

Event Briefing

Announcement for both the new Kāpiti Coast breast screening site and BreastScreen Aotearoa age extension

Due to MO:	9 October 2025	Reference	HNZ00098850
To:	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
From:	Dr Nick Chamberlain, National Director, National Public Health Service		
Copy to:	n/a		
Security level:	In Confidence	Priority	Routine
Consulted	n/a		

Contact for phone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Dr Nick Chamberlain	National Director, National Public Health Service		x
Adeline Cumings	Head of Business Services, National Public Health Service		

Attachments
Appendix 1: Runsheet and location map
Appendix 2: Draft speech
Appendix 3: Draft press release
Appendix 4: Questions and Answers
Appendix 5: Biographies

Appendices 2 - 4 have been withheld in full.

About the event

Purpose	To announce both the new Kāpiti Coast breast screening site and breast screening age extension
Date	Wednesday 15 October
Time	10am - 11am
Venues	Toi Mahara Art Gallery, 20 Mahara Place, Waikanae Mammography room, Waikanae Health Centre, 11 Marae Lane Waikanae
Expected attendees	An audience of organisational leadership and staff, key stakeholders and screening support representatives. This includes: Ah-Leen Rayner (Chief Executive, Breast Cancer Foundation NZ) Libby Burgess (Chair, Breast Cancer Aotearoa Coalition) Nicola Coom (Chief Executive Cancer Society NZ) Dr Herman Van Kradenburg (Managing Director and General Practitioner, Waikanae Health) Tim Costley – Member of Parliament for Ōtaki [Note: biographies are attached at Appendix 5]
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora representatives	Dr Nick Chamberlain (National Director, National Public Health Service) Alana Ewe-Snow (Director Prevention, National Public Health Service) Dr Adam Stewart (Clinical Lead, BreastScreen Aotearoa, National Public Health Service) Jamie Duncan (Group Director Operations, Capital, Coast and Hutt Valley) Colin Spratt (Group Manager, Sub-Specialty Medicine, Capital Coast and Hutt Valley) Harley Rogers (Group Manager, National Cancer Screening Programmes, National Public Health Service) Approximately 10 members of the BreastScreen Aotearoa national and Central region teams.
Cancer Control Agency representatives	Rami Rahal (Chief Executive, Te Aho o Te Kahu Cancer Control Agency)
Media	Media will be invited and will be managed by Kelly Mitchell, Principal Advisor, Media [REDACTED]. There will be photos taken on the day.
Speech	Draft speech attached in Appendix 2. The Draft Press Release is provided in Appendix 3.

Background

1. You have agreed to announce both the new Kāpiti Coast breast screening site and the BreastScreen Aotearoa national age extension at an event in Waikanae on Wednesday 15 October 2025 at the Toi Mahara Art Gallery. You have also agreed to tour the mammography room at Waikanae Health.
2. Waikanae Health, offer a range of medical care services to the Kāpiti Coast district, including hosting a dedicated breast screening service. BreastScreen Aotearoa and BreastScreen Central leaders will be attending the launch event (note their biographies at Appendix 5).
3. A speaking slot has been allocated to you (note: runsheet in Appendix 1 and speech in Appendix 2). Health New Zealand (Health NZ) officials will also be providing brief remarks. The Press Release (Appendix 3) and Questions and Answers (Appendix 4) are also attached for your reference.
4. The event has been organised as a launch of the screening site to ensure a targeted and effective rollout, prioritising key partners and community representatives and allows for media attendance.

BreastScreen Aotearoa is hosting the event

5. As part of the event, you will be inspecting the refurbished mammogram facilities at Waikanae Health, including the purpose-built (lead-lined) x-ray room. It also has a new mammography machine, as well as new furnishings, fittings and IT.
6. Waikanae Health is the location of a new BreastScreen Aotearoa fixed screening site and will be ready for the launch of age extension on 15 October 2025.
7. There will be an opportunity for you to speak with women who have become eligible for screening as part of the age extension, as well as staff at Waikanae Health and BreastScreen Aotearoa Central.

