

# Living & Working in New Zealand.

Everything you  
need to know



**wavelength**  
SPECIALISTS IN MEDICAL RECRUITMENT

**The best people, better placed for the best positions.**



# Breathtaking.

New Zealand is a unique land of breathtaking scenery and diverse natural beauty. It is comprised of two main landmasses; the North and South Island, and is located 1500 kilometres or a three hour flight from Australia's east coast. New Zealand is one of the world's most popular tourist destinations and it is becoming an increasingly sought-after place for doctors to live and work. New Zealand has something for everybody, from the vibrant cosmopolitan cities, to coastal paradise and snow covered alps.

We understand that making the decision to live and work in New Zealand is an exciting and perhaps overwhelming one. We also know there is a wide range of information you will need to consider before you take the steps to relocate to New Zealand such as your eligibility for medical registration, the immigration process as well as your personal circumstances with regards to housing, schooling and the cost of living.

To assist you with this decision, we have developed this information guide. We have summarised the information as much as possible and provided links for additional information. We are here to help should you have any further questions so please don't hesitate to contact us.

## Working in New Zealand

### The Healthcare System

New Zealand has both a public and private healthcare system. In the public system, essential healthcare services are provided free for all New Zealanders and people in New Zealand on a work permit valid for two years or longer.

Alongside the public system, private healthcare offers access to private hospitals for the treatment of both urgent and non-urgent conditions (excluding Accident and Emergency Care). The network of private hospitals and clinics provides a range of services that include recuperative care, elective procedures and a range of general surgical procedures. There are also private radiology clinics and testing laboratories.

#### The Public System

The government-funded public health system works on a community-oriented model, with three key sectors.

- + District Health Boards - District Health Boards (DHBs) are funded by the government and are responsible for providing or funding health and disability services in their district.
- + Primary Health Care - Primary health care covers a broad range of out-of-hospital services, although not all of them are government funded. Primary health care includes first level services such as general practice, mobile nursing and community health services.
- + PHOs (Primary Health Organisations) - PHOs are the local structures for delivering and co-ordinating primary health care services. PHOs bring together doctors, nurses and other health professionals (such as Maori health workers, health promotion workers) in the community to serve the needs of their enrolled patients.

#### The Private System

Private healthcare in New Zealand includes specialist services, primary care and private hospitals which provide non-urgent and elective treatments that complement the public health service's focus on urgent and essential treatments.

There are also many private accident, emergency and medical clinics that operate in the private sector, often providing services outside the usual hours of doctors and clinics in the public system.

#### Accident insurance - ACC

Anyone in New Zealand – including visitors – who have had an accident or injury is usually covered by the government's personal injury scheme known as ACC.

Organised by the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC), it covers the full range of personal injuries, whether they happen at home, work, or during sport or other leisure activities. ACC helps pay for medical and treatment fees and rehabilitation or residential care costs that are caused by any accident or injury.

### District Health Boards

The New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 created District Health Board's. (DHBs)

It sets out their objectives, which include:

- + improving, promoting and protecting the health of people and communities
- + promoting the integration of health services, especially primary and secondary care services
- + seeking the optimum arrangement for the most effective and efficient delivery of health services in order to meet local, regional, and national needs
- + promoting effective care or support of those in need of personal health services or disability support

There are currently 20 DHBs in New Zealand, 15 in the North Island and 5 in the South Island. They are required to plan and deliver services regionally, as well as in their own individual areas. Each DHB is governed by a board of up to 11 members. DHB boards set the overall strategic direction for the DHB and monitor its performance.

#### NORTH ISLAND

- + Auckland District Health Board
- + Bay of Plenty District Health Board
- + Capital and Coast District Health Board
- + Counties Manukau District Health Board
- + Hawkes Bay District Health Board
- + Hutt Valley District Health Board
- + Lakes District Health Board
- + Mid Central District Health Board
- + Northland District Health Board
- + Tairāwhiti District Health Board
- + Taranaki District Health Board
- + Waikato District Health Board
- + Wairarapa District Health Board
- + Waitemata District Health Board
- + Whanganui District Health Board

#### SOUTH ISLAND

- + Canterbury District Health Board
- + Nelson-Marlborough District Health Board
- + South Canterbury District Health Board
- + Southern District Health Board
- + West Coast District Health Board

For further information on New Zealand's healthcare system please visit the following website: <http://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/overview-health-system?mega=NZ%20health%20system&title=Overview>

## Salaries and Working Conditions

### Salaries

In New Zealand salaries are as per the country wide agreement (MECA Award). There are 13 levels and where you are appointed is commensurate with your experience. Base Salary is (Yr 1) \$152,000 - (Yr 13) \$216,500 NZ. The salary scales are calculated on a base salary of 1.0 FTE (full time equivalent), totalling 40 hours per week. When considering the step on the salary scale to appoint a new employee, the employer will take into account the date of qualifying, relevant skills and experience with the position. There is also provision for annual step advancement, subject to satisfactory performance. Your salary is paid fortnightly.

