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Regional service offers expanded high-tech treatment at North Shore Hospital

A new regional interventional radiology (IR) initiative will benefit around 100 patients a month at North Shore Hospital (NSH) – offering an expanded service that reduces the need to travel to Auckland City Hospital (ACH) for treatment during the week.

IR uses minimally invasive, image-guided procedures to diagnose and treat a multitude of conditions.

It was previously available up to two days-a-week at NSH with capacity to treat around 30 patients a month. Patients whose needs fell outside of open hours instead travelled to ACH for the high-tech treatment.

Both DHBs have now expanded their joint arrangement – setting up the new regional service and employing three interventional radiologists to increase the options available to a greater number of patients than ever before.

“The provision of a high-quality and sustainable local service will enable North Shore Hospital to offer continuity of weekday care,” new IR Regional Director Andrew Holden says. “In the short-term, patients will still need to come to ACH if they need IR services after-hours but this will change in due course.”

IR makes use of the body’s network of hollow structures, such as arteries and veins, bile ducts and gastrointestinal tracts, to guide catheters and other medical devices directly to where they are needed.

It is used to treat a range of conditions including cancer, uterine fibroids, problems with dialysis access, vascular issues such as varicose veins, arterial blockages, aneurysms and many other conditions.

The procedures are performed percutaneously (via a pin hole) and the risk of wound infection is negligible.

“Recovery times are faster and general anaesthetic is infrequently required,” Dr Holden says. “IR is one of the most technologically advanced and fastest-growing specialties of modern medicine. The benefits, in respect to safety and better health outcomes for our patients, are huge and we are pleased to be able to offer this expanded service at North Shore Hospital.”

Ends.

For further information, contact

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