About Kāpiti breast screening

8. The Kāpiti Coast district is serviced by the BreastScreen Aotearoa Central mobile breast screening unit, which covers the greater Wellington region of Wellington, Hutt Valley, Wairarapa and Kapiti. The new fixed site in Waikanae will provide capacity for the additional numbers of women from the age extension launch on 15 October 2025.
9. For women living in the Kāpiti Coast, this means they will no longer need to wait until the mobile unit visits their district to get a breast screen. Women will be able to make their breast screening appointments and receive breast screening closer to home. The new site is more spacious than the mobile unit and can screen a greater number of women.
10. Waikanae Health is an optimal site as it provides existing purpose-built medical space and was an affordable alternative to a new build; it is also easily accessible from other parts of the Kāpiti Coast. The health centre itself is in the middle of town, provides wheelchair access, and has ample parking and public transport nearby.
11. The new Kāpiti Coast breast screening site was funded through the age extension project with equipment and fitout budgeted at \$546,000, plus \$70,000 annual lease, excluding staff costs.

BreastScreen Aotearoa age extension

About BreastScreen Aotearoa

12. Established in 1998, BreastScreen Aotearoa is New Zealand's national breast cancer screening programme, offering asymptomatic women aged 45 to 69 a free mammogram every two years. The eligible age will be extended year on year for 70- to 74-year-olds from October 2025 to allow for more women to access free breast screening.
13. The age extension will begin with women in two age groups, 70 and 74. Each October, over the next four years, the age range will be extended by one year.
14. The extended age range will be fully in place by the end of 2029. Phasing in each age group over four years will enable breast screening and cancer treatment services to progressively meet the additional demand.
15. The aim of BreastScreen Aotearoa is to reduce women's morbidity and mortality from breast cancer by identifying cancers at an early stage, allowing treatment to commence sooner than might otherwise have been possible.
16. The programme is delivered throughout the country by eight lead providers who provide services from around 35 fixed sites and 10 mobile screening units. Of these providers, six are based within Health NZ's Hospital and Specialist Services. Providers are responsible for the screening pathway, up to referral for treatment.

Benefit of increasing the breast screening age range

17. Breast cancer is the most common cancer for women in New Zealand with around 3,400 women diagnosed each year. Extending the age of free breast cancer screening will detect more breast cancers earlier and improve treatment outcomes for those who are diagnosed.
18. BreastScreen Aotearoa currently screens approximately 270,000 women aged 45 to 69 and costs approximately \$65 million per annum. The current coverage target is to screen at least 70% of eligible women aged 45-69 every two years. As of August 2025, coverage is at 68.8%.
19. Once the national rollout begins in October 2025, an additional 30,600 women are forecast to receive breast screening in the first year, rising to over 54,000 women in 2028/2029.
20. When fully implemented, around 60 women per year will have invasive breast cancer detected at an earlier, more treatable stage because of the age extension.

Rollout of the breast screening age range extension

21. In February 2024, the Government announced a breast screening age range extension from 69 to 74 years as part of its 100-day plan to deliver better public services. Extending the age for publicly funded breast screening was also identified in the New Zealand Cancer Action Plan 2019-2029.
22. Budget 2024 provided \$35.880 million in operational funding, over five years, plus \$7.190 million in capital for the age extension [CAB-24-MIN-0148.38 refers].
23. The pilot region of Nelson Marlborough launched in October 2024. The pilot was initially

based on incremental, one year age bands, starting with women who turned 70 after 1 October 2024.

