**News release**

**Hopes high that health sector review will address one of NZ’s greatest healthcare challenges**

Alzheimers NZ hopes one of the country’s greatest healthcare challenges will be front and centre when the recently-announced Review of New Zealand’s Health and Disability Sector gets underway.

Dementia affects four out of five New Zealanders and is likely to cost the country nearly $5 billion a year by 2050, up from just under $2 billion a year now.

Alzheimers NZ chief executive, Catherine Hall, says the government needs to act urgently to address the looming dementia challenge and she hopes this review will provide a platform for positive action.

“New Zealand simply cannot afford to continue to do nothing about this issue and the sooner government realises that and does something constructive the better it will be, both for the many, many thousands of Kiwis affected by dementia and for Vote Health.

“We are very hopeful this review will treat the dementia challenge with the seriousness it deserves.”

Ms Hall is urging the government to invest in implementing the New Zealand Framework for Dementia Care, which provides a blueprint for more and better services for people living with dementia.

“We are very disappointed with the lack of progress in implementing the Framework in the past five years and hope this will change as a result of the review.”

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