

# 'Health village, not illness village'

TAUMARUNUI will pilot a new 'health village' concept at the hospital campus.

The King Country town will be the first project of its kind for the entire Waikato District Health Board region.

The project would see all health services – aged care, primary care, hospital care and specialist care – converge on, and around the existing hospital site.

"While Taumarunui already has services in these categories, they are not integrating and working as cohesively as they could be, which is something that we are looking for in new models of service delivery," said Waikato DHB change manager Grant O'Brien.

"Due to increasing pressures on the health system such as an ageing population, increase obesity and the incidence of chronic conditions, we need interaction and sustainable health services – particularly in rural communities, such as this."

Mr O'Brien is quick to point out the health village concept will be just that – a focus on health rather than illness as is the thought pattern typically linked to hospitals.

"We definitely don't want to develop a bigger hospital," said Mr O'Brien.

"We want to create a health service village; to create an environment of wellness rather than illness."

Mr O'Brien last week told the Community Health Forum it was imperative the community embraced the project.

"While it is important the DHB

comes to the party to support the community with this project, the organisation certainly doesn't want to own it.

"This is about giving the community some control over what health services are here and how they are used."

Ruapehu District Council mayor Sue Morris was at last week's forum meeting.

"I'm very pleased that the DHB has considered Taumarunui to pilot this project," she said.

"And I would like to think that this community will embrace the opportunity and bring it to fruition because it will mean better access to services which is exactly what we need."

Mr O'Brien said that further consultation with the community and key stakeholders would be the priority before presentation of a business case to the Waikato DHB board next month.

To accommodate that, there will be public meetings on Tuesday September 9 at 1pm and 6pm to capture as many people and their thoughts as possible.

"This project is not an easy one to achieve; it is a new idea and it could take some time to implement the model," said Mr O'Brien.

"The 'health village' has to meet a need, it needs to be functional, and it needs to be flexible, so we can alter it over time as we need to.

"We would appreciate all the input we can get to make this a success for the Taumarunui community."

See the public notices section of today's Ruapehu Press for more information about the public meeting.



**GRANT O'BRIEN**

# Back in action after 16 years away

NO MATTER how long you stay away from nursing, you can always come back.

Just ask Katarina Simon of Hamilton who is back on the wards at Waikato Hospital after 16 years away.

When Katarina went along to the Waikato District Health Board's open day earlier this year, she had no idea what to expect.

Katarina left the profession in 1992 to raise her three sons and was unaware how much nursing had changed.

In the intervening period she continued her studies and you can today call her Dr Simon because she completed a PhD last year.

She also has a postgraduate diploma in development studies, master of social sciences and bachelor of social sciences.

However, when Katarina heard about the open day at her old stomping ground she decided to go along.

"The open day was a great idea," said Katarina.

"I am really glad I went along as it enabled me to familiarise myself with the new registered nurse context of Waikato Hospital in a non-threatening way."

The changes in working conditions for nurses made such an impression on Katarina that she has since completed the six-week return to nursing course offered by Wintec.

The 41-year-old is due to start full registered nurse duties in Waikato Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit this week.

"The course was absolutely brilliant. It covered all the necessities for coming back to nursing today, within a user-friendly environment," she said.

"A significant amount of time was spent on cultural safety and the Treaty of Waitangi with much enthusiasm, which was neat to see."

Included in the six-week course is a clinical placement, which Katarina spent in ward 51 (gynaecology).

"I thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated my clinical placement. It was a valuable opportunity for me to get back into the swing of things under the guidance of a mentor.

"It felt wonderful to experience the passion for the job again; being part of the nursing team and going home inspired and feeling you make a real difference."

Following the successful clinical placement, Katarina went for a job interview where she more than impressed the



**SHE CAME BACK: Katarina Simon.**

panel with her knowledge and passion.

Fifteen nurses completed the competency programme to reenter the nursing workforce as a result of Waikato Hospital's open day.

Due to this success, the hospital will host another open day for former and future nurses on Friday, September 5 from 9.30am to 2pm.

Katarina is one of the faces and voices of Waikato's 'return to nursing' campaign and can be spotted in newspaper advertising and heard on the radio promoting the next open day.

She says she is glad to help Health Waikato's drive for the return of experienced nurses to its hospitals and communities.

"Coming back with fresh eyes certainly made me realise what a wonderful profession nursing truly is and how much of a privilege it is to be part of," said Katarina.

"It is a pleasure to share that with others who may be thinking about returning too."

Visit [www.waikatodhb.govt.nz](http://www.waikatodhb.govt.nz) for more information about next month's nurses open day.

## Familiar face at local meeting

**REUNION: Waikato District Health Board member Dr Suresh Vatsyayann caught up with Ruapehu District Council mayor Sue Morris at the Community Health Forum in Taumarunui last week. Dr Vatsyayann said coming to Taumarunui was like "coming home" having worked in the town as a GP in the early days of Taumarunui Community Kokiri Trust. The Hamilton doctor made the trip last week to see some familiar faces and get a feel for local health issues as a community representative.**



I came back to nursing...

So can you  
Nursing Open Day

Friday, September 5, 9.30am-2pm  
Bryant Education Centre, Waikato Hospital

Calling all former nurses keen on getting back into the workforce or people wanting to pursue a nursing career.

### Why Health Waikato?

- Flexible working hours to suit you!
- Supportive orientation
- Ongoing education and learning opportunities
- Staff discounts at a number of retail outlets

Why not come along and have a chat with us?

- Have fun practising with equipment
- Have a ward/hospital tour
- Refreshments provided
- Information packs/handouts available.

To register:  
T: 07 839 8899 X: 8614

**HEALTH WAIKATO**  
CARING FOR YOU

Waikato District Health Board

[www.waikatodhb.govt.nz](http://www.waikatodhb.govt.nz)

Eat well. Be active.

Exercise your  
sense of humour.

Share Sarah Walker's journey to the Kona Ironman World Championship – and pick up some tips for healthy eating and healthy action along the way.



Sarah's blog  
[www.waikatodhb.govt.nz/sarah](http://www.waikatodhb.govt.nz/sarah)

Waikato District Health Board

## New lounge makes transition easier

WAITING for a ride just got easier at Waikato Hospital with the recent addition of the new Transit Lounge. The facility provides a restful environment for patients who have been discharged but are unable to leave.

These patients may be waiting for medication, a doctor's letter or a ride home.

The facility is furnished with recliner chairs, television, reading material, light refreshments, toilet facilities, and a curtained area for consultation with members of the clinical team.

Clinical nurse manager Fiona Liddle is pleased that the Transit Lounge can provide such a convenient service to patients.

"Previously these patients would have waited in a ward, usually on their bed, but the Transit Lounge now provides

them with a comfortable and relaxing place to wait that is staffed by a full clinical team."

The Transit Lounge is a purpose-built facility, established to improve a patient's journey and play an important role in the discharge process at Waikato Hospital by receiving at least 30 per cent of the 80 discharged patients each day. Not only does the Transit Lounge provide a place for these patients, it caters for those who are travelling from rural hospitals to outpatient appointments and day procedures.

Patients can wait in the Transit Lounge before and after their scheduled appointment, while waiting for transport back to their hometown.

Waikato Hospital's Transit Lounge is located at level B3 of the carpark and main entry building.