24. On 31 October 2024, the then Minister of Health directed that the implementation be amended to include screening for women aged 74 from year one of the implementation.
25. As a result of this change, additional funding was required and coordination with the provider, BreastScreen South, was needed to manage the additional volumes. During this period, the pilot relied on the pre-existing opt-in enrolment approach until the new National Breast Screening System – Te Puna that was launched in February 2025 in the Midland region, and as of 23 June 2025, is live across New Zealand.
26. Te Puna enables all eligible women including women aged 70 and 74 to be automatically identified and invited by their local BreastScreen Aotearoa provider. It is a shift away from an opt-in to an opt-out enrolment approach.
27. A total of \$20.173 million, over five years, was allocated from the Health NZ baseline to cover the additional and unbudgeted costs to include screening for women aged 74 years old.
28. From 1 October 2025, the age for free breast screening will start to be extended across New Zealand.
29. Additional resources include seven additional mammography machines, ultrasound machines and supporting equipment. Four additional mobile breast screening units are to be delivered in early 2026. In addition to the Kāpiti Coast, extra fixed screening and assessment locations in Takapuna and Greenlane (Auckland) are opening in October. A further two sites, in Whangārei and Manukau, will be commissioned later this year.
30. This is a significant development for BreastScreen Aotearoa. The previous age extension happened in 2004, when the age range was extended from 50-64 to 45-69.

Next steps

31. BreastScreen Aotearoa will continue to work on increasing participation and coverage in the age extension nationally as the programme is rolled out.
32. Health NZ will engage with your office on future opportunities and announcements that may arise in 2025/26 related to BreastScreen Aotearoa.

Appendix 1: Runsheet and Location Map

Time	Details	Minister's Office notes
9.45 – 9.55am	Media met at the entrance of Toi Mahara Art Gallery 20 Mahara Place, Waikanae by Health NZ media lead: Kelly Mitchell [REDACTED]	
10.00am	Minister Brown arrives at the venue. He will be met by Dr Nick Chamberlain and Alana Ewe-Snow (National Public Health Service), and Dr Herman Van Kradenburg (Managing Director of Waikanae Health)	
10.00 - 10.15am	Welcome from Mana Whenua TBC	
10.18am	Speech: Minister Brown	
10.25am	Speech: Alana Ewe-Snow - Director, Prevention Screening, Health NZ	
10.28am	Speech: Mr Adam Stewart – Clinical Lead, BreastScreen Aotearoa, Health NZ	
10.31am	Ah-Leen Rayner, Chief Executive, Breast Cancer Foundation New Zealand	
10.35am	Morning tea is blessed with karakia	
10.37am	Morning tea for attendees	
10.37am	Media stand-up with the Minister, Health NZ leadership and Dr Herman Van Kradenburg.	
10.47am	<p>Dr Herman Van Kradenburg to escort the Minister, Health NZ leadership, Kāpiti Coast breast screening staff and invited eligible women (aged 70 and 74) to walk from Toi Mahara Art Gallery.</p> <p>The walk between venues will take one to two minutes.</p> <p><i>(Waikanae Health cannot be shut down to host the full launch event as it is still operational for patients. The Centre has a maximum capacity of 30 people, and some will need to stand in the reception area).</i></p>	
10.49am	The Minister arrives at Waikanae Health and is to be shown through to the mammography room.	
10.50am	Photos with the Minister, staff and invited eligible women next to the new mammography machine.	
11.00am	The Minister departs	

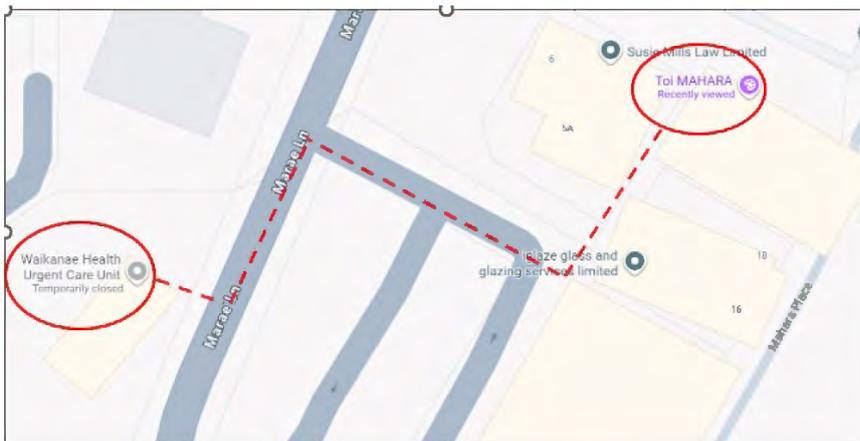
Toi Mahara Art Gallery – 20 Mahara Place, Waikanae