Senior Medical Officer's (SMOs) or Consultant's are entitled to six weeks annual leave per year.

In addition to this you may also benefit from:

- + An availability and on call allowance which is dependent upon the health board and call requirement
- + Superannuation at 6%
- + Reimbursement of a wide range of expenses that may be required or relevant to your employment, such as your medical indemnity and the cost of your registration
- + Temporary accommodation, vehicle use and flights (or travel allowance) may be offered and are negotiated on an individual basis

For further details on the DHB MECA Award see the following website: [http://www.asms.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/2013-16-DHB-MECA-signed\\_159277.6.pdf](http://www.asms.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/2013-16-DHB-MECA-signed_159277.6.pdf)

For further details on your eligibility for Superannuation see the following website: <http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/statistical-report/statistical-report-2008/superannuation-and-pensions/>

### Professional Development

Continuing Medical Education (CME) is up to 10 days leave per year and up to \$16,000 to cover expenses 'actually and reasonably' incurred to attend CME activity.

SMOs can also opt for a sabbatical for three months on full pay after six years' service, at an appropriate institution or clinical unit, for the purpose of acquiring clinical knowledge, upgrading clinical skills or undertaking an approved course of study. CME funds may be used to support a sabbatical.

SMOs may also apply for a secondment of two weeks every three years for the purpose of professional development or upgrading skills.

### Working Conditions

New Zealand has a modern, well-run, fair healthcare system and doctors are well looked after. The medical workforce is well supported by proactive unions and work conditions are consistently good with well-regulated hours, leaving you more time to enjoy the lifestyle you came for.

For a personal perspective on making the move to New Zealand from the UK, Wavelength's Director, Dr John Bethell, has published an interesting blog talking with a UK doctor, Nigel Giles, who made the move to New Zealand a few years ago:

<http://offthescript.com.au/2015/06/01/should-i-stay-or-should-i-go-one-orthopaedic-surgeons-stop-start-journey-from-devon-to-coastal-new-zealand/>

### The Treaty of Waitangi

The Treaty of Waitangi establishes the unique and special relationship between Iwi Maori and the Crown. It is relevant to all those working for the District Health Boards in New Zealand. The Treaty of Waitangi principles of partnership, participation and active protection of Maori Health interests are fundamental to the way in which the District Health Boards responds to Maori Health.

The current legislation, the New Zealand Public Health & Disability Act 2000 requires district health boards to establish and maintain processes to enable Maori to participate in and contribute to strategies for Maori health improvement. These, and related requirements, are imposed in order to recognise and respect the Treaty principles and to improve the health status of Maori.

For further information on Maori Health and the Treaty of Waitangi see the following websites:

<http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/ministry-business-units/maori-health-business-unit>

<http://www.immigration.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/79BB2C7F-58C8-45A0-9ACF-423B7E4AE077/0/LivingGuide01Treaty.pdf>

### Coles Medical Practice in New Zealand

An introduction to the main legislation, ethical standards and guidelines which govern medical practice in New Zealand is issued by the Medical Council of New Zealand.

A copy of the most recent edition can be found on the following website: <https://www.mcnz.org.nz/news-and-publications/cole-s-medical-practice-in-new-zealand/>

## Registration Pathways

The Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) provides a number of registration pathways for overseas trained specialists to work in New Zealand depending on your background and experience. Please see further information below and speak to your regulatory consultant to find out which pathway is appropriate for you.

Applications for registration take between 20 working days and 6+ months and Wavelength will assist you through the entire process.

### Comparable Health (Provisional General)

Comparable health countries include: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Ireland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, and USA.

The Provisional General registration pathway is not a vocational registration pathway so you will not be recognised by the MCNZ as a Specialist. The hospital, under their discretion, can appoint a doctor to work as a Consultant with adequate supervision whilst they are obtaining their vocational registration. To be eligible you must have worked for a minimum of 30 hours per week in a comparable health system with full unconditional registration for 36 out of the past 48 months.

### Competent Authority

The Competent Authority Model Pathway is only available to doctors that obtained their primary medical degree from the UK or Ireland. Through the Competent Authority Model, you obtain Provisional General registration, but there are fewer requirements to fulfil through this pathway.

