



Media release
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Auckland and Waitemata DHBs launch maternity services plan for future growth

Auckland and Waitemata DHBs have launched a plan to develop maternity services out to the year 2025.

Dr Sue Fleming of Auckland and Dr Peter van de Weijer of Waitemata DHB say the plan provides opportunities to improve the two DHBs' maternity services and meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and growing population.

"In Waitemata births to Asian mothers have increased 50 per cent over the past six years and similar increases are predicted out to 2025. We're going to make sure we meet the particular needs of women who may not have the same expectations as our majority population."

Anticipating the future requirements of the two DHBs' diverse populations is a key focus of the plan, which covers improving maternity services for groups such as Māori, Pacific, Asian and teenage women.

"These are approaches which will improve outcomes and make them more equitable. So will improvements to the continuity of care."

The plan has an emphasis on ensuring that both DHBs take a consistent approach with their guidelines for midwives and obstetricians and that there are better connections between hospital and primary health care providers.

"We see an opportunity for improving the connections for GPs and to the maternity services. There's also an opportunity to address the consistency issues other healthcare professionals face. For example, midwives and obstetricians at the moment are dealing with care guidelines that differ between the DHBs and we want to make this clearer and more consistent."

The plan also focuses on increasing opportunities for normal birthing for mothers.

"We believe there's opportunity to reduce the kinds of interventions that mean women stay in hospitals longer. It means more mother, baby and family-focussed care and services. More women could, we imagine, birth nearer to home or even at home," Dr Fleming said.

A workshop on the plan, held in Western Springs yesterday, included midwives, doctors, iwi representatives, ethnic community representatives and members of the public. An online survey seeking views was also launched. People wanting to give their input on *The Auckland DHB and Waitemata DHB Collaboration Maternity Plan - Working together to plan future maternity services to 2025* should visit the collaboration page at <http://www.healthvoice.org.nz/auckland-dhb-and-waitemata-dhb-collaboration-maternity-plan-2015/>.

Dr van de Weijer says that by 2025, 700 additional births are estimated for Waitakere Hospital and 300 extra births per year at both Auckland and North Shore hospitals, making an Auckland-Waitemata DHB collaboration a timely opportunity to consider how best to provide maternity care across the two DHBs.



“A cornerstone of the Maternity Services Collaboration Project is that our two DHBs will work closely together, and with our communities, to co-design services that meet the projected increase in birthing demand, focusing on the best care and support for women and their babies.”

The initial planning phase is focusing on the opportunities offered by improved models of care. Consideration of built facilities required to support these will be part of subsequent planning, consultation and board decision-making.

The Maternity Services Collaboration Project began in early 2013 with population modelling and analysis, followed by key stakeholder forums in 2014/15, resulting in the development of the plan to its current state.

The Maternity Plan will be progressed in 2016 using co-design principles in the following key areas:

- enhancing equity of access and outcome
- enhancing quality and safety
- enhancing continuity of care
- enhancing confidence in normal birth
- and enhancing the transition to parenthood and infant attachment.

ENDS

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