

4th September 2025

Kia ora,

Letter to referrers: Changes to Foot Protection Service referral criteria

We currently have significant vacancy for Podiatry within the Foot Protection Service (FPS). This is impacting on our ability to meet the demands on the service. To manage this staffing deficit, we will be temporarily modifying the referral acceptance criteria to the following, to ensure we are providing assessment and intervention for those patients with the highest clinical risk:

Current	Proposed
Current ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA	Updated ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA
Moderate Risk	
High Risk With 2 or more signs and symptoms listed	High Risk 3 or more symptoms or Māori with 2 or more symptoms
In Remission	In Remission
Active Risk	Active Risk

*Risk status is as per the NZSSD referral criteria guidelines (see overleaf).

Action for referrer:

- If a referrer identifies a patient as moderate risk they can be redirected to seek support from private podiatry in the community and may access funding through MSD/WINZ if eligible.
 - Advice on foot care is also accompanied with this letter and is encouraged to be provided to all patients with diabetes at any foot check opportunity.

Actions underway through FPS:

- Those identified as having moderate risk from current FPS case load will be phoned, screened, and either discharged or be reclassified (if their symptoms now meet the inclusion criteria)
 - Patients will receive a discharge letter following their phone call. The letter will also include advice on where to seek further community support including private podiatry options, advice on how to care for their feet, and the signs and symptoms of when to reach out for further support.
 - Patients will be advised that they may be eligible for funding to support private options, through MSD.

There will be a temporary change to the number of requirements in the high-risk category from 2 to 3 points, although remains at 2 for Māori patients with diabetes (please see NZSSD criteria on next page). This temporary change may be in place for up to 12 months whilst we experience capacity deficits within the Foot Protection Team. However, this change will continue to be evaluated along the way and again in July 2026 to reflect the capacity available in the team.

Please re-refer via BPAC or your usual referral method with updated information and photos if you believe your patient's condition has worsened and now requires re-prioritisation by the Foot Protection Service.

We continue to explore additional and alternative options to improve the capacity with our foot protection service, during this time. Please contact me directly if you have any concerns or questions with regards to this letter on 0278366501.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time.

Ngā mihi/Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Szabo'.