For example, there is not the requirement of working 30 hours per week for 36/48 months and you do not have to provide proof of work in a comparable country. You just need to have at least 1 year experience in your field and be fully registered in a UK or Irish jurisdiction.

Please note that doctors will not be approved for registration if they have been completely retired; they must have been in clinical practice within their specialty for at least 20 hours per week to qualify.

## Vocational

### VOC1 – Vocational Registration:

This registration pathway is for New Zealand or Australian postgraduates who hold general registration in New Zealand. This provides you with full registration to work independently in New Zealand without supervision.

### VOC2 – Vocational Registration:

This registration pathway is for doctors who hold the prescribed New Zealand or Australian postgraduate medical qualifications but who don't hold general registration in New Zealand. This provides you with full registration to work independently in New Zealand without supervision.

### VOC3 – Vocational Registration:

This pathway is for candidates who have obtained their postgraduate medical degree overseas in one of the listed vocational scopes: [www.mcnz.org.nz/get-registered/scopes-ofpractice/vocationalregistration/types-of-vocational-scope/](http://www.mcnz.org.nz/get-registered/scopes-ofpractice/vocationalregistration/types-of-vocational-scope/)

The initial application is a preliminary assessment of your paperwork and is generally approved within a few months. If you are deemed equivalent or nearly equivalent (to a New Zealand-trained doctor), you will be granted 'Provisional Vocational' registration (and you could then apply to start work in New Zealand). In most instances, you will then be required to attend a face-to-face interview with your specialist college, the outcome of which will detail the requirements to gain full Vocational registration.

If your qualifications, training and experience are deemed not comparable to the approved standard, the Council will propose to decline your application and you will be advised of other options for gaining registration in New Zealand.

You can apply for registration advice to determine the appropriate registration pathway that is applicable to you, at a cost of \$153.33 NZ Dollars. Alternatively you can use the MCNZ self-assessment tool. [www.mcnz.org.nz/get-registered/registration-self-assessment-tool/](http://www.mcnz.org.nz/get-registered/registration-self-assessment-tool/)

### Locum Tenens Pathway (Special Purpose)

The Locum Tenens pathway is available to those who intend to work for 12 months or less in New Zealand. To gain registration you must:

- + have an approved postgraduate qualification in the branch of medicine in which you want to work
- + have been working in active clinical practice (20 hours per week), relevant to the branch of medicine in which you are applying, for at least 24 of the past 36 months.
- + be appointed to a supervised role that is not able to be filled by a New Zealand resident doctor

Note: you may work in a specialist role for a maximum of 12 months. If you want to practice in New Zealand beyond 12 months, you will need to apply for registration within a vocational scope of practice. A Locum Tenens application usually takes 20 working days.

### Useful Websites

Medical Council of New Zealand  
[www.mcnz.org.nz](http://www.mcnz.org.nz)

## English Proficiency

All Doctors must satisfy the requirements for the MCNZ's English Language Policy. Please refer to the following link which details the acceptable standard for the English Language Policy: <https://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/Policies/English-language-policy-2014-final.pdf>

The Council has five options to demonstrate your English language proficiency without sitting a test, and if you don't meet one of the five requirements, you will need to complete an English Language Proficiency Exam:

### Approved English proficiency tests: IELTS, OET

#### Test Validity

Approved English proficiency tests expire after 2 years.

#### IELTS (Academic)

This is the most common test for doctors as it is available in many countries and has frequent test dates. Be aware that IELTS has become increasingly challenging, so it is recommended that you review the practice questions and thoroughly prepare for your IELTS test. You can take the sample test, purchase preparation materials or maybe even book into a preparation course at an English language school. This link takes you to practice exam material: [www.ielts.org/test\\_takers\\_information/test\\_sample.aspx](http://www.ielts.org/test_takers_information/test_sample.aspx).

Booking an IELTS test can take up to 1 month as testing centres generally fill up quickly. The results can take an extra 3 weeks to be sent to you so it is important to be aware of this if you are seriously considering working in New Zealand.

Please refer to this website for more information on test dates and locations: [www.ielts.org/test\\_centre\\_search/search\\_results.aspx](http://www.ielts.org/test_centre_search/search_results.aspx).

#### IELTS Test Score Requirements

- + You must achieve a minimum score of 7 for reading and writing, and 7.5 for listening and speaking
- + Results must be obtained in one sitting

#### OET (for Medical Practitioners)

Some candidates find the OET slightly easier than IELTS; however, they have limited test centres and only offer one exam a month. Please refer to this website for more information on test dates and locations: [www.occupationalenglishtest.org/Display.aspx?tabid=2536](http://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/Display.aspx?tabid=2536).

