

Waikato Hospital and Braemar Hospital visit – 24 October 2025

Due to MO:	23 October 2025	Reference	HNZ00101430
To:	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
From:	Cath Cronin, Executive Regional Director, Te Manawa Taki		
Copy to:	n/a		
Security level:	In Confidence	Priority	Routine
Consulted:	n/a		
Proactive Release:	This title is proposed by Health NZ for proactive release		

Contact for phone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Stephanie Doe	Group Director Operations, Waikato	[REDACTED]	x

Attachments

Appendix 1: Run sheet

Appendix 2: Waikato Hospital and Braemar Hospital Location Map

Appendix 3: Braemar Hospital Biographies of Attendees

Appendix 4: Braemar Hospital Factsheet [attached as a separate document]

Appendix 5: Waikato Hospital Factsheet

About the event

Purpose	Visit to Waikato and Braemar Hospitals
Date	Friday, 24 October 2025
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waikato Hospital visit - 8:30am - 9:20am• Braemar Hospital visit - 9:25am - 9:55am
Venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waikato Hospital campus. Enter via Pembroke Street, parking at the back of Emergency Department building.• Braemar Hospital, parking in carpark directly outside Braemar Hospital, 28 Ohaupo Road, Hamilton Lake, Hamilton 3204 Location maps in Appendix 2
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora representatives	Waikato Hospital <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stephanie Doe, Group Director Operations, Waikato• Dr Gary Hopgood, Regional Clinical Lead Te Manawa Taki and Medical Director Surgery and Anaesthesia, Waikato• Cheryl Atherfold, Regional Chief Nurse Te Manawa Taki and Chief Nurse Waikato• Rees Tapsell, Regional Clinical Lead, Te Manawa Taki for Mental Health and Addictions Services and Medical Director Mental Health and Addictions Services, Waikato• Ian Martin, Medical Director, Medicine and Older Persons Rehabilitation• Rebecca MacRae, Planned Care Manager, Waikato• Dr TV Liew, Head of Department, Cardiology
Expected attendees	Braemar Hospital <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fiona Michel, Chief Executive Officer• Leigh Singers, General Manager Commercial Services• Pru Sheahan, General Manager Clinical Services Biographies of attendees in Appendix 3.
Media	No media are expected.

Waikato Hospital

1. Waikato Hospital serves a district population of approximately 460,000 - which includes 25% Māori, 3% Pacific People, and 15% Asian. Around 36% of the population live in rural areas.
2. Waikato Hospital is a tertiary facility, which serves the Te Manawa Taki region, with a population of around 1 million people.
3. As the tertiary provider, services provided include one of New Zealand's largest EDs with around 220- 230 patients per day, cancer services, cardiothoracic surgery, cardiology, radiology, mental health and addictions inpatient and forensic services, and is a major trauma centre.

Health Target Performance

Target	Result Q4 24/25	24/25 Milestone	Performance
Faster Cancer Treatment	95.9%	86%	■
Improved Immunisation	74.5%	84%	■
SSED	69.3%	74%	■
Shorter wait times FSA	57.1%	62%	■
Shorter wait times elective treatment	71.0%	63%	■

Summary of Key Actions to Improve Performance – Hospital and Specialist Services

Health Target	Actions
SSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refocused floor manager role in Waikato Hospital ED – commenced 13 Oct. ▪ Implementation of 6-hr breach reporting in Southern Rural Hospitals ▪ Recruitment to initiatives for Thames ED (fast track clinic and additional senior nursing resource to support flow) and Waikato ED (hospital in the home, senior nursing resource to support weekend discharges from medicine) ▪ Focus is on non-admitted performance in Waikato ED ▪ Exploring feasibility of creating additional inpatient capacity for winter 2026.
Shorter wait times FSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weekly meetings with Directorate whose performance <65% ▪ Implementation of electronic systems to improve visibility of clinic utilisation and performance ▪ Development of specific action plan for Orthopaedics (specialty under pressure). ▪ Reduction of unbooked long waiting patients – weekly tracking by patient ▪ Implementation of additional clinics for long waiting patients (>120 days). ▪ Implementation of national planned care guidelines

