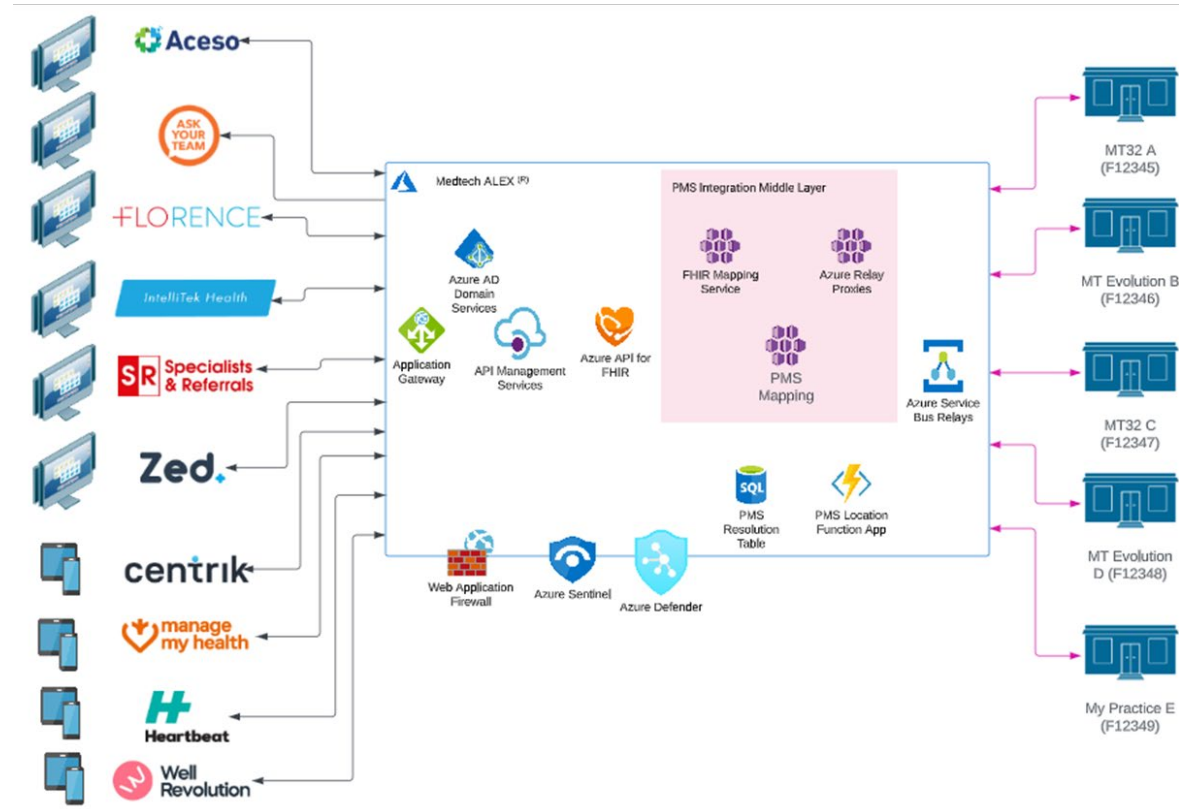
### Integrated Digital Devices

Integrated, easy-to-use monitoring devices automatically upload readings to the patient record in Evolution from the Medtech Connect app on any standard smart device.



## 4. Improve Patient Retention and Engagement

- **Patient Loyalty Programs:** Encourage patient loyalty with membership schemes or bundled care packages that include a set number of consultations or services for a fixed price.
- **Patient Education and Self-Service:** Invest in patient portals where patients can book appointments, check test results, and communicate with the practice. This not only enhances patient satisfaction but also reduces administrative workload.



# 5. Use Data to Drive Decisions

- Data-Driven Insights:** Use data analytics from your PMS to track appointment no-shows, patient retention, or underutilized services. This data can help you adjust scheduling, staffing, and service offerings to maximize efficiency and revenue.

The screenshot displays the DrInfo Health Analytics dashboard. The main interface includes a sidebar with navigation options like Home, Vortis Clinic (Demo), and Reports. The central area features a 'Welcome to the new DrInfo 2' message and a 'Metrics' section with several key performance indicators (KPIs) such as 'New funded patients in the last month' and 'Registered and Enrolled without an NES ID'. A 'Definition' section explains the metrics, and a 'Caveat' section notes that certain logic is not yet applied to MyPractice sites.

Overlaid on the dashboard is a detailed report titled 'Capitation' with a report key of 38. This report includes a table of metrics and two bar charts. The table lists various measures, their financial impact, and the number of patients affected. The 'Patients by Provider' chart shows the distribution of patients across different providers, and the 'Patients by Age' chart shows the distribution across age groups.

Measure	Impact	Patients
New funded patients in the last month	\$1,900	79
Patients no longer funded since last month	-\$1,340	65
Funding status incorrectly marked as Funded		6
Registered and Enrolled patient without an NES ID		0
Date of birth missing		0
Gender missing		0
High User Health Card expires within 30 days		0
Seen in the last 30 days and not invoiced		61
Enrolment expires within 30 days	-\$357	21
Turning 16 within 50 days		20
Ethnicity not recorded		0
NHI not recorded		0
Baby with no next of kin recorded		1
New baby registered in last 30 days		9
Patient's recorded Provider has less than 20 patients		13
Duplicate patient identified in PMS		0

Active Patients: 8,452

Patients by Provider: 6,373, 2,127, 11, 1, 1

Patients by Age: 0-4 (585), 5-14 (1,111), 15-24 (1,028), 25-44 (2,169), 45-64 (2,151), 65+ (1,408), ? (0)



## ● 6. Focus on Staff Well-being and Retention

- **Reduce Turnover:** High staff turnover is costly due to recruitment and training expenses. Invest in staff well-being and professional development to retain experienced staff, which also improves patient satisfaction and loyalty.

