



April 20, 2017

### **Patient experience gets boost through staff initiatives**

Patients, visitors and staff at Waitakere and North Shore hospitals will have the chance to walk in someone else's shoes when Patient Experience Week starts on April 24.

Improving the patient experience is the focus of the annual awareness week at Waitemata DHB with a series of events celebrating initiatives staff have introduced to encourage the organisation-wide movement.

Among the many events taking place during the week is the Empathy Zone which enables people to simulate various difficulties patients have while carrying out daily tasks. This will be at Waitakere Hospital on April 26 and North Shore Hospital on April 28. Participants will experience the challenges people face living with visual, auditory, physical impairments or a mental illness.

Waitemata DHB Patient Experience director David Price says to improve the approach to patients and their families coming through the healthcare system is to first understand their challenges.

"We put a strong emphasis on creating a compassionate facility for our patients and their whanau because we know that when patients feel comfortable and supported, this aids recovery and they have better health outcomes," he says.

"This week is about celebrating those initiatives our staff have implemented to improve the patient experience after taking a moment to put themselves in our patient's shoes."

Other activities happening throughout the week include meet and greet sessions during which Waitemata DHB senior management staff have an opportunity to meet patients, visiting whānau and staff.

Meal tray mats are also being provided with patient meals this week informing them of some initiatives they can access while in hospital.

Over the past month, children in the Rangatira children's ward, ED and Wilson Centre have participated in a drawing competition depicting what would make their stay in hospital more comfortable.

Waitemata DHB chief executive Dr Dale Bramley says improving the patient experience is essential for better outcomes.

"We have the fastest growing population out of any DHB in the country and ensuring we are meeting the needs of our patients is essential."

**ENDS**

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