

## Visit to Wairarapa Hospital

<b>Due to MO:</b>	20 February 2025	<b>Reference</b>	HNZ00079957
<b>To:</b>	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
<b>From:</b>	Robyn Shearer, Deputy Chief Executive, Te Ikaroa I Central Region		
<b>Copy to:</b>	n/a		
<b>Security level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>Priority</b>	Routine
<b>Consulted</b>	n/a		

### Contact for phone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Robyn Shearer	Deputy Chief Executive - Te Ikaroa I Central Region	s 9(2)(a)	x
Kieran McCann	Group Director Operations, Wairarapa		

### Attachments

**Appendix 1:** Runsheet and venue information

**Appendix 2:** Wairarapa – selected population information

**Appendix 3:** Performance against the health targets – national overview as of 18 February

## About the event

<b>Purpose</b>	Background information for your visit to Wairarapa Hospital
<b>Date</b>	Wednesday, 26 February 2025
<b>Time</b>	1:00pm – 2:00pm
<b>Venue</b>	Wairarapa Hospital, 96 Blair Street, Masterton
<b>Health New Zealand   Te Whatu Ora representatives</b>	Robyn Shearer, Deputy Chief Executive, Te Ikaroa I Central Region Kieran McCann, Group Director Operations, Wairarapa
<b>Media</b>	No media are expected
<b>Key topics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wairarapa District is making good gains to restore and achieve delivery against the Health Targets.</li><li>• As a smaller hospital, Wairarapa depends on regional collaboration, including sharing of specialists to help maintain local services.</li><li>• Orthopaedic service delivery and waitlists, and seismic issues with some hospital buildings, are the subject of ongoing local and media interest.</li></ul>

## Overview of Wairarapa District

### Population profile

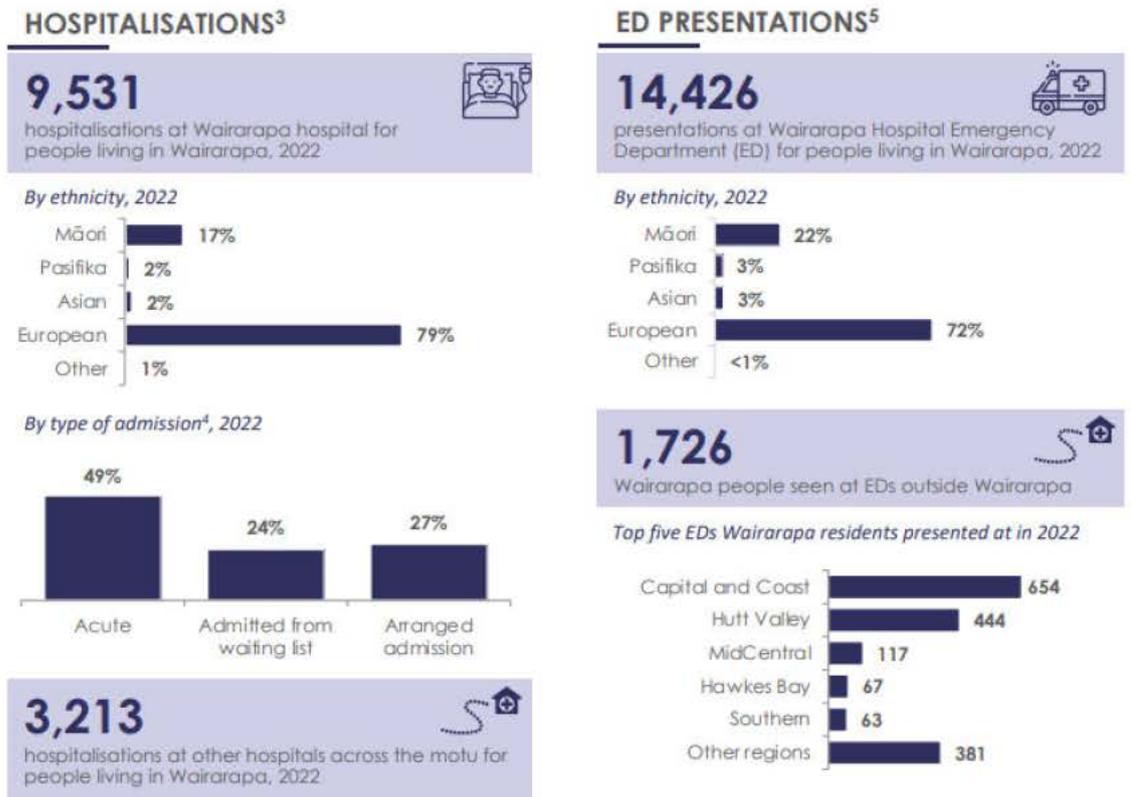
1. Wairarapa District has a population of around 52,000. The last four years have seen 10% population growth, with among the country's highest growth in aged population. Notably, the proportion of the over 65 population living alone continues to rise, while those in aged residential care (ARC) facilities is decreasing.
2. The district's actual service catchment extends north into the Tararua district, adding a further 5,000 - 7,000 people for whom the hospital in Masterton and other community health providers deliver services. (Around 11% of all hospital presentations are from out of district.)
3. Wairarapa sits 12th out of 20 districts on overall population deprivation, with the average household income substantially below the national average.
4. Population information for Wairarapa District is presented in **Appendix 2**.

