



## Updated media release

### **Waitematā DHB paves the way with New Zealand's first-ever paramedic pilot**

Paramedics are being employed to help transfer patients between Waitematā DHB's hospitals and support medical staff in providing optimal care.

The Waitakere Hospital Paramedic Pilot is a DHB initiative that involves three paramedics working in partnership with nursing and medical staff.

The pilot is a first for any hospital in New Zealand and will see the paramedics using their highly specialised skills to offer clinical support for patients, whānau and staff.

The paramedics are based in the transit team and work across different departments at Waitakere Hospital, assisting with patient transfers to and from North Shore Hospital.

Their assistance provides extra support for nurses and doctors who have previously had to accompany patients in ambulances between sites, freeing them up to spend more time on direct patient care in the hospitals.

The paramedics are also available to assist in the Emergency Department (ED) and elsewhere when available.

With Waitematā DHB's growing population and changing demographic, demand for services is expected to grow. This pilot is seen as a way to alleviate this.

Director Allied Health, Scientific and Technical Professionals, Tamzin Brott, says the pilot is a new way to enhance patient care and expand the scope of where paramedics can work.

"Moving patients between our hospitals requires a skilled medical staff member to ensure the transfer runs smoothly," says Ms Brott. "Paramedics are expert healthcare professionals whose skills and experience are a great fit for our patient transit team.

"This pilot is a win for everyone. Waitakere Hospital patients will continue to get high-quality care and a new employment pathway is opened up for paramedics."

The pilot started in June and the three paramedics are rostered on evening shifts seven days-a-week.

"We have got off to a fantastic start," says Ms Brott. "Paramedics have a broad skill set and we see a lot of opportunities for them. We are very excited about how this pilot will pan out in the coming months. We see a huge amount of potential."

The Waitakere Hospital Paramedic Pilot is being evaluated on an ongoing basis and will run until June 2021.

**ENDS**

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