### 1 Foster a Positive Workplace Culture

- **Encourage Open Communication:**  
Create an environment where staff feel comfortable sharing their ideas, concerns, or suggestions. Regular meetings or feedback sessions can help everyone feel valued and heard.
- **Celebrate Successes:**  
Recognize both individual and team achievements. Whether it's a small milestone, like resolving an issue, or a larger one, such as hitting a target, celebrating these wins boosts morale and teamwork.
- **Support Work-Life Balance:**  
Encourage staff to take breaks and manage their workloads to avoid burnout. Flexible working hours or remote work options (when possible) can also improve job satisfaction..

### 2 Invest in Professional Development

- **Ongoing Training and Learning:**  
Provide opportunities for staff to attend workshops, courses, or training sessions that improve their skills or advance their careers. This benefits the practice and helps staff feel more competent and valued.
- **Career Growth Pathways:**  
Offer clear paths for career advancement, especially for nurses, receptionists, or administrative staff. Knowing there is room for growth can increase long-term job satisfaction.

## ● 6. Focus on Staff Well-being and Retention

- **Reduce Turnover:** High staff turnover is costly due to recruitment and training expenses. Invest in staff well-being and professional development to retain experienced staff, which also improves patient satisfaction and loyalty.

### 3 Prioritize Staff Well-being and Mental Health

- **Provide Support for Mental Health:**  
Ensure there are resources available for staff who might be struggling with stress or mental health issues. Offering access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) or mental health days can show that the practice values its employees' well-being.
- **Create a Supportive Team Environment:**  
Encourage teamwork and mutual support among staff. Organize team-building activities or regular check-ins to strengthen relationships and help staff feel supported by their colleagues.

### 4 Enhance Workplace Physical Environment

- **Improve Workspace Design:**  
Ensure that the physical workspace is comfortable, well-organized, and conducive to productivity. Simple changes like better lighting, ergonomic furniture, or decluttering common areas can improve the atmosphere.
- **Create Relaxation Spaces:**  
Having a designated area where staff can take breaks or unwind during busy shifts can significantly reduce stress levels. A comfortable and quiet space for lunch breaks or short rest periods makes a big difference to staff well-being.

## ● 9 Pieces of Unconventional Wisdom for Medtech

1. Success comes from being who you are, not despite who you are.
2. You don't belong everywhere.
3. Hiring digital natives will not automatically solve a business' transformation problems.
4. Customer insights trump technology to uncover innovations.
5. Solutions come from asking questions, not giving answers.
6. Listen more, talk less.
7. Surround yourself with people who complement you.
8. Qualitative insights may be better inputs to decisions than numerical data.
9. Established businesses aren't complete dinosaurs.

<https://builtin.com/articles/9-pieces-unconventional-wisdom>



## ● Key challenges for Medtech?

- Medtech's mantra is to enable our customers (healthcare practices) to provide Healthier Care to their customers (the patients)
- Healthier Care is the ability of the practice as a whole (practice managers, reception staff, nurses and doctors) to provide each and every patient with an exceptional care experience and streamlined journey into and throughout the episode of care.
- We do this by:
  - Enabling efficient and appropriate pathways into the practice at time of patient need
  - Enabling administrative efficiencies to allow staff to focus on the patient, not the paperwork
  - Enabling efficient and appropriate transfer of patient care to streamline the referral to, and discharge from, other healthcare providers
  - Removing the “white noise” from the “system” to allow for greater focus on the things that matter
- Like a lot of businesses in healthcare delivery we are facing a number of key challenges that are impacting overall customer experience and satisfaction.
- We are very much reminded by our users that we are in the business of helping practices be practices, doctors be doctors.

# ● What are we going to do about it?

- We are going to leverage the deep product knowledge of the Product Delivery Team to significantly enhance the capabilities and performance of the Customer Support Team.
- By bridging the knowledge gap between our teams, we will be fostering a collaborative environment that promotes continuous learning, innovation, and a seamless customer experience.

## **Cross Functional Pods:**

Faster issue resolution and more accurate information provided to customers, leading to immediate improvements in customer satisfaction.

## **Enhanced Escalation Process:**

Quicker resolution of complex issues, reducing customer wait times and frustration.

## **Shadowing Sessions:**

Rapid transfer of deep product knowledge to the support team, enhancing their understanding of the product and improving their ability to support customers effectively.

## **Skills and Knowledge Assessment:**

Identify gaps in knowledge and skills that directly impact customer satisfaction, allowing tailoring of a training plan/schedule to address these areas.

## **Customer Success Check Ins:**

Enhanced customer loyalty and satisfaction through proactive engagement.

## **Customer Follow-ups:**

Customers feel valued and cared for, leading to increased satisfaction and loyalty.

## **Personalised Onsite Follow-ups:**

Strengthened customer relationships, proactive resolution of underlying issues, increased customer satisfaction, and valuable insights for potential product improvements.

- ## Avoid conventional thinking

*“ When everyone conforms to the norm — creativity and innovation die. Society becomes stagnant and people become unhappy. When conventional thinking dominates, society cannot make the progress it needs to make. Society needs unconventional individuals to try new ideas and come up with ways of doing things that nobody has ever thought of before.*

*Remember, unconventional thinkers see reality for what it really is, and they take action. So don't be afraid to try new things and challenge the status quo —you may be surprised by what you can accomplish.”*

**medtech**   
healthier care