Minister for Health and Community Services Jane Aagaard today leaves for New Zealand where she will attend the Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council Meeting.

Mrs Aagaard will also tour remote health clinics with the country’s Health Minister Annette King.

Agenda items on the Health Ministers’ Food Council include Food Safety Management in Australia; Nutrition, Health and Related Claims; and Novel Foods Country of Origin Labelling.

Mrs Aagaard said she has also taken up an offer by New Zealand’s Health Minister to visit remote health clinics in the region.

“New Zealand is also facing similar challenges in regards to delivery of health services to a largely Indigenous population,” she said.

“This will be a great opportunity to learn about some of the health practices and service delivery models adopted by this jurisdiction.”

Mrs Aagaard said she would also talk to Ms King about nurse recruitment and retention strategies adopted by New Zealand, as well as discussing NT Government policies.

“Most people are aware that there are national and international shortages of nurses,” Mrs Aagaard said.

“The NT Government has adopted recruitment and retention strategies for nurses in the public sector. My Department is identifying the best methods to market the Territory as a preferred relocation destination for ongoing employment and lifestyle improvement opportunities to nurses across Australia.

“This will also give me the opportunity to speak to New Zealand’s Health Minister about what we are doing in this field.”