

MEDIA RELEASE
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Waitematā DHB receives the Accessibility Tick

Waitematā DHB has received the Accessibility Tick at an event coinciding with the International Day of Disabled Persons.

The Accessibility Tick, awarded by Access Advisors, is an independent endorsement of an organisation's commitment to being more accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities.

Representatives from the DHB and Access Advisors attended the presentation at North Shore Hospital.

Katrina Matich, a DHB employee who has no peripheral or depth perception, was at the event and says it is great the DHB has joined the Tick programme.

"I am very pleased our organisation has got the Tick because it is a formal commitment to making the DHB inclusive for everyone," says Katrina. "Removing barriers and making workplaces more inclusive of people with disabilities is a win-win for everyone."

Waitematā DHB Recruitment Manager Vanessa Aplin says the recruitment process is tailored to specifically target disabled people. The DHB has had its processes reviewed and has a dedicated consultant who works with disabled candidates throughout their recruitment.

"We want to be able to attract, support and retain people with access needs by proactively reducing barriers during the recruitment process," Vanessa says. "We are also encouraging staff to complete the DHB disability responsiveness and unconscious bias training. By supporting staff to consider access needs in everything they do, the DHB has made a clear commitment to improving accessibility."

Director of Human Resources Fiona McCarthy says the Accessibility Tick supports the DHB's vision of being fully accessible. She says an annual Action Plan will help the DHB further.

"At Waitematā DHB, we're always working towards an inclusive culture so that our people thrive and diversity is celebrated," Fiona said.

Accessibility Tick Programme Lead Phil Turner says the DHB has proactively made changes, particularly in the areas of recruitment.

"Waitematā DHB is able to attract, support and retain people with access needs because they have been proactive about reducing barriers in the recruitment process," Phil says.

In addition to reducing barriers for people with disabilities, the DHB has also introduced a number of measures aimed at supporting and growing the Māori and Pacific workforce. These include fast-tracking applicants to the interview stage if they meet the criteria for a role, providing coaching for unsuccessful candidates to assist them in future, developing scholarship programmes and implementing dedicated career pathways for Māori.

“Waitematā DHB cares for the largest district population in the country and we believe being a diverse and inclusive workplace brings out the best in our workforce and helps us to deliver the highest standards of care to our community. We are proud that our long-term focus on improving equity for staff, patients and the wider community are having a positive impact,” says Waitematā DHB CEO Dr Dale Bramley.

Photo caption: From left to right, Katrina Matich; Waitematā DHB Disability Advisor, Samantha Dalwood and Accessibility Tick Programme Lead, Phil Turner.

For further information, contact:

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About Waitematā DHB

Waitematā DHB serves the largest population of any district health board in New Zealand, currently standing at more than 630,000 people. We have a workforce of more than 7,500 staff spread across more than 80 sites, including North Shore Hospital and Waitakere Hospital. We are also the Northern Region provider of forensic psychiatry and child disability services, plus the metro Auckland provider of child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.