Waikato Hospital – Other Initiatives and Developments

4. The Cardiology Service is experiencing high acute demand and inpatient occupancy, with the demand for the Cath Lab exceeding capacity. There are challenges with waiting times for angiography and echocardiograms.
5. A Cardiology Recovery Plan has been developed – areas of focus include:
 - a) Increased Cath Lab capacity to reduce length of stay, reduce waiting times and release inpatient capacity.
 - b) Echocardiogram wait list – reduce waiting times, process re-engineering, wait list review and delineation and outsourcing to create additional capacity.
 - c) Improve ESPI performance – clinic utilisation, reduction of wait list for dependent resources (e.g. echocardiograms), time to triage and clinical review of planned follow up appointments.
 - d) Recruitment, retention and workforce development – cardiac sonographers, advanced practice roles for nursing and growth of the SMO workforce.
6. Responding to the Waikeria Prison Expansion (600 beds in 2025, 810 beds in 2029). Implementation of Budget 2025 investment is in progress, this includes commissioning ten inpatient and eight step-down Forensic beds, development of intensive community team and workforce development.
7. Works are progressing with the new build Adult Acute Inpatient Facility. Practical completion is due 11 August 2026. Development of the staffing matrix and model of care planning has commenced.

Braemar Hospital

8. Braemar Hospital is a not-for-profit facility, owned by the Braemar Charitable Trust.
9. It has 11 theatres (including two endoscopy suites) and two Catheterisation Laboratories (Cath Labs) and 109 inpatient beds.
10. Braemar Hospital treats 11,000 – 12,000 patients per year – 17% outsourced from Health NZ.
11. More detailed information about Braemar Hospital is provided in Appendix 4.

Health NZ Relationship with Braemar Hospital

12. There is a positive, long-standing relationship between Waikato and Braemar Hospital's, and the wider Te Manawa Taki region. This is supported by regular operational meetings between the Braemar General Manager and the Waikato Planned Care Manager.
13. Braemar are an innovative and agile provider and are active in supporting regional priority areas (for example, long-waiting, more complex orthopaedic patients).
14. They are very community focused – Braemar Community Trust have been able to offer free surgery to a group of patients.
15. There have been some challenges with the changes to the National Procurement team, but the strong operational relationships between the two hospitals have helped to navigate this.
16. There are future new opportunities to work collaboratively, as Braemar's recent purchase of a surgical robot. These are being explored at present.

17.