The announcement is on the first floor of the Toi Mahara Art Gallery building. The main carparks are located outside the building.



Waikanae Health Centre- 11 Marae Lane, Waikanae

The mammogram facilities can be reached through the front entrance.



Appendix 5: Biographies



Ah-Leen Rayner, Chief Executive, Breast Cancer Foundation NZ

Ah-Leen is a highly experienced executive who has spent the past 25 years in a range of commercial and general management roles.

As CEO Breast Cancer Foundation, Ah-Leen is delighted to be working with a cause where purpose drives the organisation and makes a fundamental difference in the lives of New Zealand women.



Libby Burgess, Chair, Breast Cancer Aotearoa Coalition

Breast Cancer Aotearoa Coalition (BCAC), is a charity that supports, informs and represents New Zealanders with breast cancer. She serves as a patient representative on the Breast Special Interest Group of NZ specialists and is an affiliate member of Breast Cancer Trials (Australia and New Zealand). Libby has been a member of the Consumer Reference Group of New Zealand's Cancer Control Agency, Te Aho o te Kahu. She is currently a member of Pharmac's Consumer and Patient Working Group. She has actively campaigned on a range of breast cancer issues including access to screening, timely diagnosis and treatment, innovative medicines, provision of breast reconstructive surgery and equitable access to high quality cancer services for all New Zealanders. She has contributed to Guidelines for the Treatment of Early Breast Cancer and Standards of Service Provision for Breast Cancer Patients in New Zealand. Libby was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 41. She is a biological scientist based in Auckland and was made a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) in 2011 for services to women's health.



Tim Costley, Member of Parliament for Ōtaki

Tim has held the role of MP for Ōtaki since 2023. He serves on the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee, and as Deputy Chair of the Governance and Administration Committee.



Nicola Coom
Chief Executive, Cancer Society NZ

Nicola was appointed CE in September 2025. Prior to this she played a pivotal role in shaping the organisation's future. She led the successful amalgamation of the Cancer Society Canterbury-West Coast and Otago-Southland Divisions, championed the introduction of new innovative digital services, oversaw the opening of the Canterbury Cancer Centre, convened the inaugural Cancer Research and Innovation Conference, and helped establish a joint venture focused on pre- and post-cancer rehabilitation. Most recently, she has guided the Cancer Society through the development of their new strategic plan, ensuring the voices of people affected by cancer are at its heart.



Dr Herman Van Kradenburg
Managing Director Waikanae Health

Dr. Hermanus Van Kradenburg (Herman) is a Specialist General Practitioner (GP)

He has worked in General and Occupational Medicine since 1993. He graduated from the University of Pretoria in South Africa and holds a Diploma in Occupational Medicine (cum laude) from the University of Stellenbosch. He is a Fellow of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners. He has worked at Waikanae Health in Kapiti, New Zealand, since 2001. He has had further postgraduate training in skin surgery, regenerative medicine, psychiatry and occupational medicine. He has also lectured on aspects of these interests.

He has also consulted for various government agencies over 25 years in NZ. He is passionate about improving access to care closer to home for patients. He is the clinical lead for Tu Ora PHO on Primary Options for Acute Care (POAC) and Community Ambulance Diversion (CARS), initiatives to reduce pressure on Emergency Departments and to provide care in the community to patients, rather than presenting to hospital.