



## **Northland Health Services Plan 2012-2017**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**These FAQs have been documented for general reference**

#### **Why yet another Plan?**

We need to do things differently to address the escalating demand for services. Specifically, we need to be dealing with health needs more effectively 'upstream', in the primary and community setting. This will require the whole of the health sector, the NDHB, primary health care, Maori providers and other NGOs to work together to redesign the system.

#### **Why change? What if we keep doing the same as we are now?**

The system is under pressure from an ageing population and increasing prevalence of long term conditions. If we do nothing, in a few years time we will have an unsustainable health service. In four years, with no increases in the national health budget, the NDHB will go from financial break-even to a \$30m deficit. In 15 years we will need 170 extra beds, about 70% of Whangarei Hospital's current capacity, just to deal with the impacts of the ageing population and growth in diabetes.

#### **It's all good in theory, but resource is already tight – money and time, how is this going to be a reality?**

A financial plan will be developed and published. Part of the Plan is to change the way we do things in order to free up money and time for more effective use.

A Strategic Investment Fund will be formed to invest more NDHB funding in population health programmes, and primary and community models of care, emphasising cost effective (evidence based) service delivery

#### **I'm already very busy. Are there any incentives to encourage us to go out of our way to be part of achieving these goals?**

Creating a more sustainable healthcare framework is our professional responsibility. Being part of the solution provides us with opportunity to influence the road ahead, provide leadership, contribute to our professional field and ensure a healthier Northland. This is a big ask, and wherever possible we will endeavour to recognise significant contributions to this initiative.



### **Is this just for Northland? Or are we still expected to do the screening and other targets set out by Wellington?**

The Northland Health Service Plan is our clear long-term priority. This is a national challenge and is being addressed elsewhere through other initiatives. However, we do need to maintain effective services in both the short and medium term as well. Consequently, we need to continue 'service as usual' whilst working on this initiative. This will require some ambidextrous thinking: providing service as usual and at the same time developing a more effective service for the future.

### **What about sharing of information? We have our own systems in place, will this really save me time and resource?**

A key enabler of the NHSP is Information Services. This is one stream of work that will be addressed in our Plans and implementation. A more collaborative working environment will require the whole of the health sector, the NDHB, primary health care, Maori providers and other NGOs to work together, and IT will enable this.

### **Are all these integrated initiatives going to mean more laborious tasks and reporting?**

Redesigning the healthcare system so that we work more efficiently and effectively should reduce administrative tasks.

We believe it is also possible to reframe work practices to enable more healthcare professionals to work at the top end of their scope of practice

### **What are we doing to ensure the plan is successfully implemented?**

This is the first 'whole of system' plan for Northland. It is also the first with a sector-wide outcomes framework and roadmap. Detailed projects are being worked up with involvement from across the sector, including clear accountability for implementation. In addition, we have effective project management in place, and have developed our plans with reference to best practice change management.

### **Does this mean that the next step is integrated family health centres? I'm not convinced this is a viable business model.**

Over the next 5-20 years we will see many changes. Integrated family health centres are only one option. As a sector, we need to be innovative, explore service delivery



alternatives, and agree on which are most viable in terms of our needs and the available resources. At this stage, any model which potentially may help achieve the aims of the NHSP is on the table for debate and further investigation.

## **What support and help will be available?**

This project is unprecedented in the Northland healthcare sector. Critical support mechanisms are being put in place.

- A project office is being established to coordinate information and support
- An implementation tool kit has been developed, available on the DHB website.
- A communications strategy is being developed, including regular updates
- A communications feedback process has been established
- Specific support requests can be made to the project office

## **How will we communicate with everyone?**

A detailed communication plan with key messages will be delivered to stakeholders across the whole health sector. This will be supported by a comprehensive publicity programme to the wider community.

## **Does this mean more work for me?**

Your participation and contribution in redesigning services for a healthier Northland is sought and encouraged. Yes, this might initially mean more work, but the end result will be a more sustainable health system for Northland and a better working environment for the entire sector.

## **Does it mean a better service for the people of Northland?**

Yes, easier access to a wider range of services in the community and a health system that will meet the needs of everyone as we age.

## **What can I do and how?**

Share our vision. Get involved. Support the change projects in your organisation. Innovate and share good ideas. Share solutions to known barriers. Whatever you can do is better than not doing anything at all.



***Any comments, ideas, suggestions, please send to NDHB  
Communications/NHSP Project Office at {HYPERLINK  
"mailto:feedback@northlanddhb.org.nz"}.***

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Chamberlain'.

**Dr Nick Chamberlain**  
**Chief Executive**  
Northland District Health Board