



## Potential Coalition Parties Policies Reviewed

### Superannuation

Both National and ACT are proposing raising the age of superannuation to 67, with ACT wanting the change to happen sooner and for it to be indexed against average life expectancy in future. When asked during our election coverage, National did commit to continuing to contribute to the Super Fund. ACT did not.

New Zealand First disagrees firmly, with the heading in their policy document stating “The age of retirement will remain at 65 years. No ifs, buts, or maybes”. Winston Peters believes the change is unnecessary, saying “there’s no need to raise the pension age if you get the economy growing and pay for superannuation through improved productivity”.

NZ First is seen as the party that stands for Older People, and this is likely to be the source of some notable friction in this coalition. National and ACT appear very much aligned in the areas that will directly address Older People, but with NZ First holding back plans, especially in terms of a shift in superannuation, may make things difficult for them.

### Housing

Older People are not specifically mentioned in the housing policy for either National or ACT. When asked for their support of Aged Residential Care, both National and ACT indicated support for the Retirement Villages Act Review. Neither party indicated that Aged Residential Care is a priority for them, nor even that they understand the differences between ARC facilities and Retirement Villages.

New Zealand First have a specific policy to ‘Provide aged-care dignity by beginning to fully fund the placement shortages’ which has specific elements and targets from 2024 to the approximately 78,000 residential care beds by 2040. They were the only political party to specifically address the issue of Aged Residential Care in their policy documents.

Outside Retirement Villages and Aged Residential Care facilities, only NZ First has a commitment to developing a Seniors Housing Plan for those aging in rental accommodation.

### Health

National has few specific policies related to Older People. Within their first 100 days they have committed to extending the free breast cancer screening to 74. They are also in favour of bringing back health targets, one of which is faster cancer treatment, with the target to be ‘85% of patients to receive cancer management within 31 days of the decision to treat’. They have also said they will retain free prescriptions for superannuitants. ACT were never in favour of the fees free policy, but do not appear to be fighting for it to be removed for this group.

One of NZ First’s key policies is to ‘introduce a new patient-focused medicines buying agency to replace Pharmac and increase its funding’. With a potential \$184 million budget shortfall once Labour’s ‘one off’ Pharmac top up expires, National have committed ‘at least the same level of funding for Pharmac that it’s currently receiving’.

Without the funding, Pharmac could be forced to take some drugs off its list. This comes alongside ACT having Pharmac's support to introduce a dedicated medicines strategy, something identified as a 'crucial omission' in the independent review of Pharmac.