#### OET Test Score Requirements

- + You must achieve a minimum of 'A' or 'B' in each of the four components (reading, writing, listening and speaking)
- + Results must be obtained in one sitting

## Immigration

For New Zealand immigration assistance, Wavelength has a preferred supplier relationship with a specialist licensed immigration organisation, Pathways to New Zealand (PNZ). Preliminary consultations and eligibility assessments are free of charge; however, fees will apply should you choose to engage the services of PNZ to fully manage either a work visa or permanent residence visa on your behalf. Wavelength and PNZ have agreed on a preferential fee structure exclusively for Wavelength doctors.

You do have the choice to process your own visa applications independently, however, it is highly recommended that you seek professional advice to ensure your full personal circumstances are accurately assessed and applications correctly submitted thus avoiding any risk of delays or declined applications. For more information on PNZ or clarification specific to your requirements please speak to your recruitment consultant.

## Medical Indemnity Cover

It is essential to have medical indemnity cover before you commence practicing medicine in New Zealand. Often Specialists working as employees (on the hospital payroll) at public hospitals in New Zealand will be covered by the hospital's medical indemnity policy.

Wavelength International strongly recommends that all doctors working in New Zealand have their own private medical indemnity cover at all times, regardless of whether the client provides you with medical indemnity cover for the duration of your placement. Ultimately it is your legal responsibility to ensure you have indemnity cover and an understanding of exactly what you are covered for prior to commencing work. We recommend that you do your research before you arrive so as to avoid delay when you start. It is worth shopping around for the best cover.

For more specific information on Medical Indemnity Insurance please call or visit the websites for the below providers:

#### Medical Protection Society

PO Box 8035  
The Terrace, Wellington  
Tel: 0800 225 5677  
Fax: 04 494 7010  
Email: [membership@mps.org.nz](mailto:membership@mps.org.nz)  
[www.medicalprotection.org/newzealand](http://www.medicalprotection.org/newzealand)

#### Medical Indemnity Protection Society

Level 3, 15-31 Pelham Street, Carlton, VIC 3053  
Tel: (03) 8620 8888 (M-F 9.00am to 5.00pm)  
Membership Advice Freecall: 1800 061 113  
Medico-Legal Advice Freecall: 1800 021 223  
Email: [info@mips.com.au](mailto:info@mips.com.au)  
[www.mips.com.au](http://www.mips.com.au)

## Living in New Zealand

### Climate

Being in the Southern Hemisphere, New Zealand's seasons are completely opposite to countries north of the equator. Winter lasts from June until August and summer is between December and February with February generally being the hottest month.

Being surrounded by sea, the climate doesn't get uncomfortably hot or unbearably cold in the areas where the majority of people live, although extremes can be found, particularly in the mountain ranges in winter. Generally, the north of New Zealand is subtropical and the south temperate. Overall, the temperate climate ranges from 20–30°C (68–86°F) in summer, and from 5–15°C (41–59°F) in winter.

#### Useful Websites

Bureau of Meteorology Weather and sea temperatures  
[www.metservice.co.nz](http://www.metservice.co.nz)

### Housing

When it comes to housing in New Zealand there is a wide range of choice in location and style. You will find charming, restored, turn of the century cottages and Victorian villas in every city and town, along with large blocks with several acres in rural areas. You will also find homes built in a wide range of materials from brick or wooden bungalows to modern glass structures and contemporary architecture. Whether you are looking for an outdoor lifestyle, a place in the heart of the city, or a spacious family home with a garden you will have every opportunity to match your new home to the lifestyle of your dreams.

New Zealand homes are generally built to make the most of the light and air flow with plenty of windows and usually glass doors opening out onto a deck or balcony. Compared to house prices overseas, you will likely see your money go a lot further in the New Zealand housing market. This may be the reason why around 67% of residents own their own home. The market of course does fluctuate as with all real estate markets, however the average house price today is under NZ\$500,000.

Many people coming to New Zealand prefer to rent a property to start with while deciding where to settle rather than committing to a long term tenancy or buying a property. Renting a property is typically easy to do and most are advertised in the local paper and on the internet. However, as most residents own their own home the stock of rental property is lower than in other countries so the demand is high, and you may be required to make a quick decision when you find a property you want. Although you can arrange a rental before you arrive, it is recommended you wait until you are in the country so you can visit the property to ascertain its condition, proximity to transport, schooling and the general feel of the neighbourhood.

