



The development of a health and wellbeing plan for Tararua is making great progress and we are very appreciative of the feedback and ideas put forward by so many people via the survey, public forums and our Dannevirke-based board meeting. We talk here about some of the key issues you've raised.

Travel from Tararua to health services in Palmerston North has become more difficult recently, with the closure of the Manawatu Gorge. We are working to support local health providers and the health shuttles, as well as ensuring Palmerston North Hospital appointments are timed appropriately. Please allow extra time for travel and feel free to contact the hospital if you need to reschedule your appointments.

A project is underway across our district for a 'home first' approach to renal dialysis. This will see the majority of people who require **renal dialysis** dialysing at home. Our aim is that only the most complex cases will need to travel to Palmerston North Hospital to dialyse.

Home dialysis is more comfortable, more convenient and has health benefits. A lot more work needs to be done before home dialysis becomes the first option considered for all renal dialysis patients, and we are doing this now. We are developing new assessment protocols, training and support packages so people feel safe and supported.

We've received feedback on **ambulance service** response times. St John triages all calls and response times dependent on the urgency of the call and the level of demand at the time.

St John is introducing a new service called the 'Clinical Desk' to our district. Registered nurses and paramedics sitting in the 111 Clinical Control Centre will carry out detailed clinical assessments over the phone and give advice.

This service was launched in Auckland two years ago and has been effective. In many cases it avoids the need for people to go to hospital at all, but where an ambulance is required, it is dispatched quickly.

Accessing local **mental health and addiction services**, including alcohol and drug services, counselling, community support workers and GP access for initial treatment, is a concern across our whole district. Demand has been growing everywhere throughout NZ.

Increased availability of drugs, such as P, has a big impact on people's mental wellbeing, as do other social issues like the loss of jobs, custody cases, family break-ups, financial hardship, court appearances, family violence, isolation, and bullying.

What has been done to support the Tararua community?

We have increased the size of our Tararua-based community mental health and addictions team, including psychiatrist and nursing positions. We are funding a new service for Youth Alcohol and Other Drugs Prevention Programme in Pahiatua, and we hope to extend this to Dannevirke in the near future. This service, provided by MASH Trust is based at one of the local schools in Pahiatua. High use is being made of it and the feedback is very positive.

Our Acute Care Mental Health Team is available 24/7 on 0800 653 357. We recommend that anybody who needs urgent mental health care contact them, or alternatively one of the helplines listed at the end of this section.

Recently, the new national 'Need to Talk? 1737' phone and text service was launched to make it easier for people to reach out for help. If it is an emergency and you feel like you or someone else is at risk, call 111.

A lot of concern has been expressed about **cancer support services in Tararua**. There have recently been some changes in roles with the dedicated cancer nurse role now being incorporated into the role of the Chronic Condition Nurses.

There are other free services available to cancer patients in Tararua. These include: the Māori Cancer Coordinator Service provided through Rangitaane o Tamaki nui a Rua Inc and the cancer nursing team at Arohanui Hospice. MidCentral DHB's Regional Cancer Treatment Service includes a range of clinical nurse specialists, social support services, district nursing services and lymphoedema support. Additionally there are support services provided by Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Services, the Massey University Cancer Psychology Service, and Look Good Feel Better.

The resources freed up by the change in roles are being reallocated to Integrated Family Health Centres including the Tararua Health Group, which operates both the Dannevirke Barraud Street practice and Pahiatua Medical Centre.

## Five territorial local authority districts are covered by MidCentral DHB



There are also community organisations available: Alcoholics Anonymous, Alzheimers Support Group, Maori Wardens, and Tararua Strengthening Families. Rangitaane o Tamaki Nui a Rua's mental health and addiction service offers an AOD support group for 'P' users and family/whānau. Other services are available through the local GP practices. For more information, check out Unison – a new directory of all mental health and addictions services available on our website: [www.midcentraldhb.govt.nz/publications](http://www.midcentraldhb.govt.nz/publications).

It is okay to ask for help if you are having mental health or addiction problems and thoughts about self-harm. If you are feeling at risk, or thinking of self-harm, don't sit alone with your discomfort but talk to friends and family.

There is a commonly held view that people need to be taken to hospital and admitted in order to receive mental health and addictions care. For a small proportion of clients this is true and a very small number of these people are admitted involuntarily under the Mental Health Act.

For the majority, treatment and support can be provided in the community, with support provided to the individual and their family/whānau, including regular follow-up calls to see how things are going, consultations and counselling, and links with the full range of community services and support.

Our mental health and addiction service works closely with NZ Police and often our work overlaps. Where people are putting themselves or others in danger, we must get the Police involved as they are skilled at dealing with these situations. Following intervention to make a situation safe, Police link in with our Acute Care Team for support and treatment for the person/s involved.

### Helplines (24/7)

- **Lifeline: 0800 543 354**
- **Suicide Crisis Helpline: 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)**
- **AOD Help Line 0800 787 797**
- **Need to Talk? – text or phone 1737**

Look for one of the green cards, "Tararua Support for Times of Stress" issued by Project Tararua. For full details of a Tararua directory: [www.projecttararua.co.nz](http://www.projecttararua.co.nz)



### Ways you can get involved:

- Stay updated through our website [www.midcentraldhb.govt.nz/engage](http://www.midcentraldhb.govt.nz/engage)
- Email your name to [planning4health@midcentraldhb.govt.nz](mailto:planning4health@midcentraldhb.govt.nz) and we will ensure you receive updates
- Call Kelly Isles on (06) 350 8912.

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