



Emergency care action plan (as of June 2026)

Action	Who	Timing
<p>Develop a Statement on Emergency Care After Hours, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on adequate emergency care • Guidance on what is an emergency • Clearer expectations on who is required to provide emergency care • Information on whether, how and when emergency care exemptions will be given 	Vet Council with input from the profession, veterinary businesses (including Vet Business Group), NZVA, SIBs, VPIS	Complete
<p>Hold regional meetings with veterinarians and veterinary businesses to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a shared understanding of what is an emergency and what is acceptable emergency care • Encourage only providing emergency care after hours • Encourage the development of regional shared after hours services • Sense checking regional service standards • Educate on the Emergency Care Statement, including complaints and enforcement 	Vet Council, NZVA	Ongoing 2026
<p>Develop a coordinated communications/awareness campaign, targeted at the public, covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating on the role of emergency care (emergency-only) • Re-setting expectations around service levels after hours • Educating on the true costs of emergency care • Encouraging pet healthcare planning (including insurance) 	Vet Council (lead), with input from NZVA & VPIS	Drafting Proposal for Council Decision Q4 2026
<p>Develop coordinated messaging for students and new graduates around emergency care shifts, emphasising their value for skills development and professional identity. Re-frame conversations about these shifts from being a burden to being a valuable and rewarding part of professional development. Support messaging around non-punitive, safe environments for emergency care.</p> <p>Consider whether mandatory/encouraged exposure to emergency care shifts is feasible during placements.</p>	Vet Council, NZVA, SIBs, Massey	Initial meeting with stakeholders Q4 2026

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Develop training for experienced veterinarians in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency care skills, possibly including opportunities for seeing shifts in dedicated emergency clinics • triaging inquiries regarding possible animal emergencies • difficult conversations with clients, particularly in high pressure situations (e.g. financial discussions where there is an animal emergency) 	NZVA, SIBs, other CPD providers	Environment scan/conversation with stake holders Q1/2 2027
Review the effectiveness of the current mentoring scheme and find ways to improve its effectiveness	Vet Council, NZVA	Review planned 2027
Explore the desirability and feasibility of establishing a national advice line to support veterinarians on after hours shifts	Vet Council, NZVA, VPIS	Planned to be part of conversations above for Q1/2 2027
Continue work on supporting veterinary businesses, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving management of the health and safety aspects of emergency after hours • Consistent approaches to remuneration and reward that recognises those doing emergency after hours shifts Benchmarking of emergency service-related metrics (e.g. on-call ratios)	NZVA with Vet Council support as required	Ongoing