For more information on housing in New Zealand please visit the following website:

#### New Zealand Now

[www.newzealandnow.govt.nz](http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz)

#### Department of Building & Housing

Offers advice on bonds as well as a market rent price guides  
[www.tenancy.govt.nz](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz)

#### Real Estate National

Rental and home sale website  
[www.allrealestate.co.nz](http://www.allrealestate.co.nz)

### Cost of Living

It is difficult to make a direct comparison of cost of living by doing a straight conversion from your domestic currency because there are many other factors that come into effect – tax, property, lifestyle etc. However, New Zealand is generally considered to have a very favourable standard of living compared to other developed countries.

#### Useful Websites

##### New World Online grocery shopping

[www.newworld.co.nz](http://www.newworld.co.nz)

##### Countdown online grocery shopping

[www.shop.countdown.co.nz](http://www.shop.countdown.co.nz)

##### Online Shopping Guide Online retail shopping

[www.shopnewzealand.co.nz](http://www.shopnewzealand.co.nz)

##### Pricewatch New Zealand Petrol prices updated daily

[www.pricewatch.co.nz](http://www.pricewatch.co.nz)

##### New Zealand Immigration Cost of living

[www.immigration.govt.nz/nzopportunities/lifestyle/costofliving](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/nzopportunities/lifestyle/costofliving)

### Utilities

#### Electricity and Gas

Electricity in New Zealand is 240V AC 50Hz. The sockets are three-pin and you may need an adaptor. Universal outlets for 240V or 100V shavers are found in most leading hotels and multi-voltage appliances as well as adaptors are readily available in department stores and luggage shops.

Bottled LPG is available practically everywhere in New Zealand from a local LPG provider. Natural Gas is available where there is access to a Natural Gas pipeline – most towns and cities throughout the North Island. To find out which energy suppliers are available in your area call 0508 GAS LIVING (0508 427 548). To connect your power supply you will need to contact an electricity retailer in New Zealand:

#### Useful Websites

##### Contact – Gas and electricity provider

[www.mycontact.co.nz](http://www.mycontact.co.nz)

##### Genesis – Energy Gas and electricity provider

[www.genesisenergy.co.nz](http://www.genesisenergy.co.nz)

## Mobile Phones

New Zealand has one of the highest usages per capita in the world for mobile phones, so you should have no problem finding service – indeed you should recognize many of the same international companies. Coverage is comprehensive, even in quite small towns and on remote roads. Mobile phone prices are not bad by international standards.

### Useful Websites

**Vodafone International** – Mobile phone company  
[www.vodafone.co.nz](http://www.vodafone.co.nz)

**Telstra Clear** – Mobile, Internet and Landline access  
[www.telstraclear.co.nz](http://www.telstraclear.co.nz)

## Finance

### Currency

New Zealand's unit of currency is the New Zealand dollar (NZ\$). Coins have values of 10, 20 and 50 cents, \$1 and \$2; notes have values of \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100.

### Banking

Upon arrival into New Zealand, you should open a bank account within six weeks of your entry date. Most major banks will require the following types of evidence and identification: driver's licence; birth certificate; credit card; passport including visa.

Because you are coming from overseas, banks will generally want to see evidence that you have employment in New Zealand. Please bring a copy of your contract or a letter from your employer stating that you have a position and it's also a good idea to bring with you a letter of reference from your current bank plus some statements as evidence.

Banks are open from 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. Automated Teller Machines (ATM) are widely available at banks, along main shopping streets and in malls.

International credit cards and ATM cards will work as long as they have a four-digit PIN encoded. Check with your bank before leaving home.

### Useful Websites

**ANZ Bank**  
[www.nz.anz.com](http://www.nz.anz.com)

**ASB Bank**  
[www.asbbank.co.nz](http://www.asbbank.co.nz)

**Bank of New Zealand**  
[www.bnz.co.nz](http://www.bnz.co.nz)

**Westpac New Zealand**  
[www.westpactrust.co.nz](http://www.westpactrust.co.nz)

## Tax

The Financial Year in New Zealand runs from April 1st to March 31st. Individuals must submit their tax returns after March 31st each year and declare all of their income and tax paid. To avoid double taxation if a person is a tax resident of two different countries, New Zealand has a system of double tax agreements (DTAs) with many countries. DTAs establish rules to decide which country has the right to tax specific types of income. For specific information about DTAs and the New Zealand tax system, please refer to the Internal Revenue Department's website at: [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz)

We recommend that you make arrangement for your tax return (if eligible) before you leave New Zealand so that you do not have to manage this from overseas. It is also a good idea to engage a tax accountant to assist you with your tax return – they can save you a lot of money.

