Common problems in both countries

- Overall shortage of medical professionals
  - Doctors per 1000 population:
    - NZ 2.3;  
    - Aust 2.8;  
    - OECD 3.1

- High proportion of foreign trained health workers
Foreign-trained doctors

Foreign-trained nurses

More common problems..

- High outward migration
  - NZ: 25% of NZ trained doctors no longer registered in NZ after 4 years

- Shortages of
  - Rural doctors, GPs, some specialities, indigenous health workers

- Disparate responsibilities for health education and training
  - Numbers trained driven largely by education sector, rather than health sector
Other issues in NZ

- Ageing of workforce
  - Median age of nurses is 47 years
- High turnover rates
  - 10% vacancies
- Salaries 30 – 35% higher in Australia
Other issues in Australia

- Suspected anti-competitive behaviour by colleges on restricting the number of training places
Common responses

- Increase in medical student places
  - NZ: Increased from 300 to 500
  - Aust: Doubled (to 2500+)

- New training places for GPs

- ‘Bonding’ schemes for graduates who work in districts of need
  - Write-off of student debt
  - Aust: New medical places for students who agree to work at least 6 yrs in district of need
  - Bonded scholarships for vocational trainees
Other responses in NZ

- Health Workforce New Zealand
  - National workforce planning and development
  - Coordination of education and training
  - Coordinated response to improving training, recruitment and retention

- Strengthen and support clinical leadership

- Encourage new models of care
  - Physician assistants, nurse practitioners, extension of role of pharmacists, etc.

- Improve GP training
Other responses in Australia

- Ease restrictions on access to Medicare benefits for NZ doctors
- Rural Health Workforce Strategy
  - Incentive payments for rural doctors
  - Locum Program
  - Education assistance
Outstanding problems in both countries

- Lack of clinical placements for extra medical students
- How to reduce outward migration?
  - Working conditions
  - Time off for rural doctors
- Resistance to professional boundary changes
Other thoughts

- Is regional planning required?
- Use of price is effective, but working conditions are also important, esp for nurses
- Implications of sending new graduates and overseas trained doctors to practice in rural areas?
Thank you!