18. Further information about Braemar Hospital can found in the factsheet at Appendix 4.

Appendix 1: Run sheet

Date: 24 October 2025

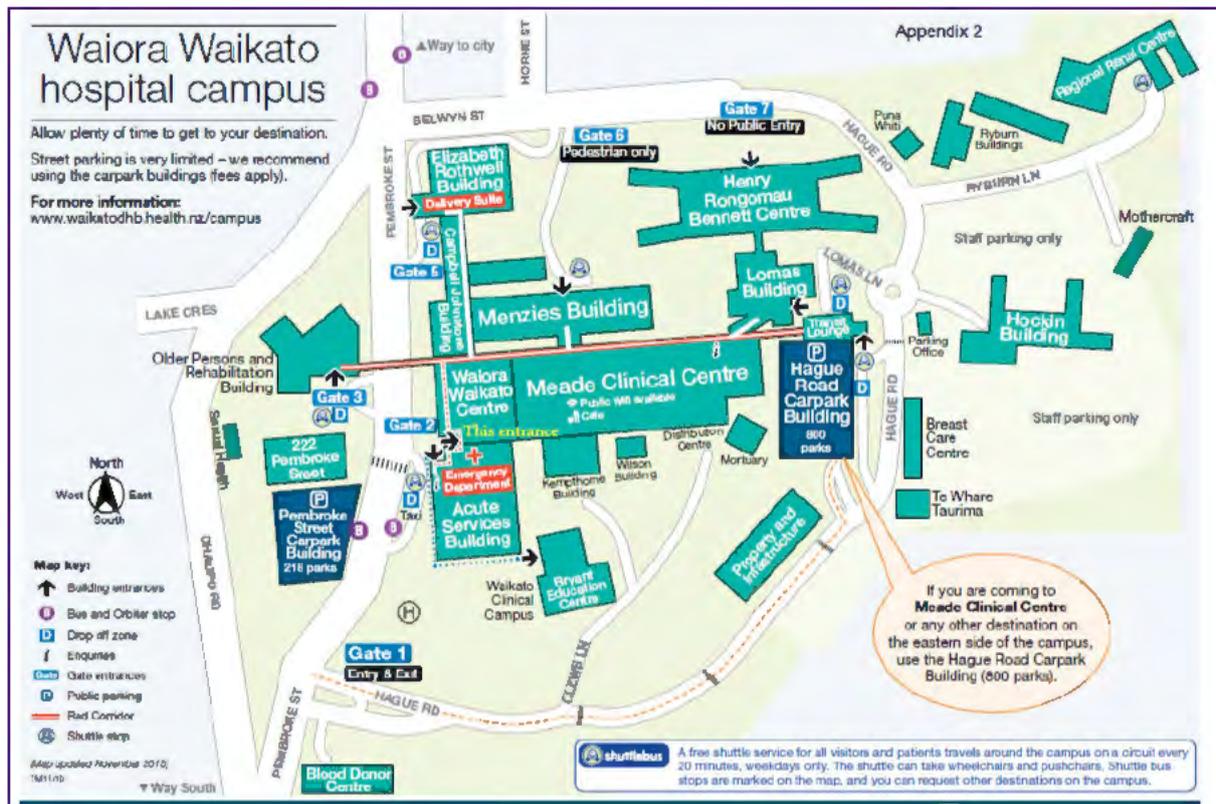
Time	Details / Attendees	Comments	Venue
08:30am	Greet Minister Brown at Emergency Department Entrance of the Waikato Hospital Attendees: 1. Stephanie Doe, Group Director of Operations, Waikato District 2. Cheryl Atherfold, Chief Nurse, Waikato and Regional Chief Nurse Te Manawa Taki 3. Mark Waitai, Director of Tikanga	The Minister has visited Waikato before therefore it is thought that it is not necessary to hold a Whakataua	Emergency Care entrance of Hospital
08:35am – 08:50am	Closed session discussion with Senior Clinical Staff Attendees: 1. Stephanie Doe, Group Director of Operations, Waikato District 2. Gary Hopgood, Medical Director, Surgery and Anaesthesia; and Regional Clinical Lead, Te Manawa Taki 3. Rees Tapsell, Regional Clinical Lead, Mental Health and Addictions 4. Ian Martin, Clinical Director, ED, Medicine and OPR Services 5. Cheryl Atherfold, Chief Nurse, Waikato District and Regional Chief Nurse, Te Manawa Taki	Meet with Senior Clinical Staff	Meeting Room, Bryant Education Centre
08:50 – 09:00	Tour of Emergency Department Attendees: 1. Stephanie Doe 2. Dr Gary Hopgood 3. Dr Ian Martin 4. Liz Courtney, Interim Nurse Manager		
09:05am – 09:20am	Cath Lab Attendees: 1. Stephanie Doe 2. Dr Gary Hopgood 3. TV Liew, Head of Department, Cardiology		Cath Lab, Meades Clinical Centre, Level 2, Waikato Hospital
09:25am – 09:55am	Visit to Braemar Hospital Attendees from Waikato Hospital to this visit:	Refer to Appendix 5 for further	Braemar Hospital, 28 Ohaupo

Time	Details / Attendees	Comments	Venue
	1. Stephanie Doe 2. Dr Gary Hopgood 3. Rebecca McCrae, Planned Care Manager Attendees from Braemar Hospital: 1. Fiona Michel, Chief Executive Officer, Braemar Hospital 2. Leigh Singers, General Manager Commercial Services, Braemar Hospital 3. Pru Sheahan, General Manager Clinical Services, Braemar Hospital	background on Braemar Hospital.	Road, Hamilton Lake, Hamilton – Refer to Appendix 2 for Map and parking information
09:55am	Minister Brown departs		Minister Brown is escorted to his car by Braemar and Waikato senior staff

Appendix 2: Waikato Hospital and Braemar Hospital Location Maps

Waikato Hospital has reserved a carpark 205 for the Minister which can be accessed via a barrier arm off Clews Lane – refer map below and attached. Minister to enter from the Emergency Department of the Hospital see location below.

Braemar is within walking distance of Waikato Hospital if the Minister chooses to walk with Waikato Representatives just across the road. This will save his driver from having to move the Minister's vehicle.



Parking

Parking for patients and their visitors is allocated in the car park in front of the hospital's main entrance (off Ohaupo Road).

Patients may be dropped off and collected at the front of the building.