The tax system in New Zealand is a relatively favourable tax environment for your earnings and assets - the most attractive of 27 of the OECD countries researched by Professor Rob Salmond of the University of Michigan.

Key features:

- + A big attraction if you're considering living in NZ is the tax concession on overseas investment income & pensions that applies for your first four years of living here
- + No inheritance tax
- + No general capital gains tax, although it can apply to some specific investments
- + No local or state taxes apart from property rates levied by local councils and authorities
- + No payroll tax
- + No social security tax
- + No health care tax, apart from a very low levy for New Zealand's 'accident compensation injury insurance scheme

### IRD Numbers

An IRD number is essential for the purposes of registering for tax in New Zealand. If you do not already have a New Zealand IRD number for taxation purposes you must complete the IRD Application Form, so your employer can deduct the correct amount of tax from your pay.

You will find further information about the IRD number and the necessary form at [www.ird.govt.nz/how-to/irdnumbers/](http://www.ird.govt.nz/how-to/irdnumbers/)

You will need to download, complete, sign and post this form along with a copy of identification (refer to form) to the NZ Inland Revenue before you leave for New Zealand using the HR department at the hospital/practice address as your postal address. When you arrive in NZ, call the toll free # 0800 227 774 and the tax department will give you your IRD # over the phone.

Alternatively, the tax office will send your IRD number to the hospital prior to your commencement. When you arrive at work, bring the Tax Code Declaration Form with you. Once you know your number, complete the form and give it to your HR contact.

### Useful Websites

XE – Real time exchange rate calculator  
[www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com)

AAANZ – Good reference for accounts  
[www.afaanz.org](http://www.afaanz.org)

NZ Tax Office – Tax information, forms and online services  
[www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz)



Wavelength handled all the regulatory and migratory paperwork extremely well. I think my case demonstrated that sometimes things don't always go to plan.

Wavelength really extended themselves to give me excellent support. In fact, support from the entire Wavelength team was outstanding especially considering I was on the other side of the world. The team had to call me at odd times, often in their own time because of the time difference to me in the UK. I couldn't fault that process, it was excellent from start to finish.

I felt that Wavelength really listened to me and had an excellent way of finding out what I wanted. The recruitment team at Wavelength were very, very good at tailoring my expectations to what they were putting forward. It really was an excellent service and I would definitely recommend it to other doctors thinking of doing the same.

Dr Marcus Abel, General Practitioner from the UK

## Healthcare and Insurance

### Public & Private Healthcare Insurance

#### The Accident Compensation Corporation

Temporary residents have access to NZ public healthcare although we generally recommend that all temporary residents have comprehensive medical insurance. While we hope your visit to NZ will be accident free, if you are injured, you may need the help of the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) – New Zealand's accident compensation scheme.

In New Zealand, you cannot sue anyone for compensatory damages if you are injured. Instead ACC helps pay for your care – and that means paying towards the cost of your treatment and helping in your recovery while you remain in New Zealand.

You still need to purchase your own travel and medical insurance because ACC does not cover everything. ACC only covers treatment and rehabilitation in New Zealand, and usually you must pay part of the cost yourself. If you have a serious injury, with long-term effects, you may also be eligible to be assessed for lump-sum compensation once the injury is stable.

The ACC does not pay any additional costs resulting from an accident, for example delayed or curtailed travel costs, travel home, treatment at home and loss of income in your home country.

We strongly advise you to arrange your own health insurance. New Zealand's public and private medical/hospital facilities provide a high standard of treatment and service but it is important to note these services are not free to visitors, except as a result of an accident.

#### Useful Websites

Just Landed – General Information for Travelers (GP & prescriptions)  
[www.justlanded.com/english/New-Zealand/Health](http://www.justlanded.com/english/New-Zealand/Health)

Ministry of Health – Eligibility for Publicly Funded Health  
[www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/eligibility-publiclyfunded-health-services](http://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/eligibility-publiclyfunded-health-services)

#### Seeing a General Practitioner

New Zealand's healthcare system is funded mainly through general taxation. Treatments are usually free for patients or subsidised.

Medical treatment is generally very good. Private healthcare is also available and public healthcare is free for most hospital treatment, including 24 hour accident and emergency clinics.

