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Media release

New breast screening clinic to save lives of Auckland women

Auckland and Waitematā DHBs, with the help of Associate Minister of Health Dr Ayesha Verrall, have launched a new breast screening clinic in central Auckland today.

The new Breastscreen Auckland clinic is located in Greenlane and is a collaborative approach between Auckland and Waitematā DHBs. Waitematā DHB is running the service which will make breast screening more accessible for the 67,000 women who are aged between 45 and 69 in the Auckland DHB catchment.

The new service, which Ngāti Whātua has gifted the name of Kia Ū Ora, has been applauded by Minister Verrall for its focus on equity of health outcomes.

“We know that wāhine Māori and Pacific women have a significantly higher breast cancer registration rate than non-Māori and non-Pacific women*. For this reason the clinic will be prioritising wāhine Māori and Pacific women, especially those who are overdue for screening.”

Dr Mike Puttick, Auckland DHB Breast Surgeon says screening, along with self-checking, is the best way to ensure that breast cancer is picked up early.

“Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting New Zealand women. The new clinic makes regular mammograms more accessible for the women of Auckland, which will ultimately save lives by finding breast cancer early, before it spreads.

“If you’re a woman aged 45 to 69, I really urge you to ensure you have a mammogram every two years to ensure that any changes are picked up early.”

Dr Debbie Holdsworth, Director Funding for Auckland and Waitematā DHBs, says the DHBs have taken a number of steps to support people to attend.

“The Auckland DHB region has an ethnically diverse population with 8% of residents being Māori, 10% Pacific, 34% Asian and 48% European or other. We’ve recruited a diverse workforce into the clinic that’s reflective of the community it serves, and translators will be available for the women attending if they feel they need their assistance.

Dr Holdsworth says those involved in setting up the new clinic have worked exceptionally hard to stand it up in a short space of time.

“I’m very proud of the teams who got the clinic off the ground in four months, it’s a great example of collaboration across the health sector.”

In addition to the clinic based in Greenlane, there will be mobile clinics set up to be based in areas of central Auckland that have higher numbers of Māori and Pacific wāhine.

Ends

*In 2014 the rates were 122.5 per 100,000 and 97.2 per 100,000, respectively) and Pacific women also had a higher breast cancer registration rate compared to non-Māori/non-Pacific women (116.2 new registrations per 100,000 women in 2014.

For media enquiries please call the Auckland DHB media line on 09 375 3499 or email communication@adhb.govt.nz

Auckland District Health Board

Auckland DHB provides and funds public health services to the 494,000 people living in central Auckland, as well as regional services for Northland and Greater Auckland and specialist national services for the whole of New Zealand. We have more than one million patient contacts per year.

We employ approximately 11,500 staff and operate Auckland City Hospital, Starship Children's Hospital, Greenlane Clinical Centre, and several community-based services and fund healthcare services delivered by GPs, midwives, dental care, pharmacies, aged care residential homes, screening programmes and other NGOs.

Waitematā District Health Board

Waitematā is the largest and one of the most rapidly growing DHBs in the country, serving a population of around 650,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas. We are the largest employer in the district, employing around 8,500 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing services to our own population, we are also the metropolitan Auckland provider of child disability services, child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services, and the northern region provider of forensic psychiatry services.

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