### Hospital and Health Services

5. Wairarapa District Hospital delivers secondary services, employing 421 FTE. The hospital provides specialist inpatient and outpatient services, diagnostics for the district (including X-Ray imaging and CT scanning) as well as community nursing and outreach specialist care.
6. The hospital has around 9,500 in-patient admissions each year, evenly spread across

planned and acute. The emergency department (ED) sees 16,200 patients per year. Of whom some 15% are from out of district.

- Staffing in the hospital is currently stable, and a number of chronic challenges have been addressed, particularly in General Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and General Medicine. Other longstanding workforce issues are covered elsewhere in this briefing.
- Information relating to general and ED admissions is presented in the following graphics.



- Tertiary and more complex hospital treatments are supported by neighbouring districts with around 3,200 hospitalisations a year to other districts for patients from the Wairarapa. These mostly occur at Wellington Regional and Hutt hospitals.
- Wairarapa hospital is working in a more networked way with other Central Region hospitals to support access to secondary specialist services. The hospital has commenced shared work with MidCentral and Whanganui Districts for urology, and Capital Coast and Hutt Valley (CCHV) District for breast cancer, plastics, orthopaedics and Ear Nose and Throat (ENT).
- Recent *Shorter Stays in ED* data appears to validate the new model of care for the hospital's ED, and step changes in Health Target delivery are being seen. The ED's busiest periods have been identified and changes enacted to the operating model to improve patient flow and wait times.

### Primary and Community Care

- Primary care services are provided by Tu Ora Compass Health, the Primary Health Organisation. Recent efforts to recruit GPs into the district have resulted in greater

capacity and more practices taking on new patients. Work has recommenced with Masterton Medical Limited (the district's largest practice) on its plans for a new practice adjacent to the hospital.

### Private Hospital Development

13. A private hospital, Selina Sutherland, is housed within the Wairarapa Hospital site and shares theatre capacity with the district.
14. A new standalone private surgical hospital is at the final planning and consenting stage. It is intended to be built on private land adjacent to the hospital and the new private primary care facility.
15. Discussions are continuing with the provider about how best to use any additional private capacity.

### Performance against the health targets

16. Overall, Wairarapa district has been making good gains to restore and achieve delivery against the Health Targets.

Current target	Wairarapa Hospital
<i>Faster cancer treatment — 90% of patients to receive cancer management within 31 days of the decision to treat.</i>	<b>100%</b> in December 2024 [most recent available data].
<i>Improved immunisation for children — 95% of children to be fully immunised at 24 months of age.</i>	<b>82.6%</b> [12 weeks to 16 February 2025].
<i>Shorter stays in emergency departments — 95% of patients to be admitted, discharged or transferred from an ED within six hours.</i>	Has been met intermittently; currently at <b>84.7%</b> [week ending 16 February 2025]. <i>See also paragraph 11 above.</i>
<i>Shorter wait times for a first specialist assessment — 95% of patients wait less than four months for an FSA.</i>	<b>68%</b> of people have waited less than four months for an FSA [as of week ending 26 January 2025]. <i>This is an area of particular focus.</i>
<i>Shorter wait times for treatment — 95% of patients to wait less than four months for elective treatment.</i>	<b>56.4%</b> of people have waited less than four months for elective treatment [as of week ending 26 January 2025]. <i>This is an area of particular focus.</i>