Generally you pay upfront for services rendered at the time you see a GP. A visit to your GP costs \$NZ 45 to \$NZ 55 between 8:00am – 6:00pm. Visits at weekends or nights cost \$NZ 10 to \$NZ 15 more. Visits to your GP are subsidised by \$NZ 15 for children aged 6-17 years and by \$NZ 35 for children under six. Many GP's waive the fee entirely for children under six. Adults who visit the doctor frequently, or who receive social benefit receive a \$NZ 15 subsidy. To see a specialist for treatment, you must be referred by a GP. Waiting times vary according to region, urgency and type of treatment involved.

If you prefer not to wait and opt for a private specialist, you or your medical insurance will be required to cover all fees.

## Emergency Treatment

If you require out of hours or urgent treatment, then you will need to go to a 24-hour medical centre or the emergency department of the local hospital. In case of emergency, dial 111 for ambulance, fire brigade or police.

### Useful Websites

#### NZ Ministry of Health

Central source for public health information  
[www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)

#### NZ Health Funds Association

Great resource for comparing funds  
[www.healthfunds.org.nz](http://www.healthfunds.org.nz)

#### Southern Cross Private Health Fund

[www.southerncross.co.nz](http://www.southerncross.co.nz)

## Education & Childcare

### Schooling

There is a wide range of education to suit different cultures and needs within New Zealand, although generally the education system can be considered to be British based. Most children start primary school at age 5 and move to intermediate school at 11, then secondary school from 13 to 17 or 18. Some primary schools go right through to age 13. New Zealand law states that all children between 6 and 16 years old must attend school. If you are bringing your children, you must enrol them in a school as soon as possible. The school year in New Zealand runs from January to December. Students have a six-week summer holiday and three two-week breaks between each of the four terms.

### Public or Private

It is your choice as to whether you send your children to a government or a non-government school. Government schools are typically free, although it is best to check with each school to clarify their position on cost for temporary residents. Private Schools will always charge fees and they may charge more for overseas students.

### Enrolling

You will need to approach the school of your choice directly to enrol your children. You will need to present them with your NZ entry visa, proof of date of birth, immunisation records and relevant papers such as school reports from their previous educational institutions.

### Tertiary Education

For a fully comprehensive guide to tertiary education in New Zealand please see the following website:  
<http://www.education.govt.nz/further-education/>

### Child Care

If your children are younger than school age there are many full-time and part-time childcare services available. Alternatively NZ

Childcare has a comprehensive website enabling you to search for childcare centres in an area of your choosing. Go to:  
[www.nzchildcare.co.nz](http://www.nzchildcare.co.nz)

### Useful Websites

#### NZ Government Department of Education

[www.minedu.govt.nz](http://www.minedu.govt.nz)

#### NZ Education

Comprehensive New Zealand Overview Education Guide  
[www.newzealandeducated.com](http://www.newzealandeducated.com)

#### Private/Independent Schools NZ

[www.isnz.org.nz](http://www.isnz.org.nz)

## Transport

### Driving Rules

New Zealanders drive on the left side of the road. When turning left, give way (yield) to traffic crossing or approaching from your right.

All road distances are measured in kilometres. Always stick to the speed limits as there are cameras around the cities, towns and along the highways. The general speed limits are 50km in built up areas and 100km on highways. Drivers and all passengers must wear seat belts.

You can legally drive in New Zealand for up to 12 months if you have either a current and valid driver's licence from your home country or an International Driving Permit (IDP).

Recent law changes mean all drivers, including visitors from other countries, must carry their licence or permit at all times when driving. You will only be able to drive the same types of vehicles you are licensed to drive in your home country. The legal age to rent a car in New Zealand is 21 years.

Make sure your driver's licence is current. If your licence is not in English, you should bring an English translation with you, or obtain an IDP.

For up to date information on South Island roads call toll free 0800 4 HIGHWAYS (0800 44 44 49) from within New Zealand, or refer to the Transit New Zealand website [www.transit.govt.nz](http://www.transit.govt.nz) for country wide information.

### Buying a Car

If you decide that you would like to buy a second hand car, car yards can save you a lot of hassle and provide welcome advice. If you have time and some mechanical knowledge, you will save money as a private buyer.

Generally, you will need a Warrant of Fitness (WOF) to have the vehicle transferred from its previous owner's name to your name. A WOF Certificate proves that a car is roadworthy. It is valid for six months but must be less than 28 days old when you buy a car. To register the vehicle, you and the seller should complete a form which can be filed at any post office. The paperwork will generally take around 10 days.

Joining the Automobile Association is well worth the investment as you get free roadside assistance (within certain limits) and discounts on road maps and other products. Membership is reciprocal with overseas equivalents.

