

Media Release  
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### **Auckland DHBs well placed to manage increasing number of COVID-19 patients**

After caring for COVID-19 patients for more than 18 months, the Auckland region's hospitals are reassuring the public that they are well placed to manage increased patient numbers as a result of community transmission.

Across the region today, the DHBs are caring for 50 COVID-19 patients. In the metro Auckland region, there are 129 resourced ICU/HDU beds; 94 in Auckland (this includes neonatal and paediatric intensive care unit beds), 25 in Counties Manukau and 10 in Waitematā.

As at 21 October, ICU/HDU occupancy in the metro Auckland region was 86% in Auckland, 44% in Counties Manukau and 50% in Waitematā.

Northern Region Health Coordination Centre Lead (and Counties Manukau Health CEO) Margie Apa says that for many months, hospitals have been proactively increasing negative pressure capacity and improving ventilation within ED, ICU and a number of wards, while continuing to provide high quality care for all patients.

"Work currently being carried out across all hospitals to build more negative pressure rooms is part of the long-term planning as part of future-proofing capacity," she says.

"Hospital staff closely monitor capacity and demand from COVID-19 patients or other patients who may require hospital-level or intensive care.

"Since last year the metro DHBs have been operationalising plans to increase capacity to safely care for COVID-19 patients in dedicated separate areas of the hospitals."

Ms Apa says all DHBs are working to manage patients in the best possible environments, to keep staff and patients safe, as well as look after all other hospital patients.

This means in some areas, intensive care bed spaces may be used as dedicated COVID-19 patient areas, while other areas across the region will continue to be used for non-COVID-19 patients who may need intensive care.

"As part of resilience and surge planning, the DHBs plan for a range of potential scenarios and continuously upgrade and improve facilities. DHBs never stop improving facilities, and that is obvious right now as the hospitals continue to build negative pressure capacity."

For up-to-date information on testing locations in Auckland, visit [www.arphs.health.nz/covid19test](http://www.arphs.health.nz/covid19test). For up-to-date info on all testing locations, visit [www.healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19/](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19/)

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**Notes for editors**

The Northland and metro Auckland DHBs (Counties Manukau, Waitematā and Auckland DHBs) are operating a regional response to the COVID-19 pandemic through the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC).