

## Tauranga Hospital ICU / HDU and CCU

<b>Due to MO:</b>	7 August 2025	<b>Reference</b>	HNZ00094715
<b>To:</b>	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
<b>From:</b>	Jeremy Holman, Chief Infrastructure & Investment Officer Cath Cronin, Executive Regional Director, Te Manawa Taki		
<b>Copy to:</b>	n/a		
<b>Security level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>Priority</b>	Routine
<b>Consulted:</b>	n/a		
<b>Proactive Release:</b>	This title is proposed by Health NZ for proactive release		
<b>Contact for phone discussion (if required)</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>1st contact</b>
Pauline McGrath	General Director Operations, Tauranga Hospital	[Redacted]	x
Mike Fitzpatrick	Interim Regional GM Asset Management, Te Manawa Taki		
<b>Attachments</b>			
<b>Appendix 1:</b>	Runsheet		
<b>Appendix 2:</b>	[Redacted]		
<b>Appendix 3:</b>	Q&As/facts		
<b>Appendix 4:</b>	[Redacted]		
<b>Appendix 5:</b>	Health Targets		

## About the event

<b>Purpose</b>	To officially open the refurbished and expanded ICU / HD, view the new CCU, and meet with the GDO and senior clinical leadership team.
<b>Date</b>	Wednesday, 13 August 2025
<b>Time</b>	11.00-11.50am
<b>Venue</b>	Tauranga Hospital
<b>Expected attendees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cath Cronin, Executive Regional Director – Midland region Te Manawa Taki</li><li>• Pauline McGrath, Group Director of Operations, BOP</li><li>• Kate Grimwade – Chief Medical Officer, BOP</li><li>• Julia Braid – Interim Chief Nurse Officer</li><li>• Dr Vicki Higson – Consultant anaesthetist and intensivist</li><li>• Craig Henderson – Project Lead, Infrastructure</li><li>• Mike Fitzpatrick - Interim Regional GM Asset Management, Te Manawa Taki</li></ul> Communications contact on site: Shae Skellern, [REDACTED]
<b>Media</b>	Media will be invited by the office
	[REDACTED]

## Background

1. This event briefing provides you with information to support your attendance at the opening of the refurbished and expanded Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and High Dependency Unit (HDU) at Tauranga Hospital.
2. Within Health NZ, the Bay of Plenty district serves 269,670 residents (213,300 living in Western Bay of Plenty, and 56,370 in Eastern Bay of Plenty).
3. Tauranga Hospital is a secondary hospital providing care to the Bay of Plenty community. Health services include community services, medical, surgical, mental health, allied health and emergency care.
4. Health NZ Bay of Plenty is responsible for the provision of most health services in the Bay of Plenty district. These services include:
  - Two hospital sites (Tauranga and Whakatāne)
    - One primary birthing centre in Bethlehem, Tauranga
    - GP-led satellite facilities in Ōpōtiki and Te Kaha
    - Community services

- Mental Health Services: Tauranga - 24 beds, and Whakatāne - 10 beds
- The Bay of Plenty Clinical Campus is one of five around the motu that work with University of Auckland, training and coordinating medical and other students. The Clinical Campus also manages all clinical research and clinical education, including simulation, within the district.

### **Tauranga Hospital infrastructure**

5. Tauranga Hospital redevelopment is part of the Regional Health Redevelopment Programme (RHRP), Tranche 2.
6. The redevelopment is a crucial investment in strengthening the health system for the people of Bay of Plenty (Te Moana-a-Toi).
7. The redevelopment aims to address seismic risks, align healthcare with national priorities, reduce inequities, and provide more care closer to home.
8. It seeks to introduce more efficient healthcare models, addressing changing population needs and increasing capacity to meet the demands of Tauranga's growing and ageing population.
9. Planning and business case preparation continues for Tauranga Hospital, and this will finalise the proposed approach for the redevelopment. This is an extensive piece of work. The feasibility and assurance work is now being concluded while site master planning continues. The Masterplan will reflect the priority areas as indicated in the Health Infrastructure Plan.
10. The Programme Business Case will need to go through normal business case signoff and Cabinet approval before the investment is confirmed.

### **Discussion**

11. You will meet with the Executive Regional Director, Te Manawa Taki, Group Director Operations for BOP, district leadership, and key medical and infrastructure leads to announce the opening of the expanded and refurbished ICU and HDU, which includes six new beds at Tauranga Hospital.
12. The ICU and HDU are located in the five-storey Acute Services building at Tauranga Hospital which was first completed in 2008 and had been built with two floors future-proofed (shelled) to be used as demand requires.
13. A Business Case for additional ICU / HDU and CCU capacity at Tauranga Hospital was put forward by the former Bay of Plenty DHB in October 2021.
14. Tauranga Hospital's critical care capacity (ICU / HDU and Coronary Care Unit (CCU)) was under substantial pressure, with demand exceeding available capacity. Capacity included 10 ICU / HDU beds, nine CCU beds, and one ICU / CCU swing bed located on Level 1 of Building 50. At the time, it was anticipated surge demand linked to COVID-19 would further exacerbate current capacity issues and place increased strain on the DHB
15. In December 2021, \$15.416 million of Crown funded capital was subsequently approved

as part of the Rapid Hospital Improvement Programme (RHIP)<sup>1</sup> to expand Tauranga Hospital's critical care (ICU / HDU and CCU) capacity. In March 2023, Joint Ministers approved an additional \$5.284 million of Crown funded capital to be provided out of the RHIP programme contingency fund, bringing the project's total funding to \$20.7 million.

16. There was a good opportunity to increase ICU capacity within a short timeframe due to the future-proofed (shell) space. The project proposed doing this in two stages:
  - Stage 1: Preparing Level 3, a cold shell space with no electrics or drainage, for CCU and ICU / HDU to relocate to;
  - Stage 2: Preparing Level 1 to be refurbished and expanding the number of ICU / HDU beds from 10 to 16.
17. The finalised project has provided the Acute Services building with a CCU on Level 3 with 10 beds (completed in March 2025), and Level 1 is now for ICU / HDU and has 16 beds. Note that CCU remains on Level 3 with 10 beds. There is capacity on Level 3 for a further 10 beds, potentially for cardiac patients. A process is underway to determine how and when this would work. One floor is shelled for further health services in the future as demand requires.
18. Benefits delivered include:
  - a) An increase of six beds - from 10 beds to 16 beds across ICU / HDU. The ICU / HDU expansion provides a critical care environment that has additional capacity and is an appropriate environment for patient recovery. It provides greater resilience to future acute and planned care needs, and ensures the district provides more access to timely, quality healthcare;
  - b) The refurbished ICU features three negative pressure zones to help control infection, if required;
  - c) Up until now the CCU and ICU were combined units, so the new separate CCU provides a larger, more dedicated space for coronary patients. This will allow for a more cohesive cardiology service improving efficiency and access to diagnosis and treatment in partnership with the hospital's Cardiac Catheterisation Lab.
19. The total project cost included fit-out of the additional ICU / HDU spaces, installation of critical care clinical equipment such as ICU pendants, patient hoists, patient monitoring devices, and dialysis compatible outlets. It also included cost of ancillary services, an additional lift and a water tank for fire safety requirements.
20. The operational date is 19 August for the Level 1 ICU / HDU. The third-floor CCU is operational now.

### **Workforce**

21. ICU / HDU is staffed by Intensive Care Specialists, Registrars, and Critical Care Trained Nurses.
22. The critical care team has a strong recruitment and training programme well under way to ensure safe staffing is provided as the new beds are commissioned.

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<sup>1</sup> Further detail on the RHIP is contained below in Appendix 3: Q&As / Key facts

23. Operational funding has been provisioned for the expanded critical care services at Tauranga Hospital and is in place for FY 2025/26.

## Appendix 1: Runsheet and location map

Time	Details	Minister's Office notes
11am	Minister arrives at Facilities and Business Operations building – Clarke Street Carpark G, Gate 5, Tauranga Hospital. Greeted by GDO, Pauline McGrath and ERD, Cath Cronin.  A short whakatau will take place.	A carpark has been reserved in carpark G directly outside the Facilities and Business Operations building (detailed map below - Clarke Street Carpark G, Gate 5).  Whakatau will be led by Mana Whenua (Ngāi Tamarawaho), Craig Teddy and Te Pou Kokiri. No response is required.
11.05am	Minister to go to Level 3 CCU with GDO and ERD only as this newly expanded space is now operating.	
11.15am	Arrive at Level 1 ICU / HDU unit and is introduced to Julia Braid, Dr Vicki Higson, Mike Fitzpatrick and Craig Henderson.  They will be on hand to answer media questions.  Pauline and Julia walk Minister around the unit, pointing out key detail/information.	
11.20am	Media arrive – Main Entrance, greeted by local comms and taken to Level 1 where the official opening will take place.	
11.25am	Room for Minister to prep before speaking to media.	
11.30am	Pauline prompts Minister to cut the ribbon (across doorway of a bed bay or similar) to officially open the unit.	
11.32am	Speech announcing the opening of newly expanded ICU / HDU.	
11.35am	Opportunity for questions from the media.	
11.45am	Pauline and Cath escort Minister out.  (Allow media time to wrap up then escort media out).	

	If time permits, you will walk to the Emergency Dept. Entrance and meet staff.	
11:50am	Minister departs.	





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## Appendix 3: Q&As / key facts

### **How much was the project?**

\$20.7 million

### **How many ICU / HDU beds did Tauranga Hospital previously have?**

The hospital had six ICU beds and four HDU beds.

### **What is the capacity now?**

The increase is from 10 beds to 16 beds in total across ICU/HDU, in one unit on Level 1.

### **Has CCU capacity expanded?**

The Coronary Care Unit has the same capacity as before with 10 beds. Due to CCU having its own space on Level 3, there is capacity for another 10 beds which may potentially be used for cardiac patients – a process is underway to determine how and when this could work.

### **What are the expected benefits of this upgrade?**

The increased capacity new will meet the demand of the growing population and provide greater resilience to future acute and planned care needs and ensure New Zealanders have more access to timely, quality healthcare.

### **What workforce is needed for an HDU / ICU?**

Critical care units are staffed by intensive care doctors and nurses with extensive training in managing the sickest patients. Critical care includes both 'Intensive' and 'High Dependency' care, provided in ICUs and HDUs respectively.

High dependency care differs only in the ratio of nurses looking after patients.

For HDU, where patients do not need to be connected to life support or dialysis machines, there is one nurse looking after two patients. For ICU, the ratio is 1:1, and is maintained around the clock.

### **How was this expansion managed within the building?**

The project has been completed in stages. The first stage of the redevelopment was the preparation of the shelled space on Level 3 to facilitate the relocation of ICU / HDU and CCU which enabled the second stage of the refurbished ICU / HDU. The new CCU facility was completed in March 2025 at which time the CCU and ICU / HDU relocated to Level 3.

Stage 2 involved alterations to Level 1 and now that this has been completed, ICU / HDU will relocate back down to Level 1 and will be operational from 19 August.

The Coronary Care Unit will remain on Level 3.

### **What Health Targets does this expansion project support?**

SSED and timely access to surgery critical care.

## What other new health services or upgrades have been provided on the Tauranga Hospital campus recently?

- A second state-of-the-art cardiac catheterisation lab opened in July 2025, significantly improving access to diagnostic and treatment services across the region;
- The new Coronary Care Unit, which was completed in March 2025;
- Work to upgrade Tauranga Hospital's adult mental health unit - Te Whare Maiangiangi - began in May 2025. The project includes extensions to the existing unit, bringing the total number of beds available for tangata whaiora (patients) from 26 to 29. A redesign of the building's layout will also see the number of beds in the intensive psychiatric care unit increase from 4 to 10, providing an extra level of intensive support;
- The opening of the Greerton Ambulatory Care Facility which has increased outpatient capacity.

## What is happening with the redevelopment of Tauranga Hospital?

Tauranga Hospital is part of the Regional Hospital Redevelopment Programme (RHRP) Tranche 2. The Tauranga Hospital redevelopment is a major investment to bring the whole of the hospital campus up to contemporary standards. This is equivalent to other hospital redevelopment projects that are currently underway in Nelson and Whangarei. Specifics around the projects such as costs, service uplifts, and specific timing are not yet available. Planning and business case preparation is currently underway for Tauranga and this will finalise the proposed approach for the redevelopment.

Stage 1 projects for Tauranga will be confirmed through the business case decision. The stage 1e projects signalled in the Health Infrastructure Plan reflect priority areas. The ED capacity will be supported by investment and will provide targeted improvements. There is also the need to lift the seismic status of some facilities across the site.

## What is RHRP?

The Regional Hospital Redevelopment Programme was established in June 2021 to explore solutions through enhanced planning and support future investment proposals. The plan addresses infrastructure issues across regional hospitals, including poor building conditions, seismic risks, and growing demand versus capacity.

The RHRP has two tranches: Tranche 1 is Whangarei and Nelson hospitals; and Tranche 2 includes Tauranga, Palmerston North and Hawke's Bay hospitals.

## What are the biggest risks and issues facing Tauranga Hospital?

### Aging Infrastructure

- A number of buildings on the Tauranga Hospital campus have Earthquake Prone Building notices that range from 20% to 25% New Building Standard. Remediation of these buildings is required. The hospital sits in a medium seismic zone.
- There is a shortage of examination beds in the Emergency Department when compared to the Australasian Emergency Medicine Standards for emergency departments.
- Overall low bed capacity across the hospital is an issue.

## Staffing Levels

- There are issues with recruiting to the following specialties: anaesthesia, obstetrics and gynaecology, Emergency Department and ENT SMOs, and Allied Health, including podiatry and occupational therapy.

### **\* Rapid Hospital Improvement Programme (RHIP)**

RHIP aimed to fast-track projects identified by DHBs where benefits for increased ICU capacity and improved COVID treatment capacity could be brought forward.

Some of these projects were well defined and part of longer running capital allocation processes, while others were new projects brought forward.

RHIP evolved at pace as information was collected from DHBs to validate projects. This pace meant that initial forecasts and bed figures evolved as understanding of projects improved with provision of better information from DHBs.

The Health Infrastructure Unit (HIU) asked each DHB to identify potential facility investments that were capable of being fast-tracked and that could deliver:

- An increase in ICU / HDU bed capacity; or
- Capacity for the safe treatment of patients with COVID-19; or
- Infrastructure that reduced disruption to business-as-usual operations.

The scope of each project was refined to reflect where the most benefit could be achieved in a short timeframe. Throughout the process, the HIU engaged with DHBs to ensure that Crown investment was appropriate when considered alongside workforce factors.



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## Appendix 5: Health Targets

### Performance against the Health Targets

Tauranga's recent performance against the applicable health targets is as follows:

- The Bay of Plenty SSED health target achievement for the week ending 20 July was 71%. This is up on the previous week and was achieved despite higher than usual presentations to ED.
- Our teams are maintaining a focus on patients waiting over 18 months for a first specialist appointment. Bay of Plenty is currently achieving 59% against the national target of 65% for Shorter Wait Times for First Specialist Appointments.
- We are currently achieving 75% against the national August target of 67% for Shorter Wait Times for Elective Treatment.
- Bay of Plenty achieved 91% in the month of July for the 31-day Faster Cancer Treatment pathway.