#### Useful Websites

**New Zealand Automobile Association**

[www.aa.co.nz](http://www.aa.co.nz)

**Dealer Directory and Auto Listings**

[www.carbuying.co.nz](http://www.carbuying.co.nz)

**Buying New and Used Cars**

[www.autotrader.co.nz](http://www.autotrader.co.nz)

### Renting a Car

International car rental firms such as Avis, Budget, Hertz, and local companies hire out a wide range of vehicles. Most firms have some great deals that can be pre-booked before leaving home. One-way hire between some company locations is available, though certain restrictions may apply. The majority of rental firms require that you take out accident insurance with an insurance company nominated by them. It is worth taking out the excess cover as the excess can be hefty.

#### Useful Websites

**Government Ministry of Transport**

[www.transport.govt.nz](http://www.transport.govt.nz)

**NZ.com**

Helpful site for traveling round New Zealand

[www.newzealand.com](http://www.newzealand.com)

### Bus

New Zealand's largest coach network has been in business for 30 years and operates under Intercity Coach Lines and Newmans Coach Lines. They have over 150 services daily and connect to more than 600 cities, towns and communities throughout the nation.

#### Useful Websites

**Intercity Coachlines**

NZ's largest coach network

[www.intercity.co.nz](http://www.intercity.co.nz)

### Rail

New Zealand's privately owned rail network generally sticks to scenic routes such as Auckland – Wellington and Picton – Christchurch. In the main trains are modern and comfortable and reasonably efficient. They can be expensive; however, if you are traveling long distances and wish to see the countryside at a leisurely pace, it is certainly more comfortable than buses.

#### Useful Websites

**Tranzscenic Rail**

New Zealand's only passenger rail company

[www.tranzscenic.co.nz](http://www.tranzscenic.co.nz)

### Air

New Zealand is well served by air transport, with all cities, major towns and resorts linked to the national network. The main domestic airlines are Air New Zealand and Pacific Blue, with commuter airlines linking the smaller towns.

#### Useful Websites

**Air New Zealand**

NZ's main national and international carrier

[www.airnewzealand.co.nz](http://www.airnewzealand.co.nz)

**Jet Star**

Provides Domestic and International air travel both to and throughout New Zealand

[www.jetstar.com](http://www.jetstar.com)

**Flight Centre**

Chain of Travel Agents that offer great prices

[www.flightcentre.co.nz](http://www.flightcentre.co.nz)

### Holidays and Travel

New Zealand is an excellent country for holidays and travel. A year round mild climate keeps the weather from being a problem. There are easy walking trails, accommodating citizens and inexpensive places to stay, such as various hostels and motels located throughout the country.

This is a country without dangerous wild animals or snakes, so it is safe to enjoy outdoor activities. New Zealand is also one of the safest places in the world, however as with any other country or home you must take the same precautions with your personal safety and possessions.

New Zealand is 1,600km long and 450km wide at its widest part. Covering an area of approximately 270,500 sq. km (all islands combined) it is roughly the size of Japan, the British Isles or California – large enough to contain a huge variety of scenic attractions, and small enough so you can get to see most of them while you are there.

Routes are bitumen but given the vast distances involved and the light traffic on some remote routes there are still quite a few dirt tracks around. Most dirt tracks can be tackled in a 2-wheel drive, but an off road vehicle certainly helps. Finally there is plenty of challenging 4-wheel drive tracks for those of adventurous spirit.

### Telephones

To call a number in New Zealand from overseas, you will need to dial the country code for New Zealand (64) followed by the area code and the number. If you are calling any number from within New Zealand, you will need to dial the area code (e.g. Auckland 09) then the number. To call internationally, you need to dial 00 then the country code (e.g. UK is 00 44) and the number.

An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely Auckland, New Zealand, taken from a high vantage point on a hill. The city is nestled between a large bay on the right and a smaller bay on the left. The sky is a mix of purple, blue, and orange, indicating sunset or sunrise. The water is a deep blue, and the city buildings are illuminated by the low sun. The foreground shows rocky terrain and some greenery.

# Considering the move to New Zealand?

Wavelength International have almost 20 years experience in placing doctors from all over the world into medical roles in New Zealand. We have established strong relationships with hospitals across the North and South Islands.

Our expert recruitment consultants and in-house migration team can facilitate Visa applications, assist with medical registration and help with the entire relocation process to make your move as seamless as possible.

**Please speak to one of our dedicated recruitment consultants today so we can help make your dream of living and working in New Zealand a reality.**





Australia telephone 1300 780 525  
New Zealand telephone 0800 450 505  
UK telephone 0845 602 1498  
Ireland telephone 1800 422 023  
USA & Canada telephone 1800 697 8541  
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