

## **Media Release**

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# **Leading Podiatry Franchises**

As New Zealand faces critical shortages of health professionals needed to cope with its rapidly aging and still active population, one organisation is developing smart ways for attacking the problem.

The country's largest podiatry provider, Foot Mechanics, with 12 clinics throughout the North Island, intends to expand into more communities faster through a franchising model. This is the first franchise available in New Zealand podiatry.

Foot Mechanics general manager John Miller says the timing is right because New Zealand's health system is under more pressure than ever before.

He says the Government's Primary Health Care Strategy creates opportunities for podiatrists but his company has found there is a level of scale needed to make the most of those openings.

"We aim to build an ever stronger team of podiatrists who will play a significant role in primary care in this country," he says.

"Our network will improve access to health care. We are developing a workforce of competent and committed podiatrists all focused on supporting the health needs of the communities in which they live."

Miller says New Zealand has many podiatrists working alone which can be a difficult existence as there is always pressure to see patients while also running a business. Our aim is to allow those podiatrists to be able to see more patients while taking some of the pressures of running day-to-day business away from them.

"An individual podiatrist will often spend only half their time seeing patients – some 20 hours per week – with the other half of their week tied up in administrative tasks.

"We believe we can make the system work more efficiently," he says.

Erica Amon, Clinical Operations Manager for Waikato Primary Health hopes this type of business model will help address New Zealand's health workforce problems.

