

## Media release

24 April 2020

### Northern Region DHBs test over 40,000 people for COVID-19

Latest Northern Region Health Communication Centre (NRHCC) data shows that since testing began in February, the Northern Region DHBs (Northland, Waitematā, Auckland and Counties Manukau) have tested more than 40,000 people for COVID-19.

NRHCC Lead (and Waitematā DHB CEO) Dr Dale Bramley says this is a positive signal.

“This highlights the hard work that the people in the Northern Region, community and primary health care staff, laboratory workers and DHB staff have put in to identify and stop the spread of COVID-19 in the region and I am exceptionally proud of everyone involved.”

Of the more than 40,000 people tested, approximately 6,400 have been Māori (16 per cent of the total people tested in the region) and approximately 6,500 Pasifika, (16 per cent of the total people tested in the region). Māori make up 14 per cent of the Northern region population and Pasifika make up 12 per cent.

The NRHCC data shows consistent progress, with 12 per cent Māori and 13 per cent Pasifika tested up until 26 March, 14 per cent Māori and 13 per cent Pasifika tested up until 2 April, 16 per cent Māori and 15 per cent Pasifika tested up until 9 April and 16 per cent Māori and 16 per cent Pasifika up until 23 April.

“This highlights that our ongoing efforts to help ensure equitable access to testing across the region are working,” says Dr Bramley.

“We want to acknowledge the huge amount of activity and support we have been given by local iwi and the Pasifika community to help with this, as well as our Māori and Pasifika health providers,” Dr Bramley says.

“We particularly want to acknowledge those in Northland for their hard work, where the DHB reports that 46 per cent of the tests taken have been for Māori.”

The Northern Region DHBs are working to increase COVID-19 testing among Māori and Pasifika in a number of different ways. This includes testing centres to cater specifically to Māori or specifically to Pasifika.

The metro Auckland DHBs are now also funding mobile testing services to help make testing more accessible for whānau and communities who are unable to get to a community testing centre, with four currently in operation.

Northland DHB is doing similar work in partnership with Māori health providers. Mobile testing services will reach into the smaller communities they currently visit to engage with whānau Māori as a priority.

Further support from the Northern Region DHBs includes partnership with 120 new community health workers to focus on whānau wellbeing during and post the COVID-19 outbreak. This Ngā Kaimanaaki service aims to ensure whānau are safe, protected and well in their homes and communities, by linking up whānau with the services they required.

The Northland and Auckland DHBs are operating a regional response to the COVID-19 pandemic through the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC). As part of the NRHCC, a Regional Māori Response Team and a Regional Pasifika Response Team have been established by the DHBs' Māori and Pasifika Health leadership to meet the needs of Māori and Pasifika communities during the pandemic.

*The data in this press release is drawn from the Northern Region's first analysis of COVID-19 testing in Northland and Auckland. Please note that it replaces interim data relating to testing which has been previously released by the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre.*

**Māori Health Providers who are testing for COVID-19 in Auckland:**

- Whānau House Waipareira Trust – Henderson
- The Whanāu Ora Community Clinic – Wiri

**Pasifika Health providers who are testing for COVID-19 in Auckland**

- Langimalie Health Centre – Panmure
- South Seas Healthcare – Otara

These testing centres are tailored for Māori and Pasifika people but all are welcome to attend any of the community testing centres across Auckland if they fit the testing criteria.

Large families are now included as a priority group for COVID-19 testing.

**Northland DHB is working with nine Māori Health Providers from across the rohe to deliver mobile COVID-19 Testing Clinics:**

- Whakawhiti Ora Pai - Far North
- Te Hiku Hauora - Kaitaia
- Hauora Hokianga - Hokianga
- Te Hau Ora O Ngāpuhi - Kaikohe
- Ngāti Hine Health Trust - Kawakawa, Moerewa
- Te Ha Oranga - Kaipara
- Whāingaroa Rūnanga - Kaeo
- Whānau Ora Community Clinic - Whangaroa Health Services Trust – Kaeo

**As at 23 April:**

- 40,210 people have been tested in the Northern Region
- 16% of the people tested have been Māori (6,394)
- 16% of the people tested have been Pasifika (6,504)

- Ends -

**Media contact**

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