Appendix 3: Braemar Hospital Biographies of Attendees



Fiona Michel (she/her) MBA, CMIInstD GAICD, FCPHR, **Chief Executive Officer**

Fiona is a seasoned business executive who has worked across a range of large public and private sector organisations, in New Zealand and overseas. She also holds governance roles; as member of the University of Waikato Council, Chair of the NZ Graduate School of Medicine Medical Advisory Board, Independent Director for New Zealand Medical Indemnity Insurance and Chair of the Dress for Success Hamilton charity.

Fiona holds a Master of Business Administration and is an alumnus of Harvard Business School. She is a Chartered and Graduate Member of the New Zealand Institute of Directors and the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and was a finalist in the New Zealand Women of Influence Awards in 2021.

Fiona, her husband David and son Jonathan own a small lifestyle block in Ōhaupō, complete with macadamia and citrus orchards and a small menagerie of animals.



Leigh Singers (she/her), **General Manager Commercial Services**

Leigh joined Braemar Hospital in 2022 as the General Manager Commercial Services. A registered nurse by profession, Leigh is a dynamic, respected health manager with extensive experience in nursing and business management roles in the public health sector, complemented by skills gained with a private sector healthcare capacity planning software vendor. Over her career Leigh has held a number of Service Manager roles at Waikato District Health Board including in Surgery, Integrated Operation and Planned Care, and has delivered a range of projects that have delivered sustained value to the DHB.

Leigh is accountable for campus planning and development, commercial contract negotiations and new commercial opportunities, procurement and stores, property and facilities, hospital services (non-clinical), market intelligence and partner relationships.

Leigh has a Graduate Diploma in Management Studies from the University of Waikato, and has a Diploma in Comprehensive Nursing. When not at work Leigh enjoys swimming for fitness (and the odd event), gardening, and spending time at the beach with her husband Andrew and two adult sons.



Pru Sheahan (she/her) Registered Nurse DipN PGCert Advanced Clinical Assessment, **General Manager Clinical Services**

Pru is a registered nurse with more than 25 years' experience across perioperative private and public healthcare sectors in New Zealand. With two decades of tenure at Braemar she has held a number of senior management roles with a focus on developing high performing teams, clinical performance improvement and ensuring health services are delivered to meet the needs of specialists and patients.

Pru completed the Community Enterprise Leadership Foundation programme (CELF) in 2024 and in 2023 completed the Executive and Performance Leadership Certificate through Cornell University in the United States. Pru is an Advisor to the New Zealand Private Surgical Hospitals Association Executive.

Pru is known for her leadership style as being focused, down to earth, approachable and sincere. She is very proud of the services Braemar delivers and believes Braemar has many points of difference which makes the organisation so successful. Pru is accountable for Patient Services, Theatres, Clinical Quality & Risk, Pre-Admission, Clinical Education, Specialist Relationships and Clinical Relationships.

Pru grew up in Cambridge and spends her time away from work with her family enjoying nature and horses.

Appendix 4: Braemar Hospital factsheet

Attached as a separate document.

Appendix 5: Waikato Hospital factsheet

Waikato Hospital

Location and Population

Waikato Hospital is located in Hamilton and serves a population of approximately 460,000 people, which includes 25% Māori, 3% Pacific People and 15% Asian. Around 36% of the population live in rural areas. The Waikato District is expected to grow by about 42.1% between 2024 and 2054.

Hospital Services

Waikato Hospital has 888 inpatient beds (including mental health and forensic beds) and is recognised as both a tertiary and accredited training hospital that serves the Te Manawa Taki region, with a population of approximately 1 million people.

As the tertiary provider, services provided include one of New Zealand's largest Emergency Departments with around 220 - 230 patients presenting per day, cancer services, cardiothoracic surgery, cardiology, radiology, mental health and addictions services, and forensic psychiatry services. It is also a major trauma centre.

Our diverse workforce of over 7,000 employees provides care and support to more than 100,000 patients per year.

Current Pressures

Waikato Hospital faces pressures with acute demand growing faster than capacity. In 2024, there were 85,658 presentations to the Emergency Department, of which 28% were triage categories 1 and 2 (highest acuity). Year to date, there have been 68,285 presentations (4,523 more presentations than the same period last year).

Cardiology is a particular area of pressure. There is also significant demand for Infant, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and anticipated growth in demand for forensic care, related to the expansion of Waikeria Prison.

