



**For immediate release
12 May 2021**

Note: this centre has now closed
Media Release

Westgate Mall site of new COVID-19 vaccination centre for West Auckland

“Love thy neighbour and get vaccinated” was the catch cry as Auckland’s second Pasifika-led community vaccination centre opened at Westgate Mall today, Wednesday 12 May.

The new centre is being led by The Fono Trust Pacific health provider in partnership with the Pacific Collective. At capacity it will be vaccinating up to 300 people per day by appointment and through community outreach.



Above: members of the crowd at today’s opening event.

The first to be vaccinated on site today were local church leaders, who were keen to lead the way and show their congregations how safe and straight forward the process is.

Reverend Superintendent of the Samoan Methodist Northern Auckland Synod, Le Afioga le Sea – Reverend Taumafai Komiti opened the launch event reminding people about the importance of protecting their families and communities: “We are reminded to love thy neighbour and get vaccinated,” he proclaimed to much applause from the dozens of gathered dignitaries. “This is the only way we will protect our communities and our families.”

The new centre aims to become the focal point for the Pacific community in West Auckland bringing in large Pacific church and community groups as well as the wider community. It is a centre awash with Pacific artwork and music which will remain throughout the vaccination programme.

The Fono Trust Chief Executive, Tevita Funaki who spoke at this morning’s opening said it was an honour to be continuing the fight against COVID-19 by becoming the first Pacific led centre in the west of Auckland.

“We want our people to feel they have a welcoming place to come and receive their vaccinations and we’ve achieved that with this centre. We need to continue to work closely with all of our Pacific families in this area and the wider community to encourage them to take their turn to be vaccinated when their time comes. Only then will we succeed in keeping our people safe from this pandemic.”



Above: The Fono Trust Chief Executive, Tevita Funaki.

The site will continue to send invitations to those in Groups 1 and 2 of the government’s scheduled vaccination rollout which includes all older Māori and Pacific and their household contacts as well as frontline health, border and MIQ workers. Health workers from the Fono and DHBs are also conducting outreach meetings to bring more people into the centre over the coming weeks.

Dr Dale Bramley, Chief Executive of the Waitematā District Health Board, spoke at the event.

“Earlier this week, we opened the first vaccination centre on the North Shore, in Birkenhead. Today we have reached another important milestone – with the opening of our first Pacific-led clinic within the Waitematā District, here at Westgate,” says Dr Bramley.

“This clinic will help serve our diverse West Auckland population, in particular, our Pacific communities. This clinic belongs to our community and is a service to that community”.

He echoed the catch cry of Reverend Komiti, adding:

“Vaccinating is also about protecting our whānau, our whakapapa and our kaumātua and kuia.”

Dr Bramley finished by thanking the Fono, the Pacific collective and staff from the DHB and Northern Regional Health Coordination Centre, who have made the vaccination clinic possible in a very short space of time.

The Fono is the largest Pacific NGO in New Zealand and offers medical and community services across the Auckland Region.

The Westgate vaccination centre is located at 11 Westgate Drive in the old Westgate Mall.

- Ends -

Media contact

Tracie Simpson – 022 525 7445

Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC)

Notes for Editors