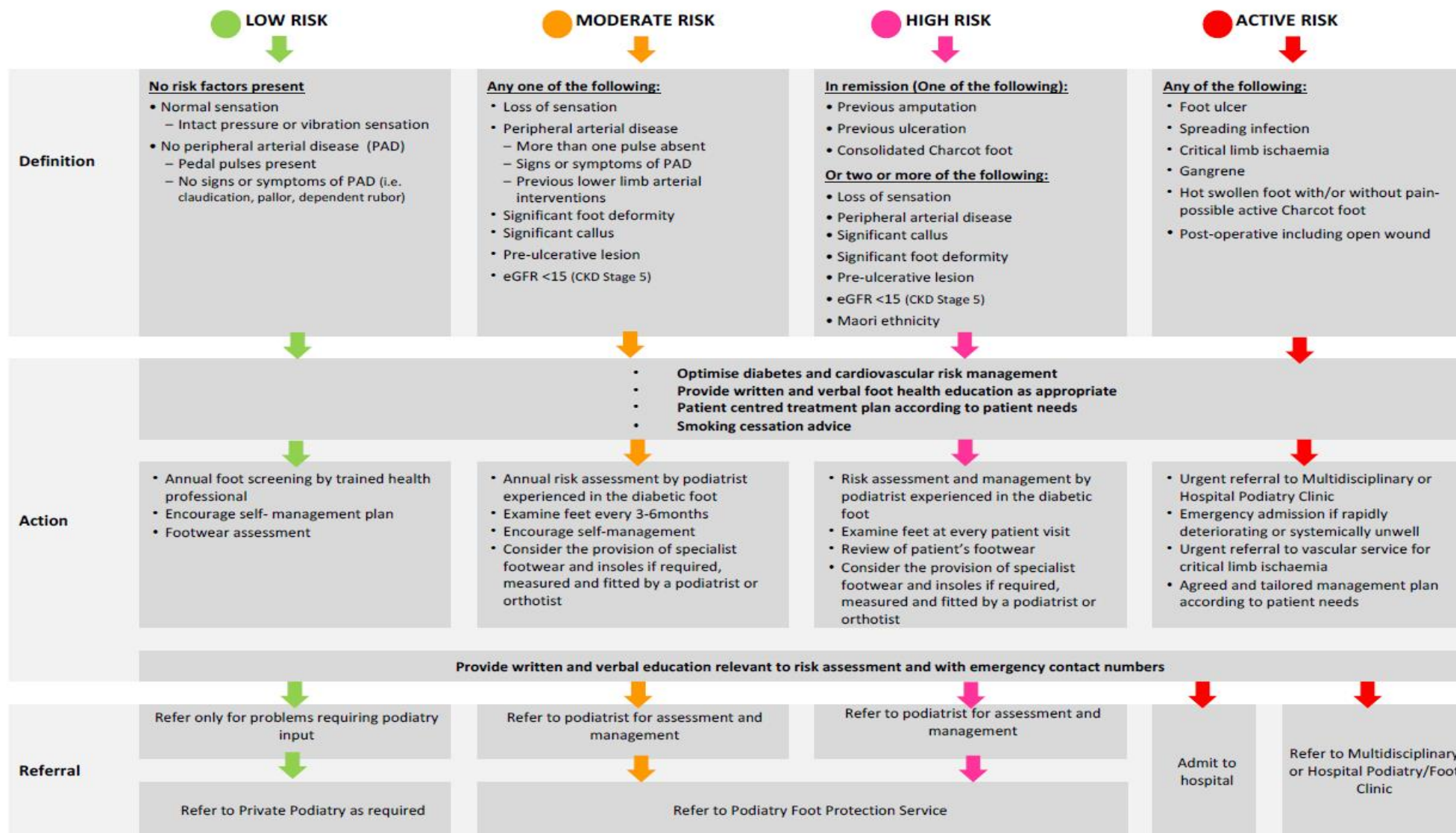
Brenda Szabo

Diabetes Integrated Service Lead
Taranaki

Cc. Carly Innes, Senior Service Development Manager – Living Well
Te Manawa Taki, Commissioning

Appendix 1: Foot Risk Stratification and Referral Pathways as detailed by the NZ Society for the Study of Diabetes (NZSSD)

REFERRAL PATHWAY FOR DIABETES FOOT SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT



Appendix 2: Diabetes and how to care for your feet – Diabetes NZ

[*Diabetes+and+how+to+Care+for+Your+Feet Sep2023.pdf*](#)



Wear socks with your shoes. This helps stop blisters. Change your socks daily. Choose socks that are not too tight. Check that the seams don't rub and that there are no holes in them.



Make sure your doctor or nurse checks your feet when you have your diabetes check-up.

Diabetes and how to care for your feet



Protect your feet. Avoid going barefoot, even at home. Always wear shoes, sandals or slippers that fit well. Choose shoes with no rough seams or areas that rub. Before you put your shoes on look inside and check that there is nothing in them that could hurt your foot. Your podiatrist can give you tips on choosing the best footwear.

Looking after your feet every day helps keep them healthy. Good foot care, managing your blood glucose and cholesterol levels, eating healthy, keeping active and stopping smoking can all help stop foot problems and leg amputations.

Visit your podiatrist regularly and have your feet checked by your doctor or nurse at your next visit, even if you are visiting for a different reason.



Diabetes New Zealand
 PO Box 12441, Wellington 6144
 Phone 0800 342 238
 Visit www.diabetes.org.nz
 Email info@diabetes.org.nz



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Diabetes and how to care for your feet

High blood glucose levels can damage your blood vessels and the nerves to your feet. This can cause poor blood flow and loss of feeling (neuropathy) in your feet. This means that your foot will be numb in places so you don't notice when you have hurt your foot. It can lead to sores that are hard to heal and may lead to amputation.

The good news is that many of these foot problems can be avoided by daily foot care. Follow these steps to help prevent foot problems.



Wash your feet every day.



Dry your feet and don't forget between your toes. If your skin is dry, apply a moisturising cream daily, but not between the toes. This can increase chances of tinea (athlete's foot).



Check your feet daily. Use a mirror or ask someone to help. Look for changes to your skin. Cover any cuts or blisters and change the plaster each day. If it does not start healing or gets red or sore or smells see a doctor straight away.



Cut toenails straight across and do not make them too short. File sharp edges. Nails are easier to cut after being washed.



Be careful with heaters and hotwater bottles – if you have numbness it could cause you to burn your feet and not realise. Hot water could burn your feet too – always check the temperature with your elbow before you get in a hot bath.


Podiatrists in Taranaki



NEW PLYMOUTH

Kaysey Reed Podiatry

111 Vivian Street, New Plymouth
4310


 021 922 572

✉ Kayseypodiatrist@gmail.com

Coastal Podiatry – Karyn Lehrke

111 Vivian Street, New Plymouth
4310


www.coastalpodiatry.co.nz

 027 335 5827

✉ podcoastal@xtra.co.nz

Happy Feet Podiatry – Isabella Young

99 Tukapa Street, New Plymouth
4310

 06 753 9505

✉ youngisabella@yahoo.co.uk

Feet and Co Podiatry – Elise Cheah

157 St Aubyn St, New Plymouth
4310

www.feetandco.net


✉ feetandcopodiatry@gmail.com

SOUTH TARANAKI

Linley Ladd Podiatry

Hawera - Call Robertsons
Pharmacy


47 Waihi Road, Hāwera

 (06) 278 5382

✉ linley.ladd@tdhb.org.nz

Stratford - Call MacKays
Pharmacy

82 Miranda St, Stratford

 (06) 765 6470