Health Target Performance

Health NZ Waikato's performance in the fourth quarter of 2024-25 shows the following results against national targets:

- Faster cancer treatment was achieved for 95.9% of patients (target: 90%)
- 69.3% of ED patients were seen within six hours (target: 95%)
- Childhood immunisation at age two reached 74.5% (target: 95%)
- Elective treatment timeliness was at 71.0% (target: 95%)
- First specialist assessments within timeframes were 57.1% (target: 95%)

Current Projects

A range of activities are underway to address these challenges. These include:

- Exploring the feasibility of standing up additional acute inpatient beds and implementing Hospital in the Home.
- Implementing the Cardiology Recovery Plan, which includes increasing Cath Lab capacity to reduce length of stay, reduce waiting times and release inpatient capacity.
- Responding to the Waikeria Prison Expansion (600 beds in 2025, 810 beds in 2029). Implementation of Budget 2025 investment is in progress, this includes commissioning ten inpatient and eight step-down Forensic beds, development of intensive community team and workforce development.
- Works are progressing with the new build Adult Acute Inpatient Facility. Practical completion is due 11 August 2026. Development of the staffing matrix and model of care planning has commenced.

END.



Welcome to Braemar Hospital Minister Brown

28 Ohaupo Road, Hamilton Lake, Hamilton 3204

Braemar Hospital
www.braemarhospital.co.nz

Braemar Charitable Trust (Shareholder)
www.braemartrust.co.nz

Proudly Serving Our Community for Nearly 100 Years

Established: 1926 | **Owned by:** Braemar Charitable Trust (since 1970)

Purpose: Making Lives Better

Vision: To be New Zealand's most innovative provider of surgical excellence

Who We Are

- **Not-for-profit:** Financial surplus reinvested in hospital improvements or returned to our shareholder to fund their community health initiatives
- **100% NZ-owned:** Not owned by doctors, corporates, or overseas interests
- **No debt:** We own our land, buildings and equipment

Our Impact

- **11 theatres (including 2 endoscopy suites) & 2 cath labs**
- **109 beds** including 73 inpatient, 5 special care/ICU
- **Treat 11,000 – 12,000 patients/year:** 17% outsourced from Health NZ; 25% ACC; less than 5/1000 transferred to Waikato Hospital
- **More than 200 credentialed specialists and 350+ employees** (unionised – eTū, NZNO, NPANZ, Living Wage Accredited)
- **Annual patient satisfaction** 93-95 Net Promotor Score
- **421 volunteer hours & 127 free surgeries** in the first half of 2025 with more to come
- **26 training placements** for nurses, anaesthetic technicians and HCAs; plus orthopaedic fellow, Gateway students and student interns on scholarship via the Braemar Charitable Trust

Innovation & Excellence

- **Early adopter of technology:** Digital theatres, O-arm spinal surgical imaging and guidance system, Velys orthopaedic robot; and in 2025 Waikato's first da Vinci Xi surgical robot
- **Cater for all specialties except maternity & ophthalmology**
- **Resourced to perform complex surgeries** some not available elsewhere in NZ private sector
- **Recent investments:** New ward to increase patient capacity and upcoming renovations to improve patient experience
- **4-year recertification** following our last Ngā Paerewa Health & Disability Service Standard audit

Equity & Community

- **Braemar Charitable Trust:** Advancing healthcare equity and access
- **Disability employment & cultural awareness programmes**
- **Living Wage Accredited:** Only hospital in NZ with this status
- **Community Surgery Programme:** Free treatment for those in need

Our Challenges & Opportunities

- **No advantage of scale** compared to larger competitors
- **Under-utilisation of our capacity** especially cardiac and gynaecology
- **Collaborating with Health NZ & Southern Cross Insurance** to encourage utilisation of our technology, capacity and resulting quality and efficiency
- **Ready to do more:** Capacity and expertise to support public health needs
- **Active supporter of the new Medical School** with the intention to offer training placements

Minister of Health Visit | 24 October 2025 | 9.25am – 9.55am

CEO | Fiona Michel, MBA | [REDACTED]

Fiona is also Vice President of the NZ Private Surgical Hospitals Association, is a Ministerial appointee to the University of Waikato Council and Chairs the new Medical School Medical Advisory Board. She was an Executive at Auckland DHB (2016 – 2019) and was seconded to the Ministry of Health in 2021 to support the Covid-19 Vaccination and Immunisation Programme. 4 years at Braemar

GM Commercial Services | Leigh Singers, RN | [REDACTED]

20 years at Waikato DHB, 3 years at Braemar

GM Clinical Services | Pru Sheahan, RN | [REDACTED]

23 years at Braemar