17. A national overview of delivery against the health targets (with data extracted on 18 February, but current as of various dates/date ranges) is provided in **Appendix 3**.

### Infrastructure and investment at Wairarapa Hospital

#### General refurbishment

18. Recent upgrades to the hospital campus include a refurbishment of the outpatient area (a re-fit to include a triaging area, installation of an audiology booth and clinic space to better support future models of care) and a Senior Medical Officer's hub (clinical workspace and regional/national remote networking). These upgrades, alongside expanded use of virtual

consultations, will reduce patient travel requirements, including to other districts.

## **Diagnostic Upgrades**

19. Wairarapa's CT scanner is being replaced, with the project currently at procurement stage. The replacement scanner is expected to be in place in the second half of 2025. A proposal to secure a MRI scanner in the district is also being prepared to address the increasing volume of patients requiring travel to Hutt and Wellington Regional hospitals to receive imaging services, as well as improve imaging standards for core services in Masterton.

## **Endoscopy unit**

20. Wairarapa Hospital's endoscopy unit requires upgrading to meet accreditation requirements. Modelling on projections and future infrastructure requirements for endoscopy within the district's catchment area and support options for neighbouring districts has been completed and concept design is now underway.

21. S9(2)(f)(iv)

## **Current issues**

### **Wairarapa Hospital seismic issues**

22. In 2023, Health NZ brought a claim of negligence against Masterton District Council for issuing a Code of Compliance Certificate when the Wairarapa Hospital was found not to be code compliant. Nor did it meet the Importance Level 4 (IL4) standard which requires buildings and facilities designated as essential facilities to be operational immediately after an earthquake or other disaster event. A hearing took place at the High Court in Wellington in August 2023. A confidential settlement was reached, and reasons for the need for confidentiality have been discussed with your office.
23. The majority of the building has been remediated to achieve a minimum New Building Standard (NBS) of 34% at IL4, with peripheral structures such as the walkways, cafeteria and ambulance bay having been structurally strengthened to NBS 34% (IL3).
24. There has been recent media interest in the outcome of the claim and its implications for Wairarapa Hospital. To note:
- Health NZ is bound by the agreed confidentiality clause;
  - All public health property or maintenance improvement comes from the national Health NZ infrastructure budget;
  - All hospitals are subject to national priority in the Infrastructure Investment Plan which is yet to be approved by Cabinet.

### **Sub-regional services**

25. Several services are provided in collaboration with other districts. In particular, Wairarapa

has been working with other districts on Orthopaedics, ENT and Urology to develop sustainability options relating to the senior medical workforce.

26. Urology has recently transferred to a sub-regional partnership with MidCentral and Whanganui. The new service model commenced last month, with early success in attracting new surgeons to the region and building integrated models of care to address variable patient access.
27. Challenges remain in the provision of orthopaedic surgery. From 2021, recruitment and deployment of orthopaedic surgeons transferred to CCHV (due to recruitment challenges). Recent resignations from those positions have reduced planned-care surgeon time in Wairarapa. This is being mitigated, with one surgeon recruited last month and two further surgeons expected to commence in the coming months. Waitlists and prioritising patients continue to be managed according to the national Clinical Prioritisation Assessment Criteria through use of these resources and the contracting of locum surgeons.
28. *Acute* orthopaedic surgery has not been carried out at Wairarapa Hospital since 2021, and patients are instead transferred to CCHV.
29. Similarly, provision of ENT services has been subject to decreasing availability of visiting specialists from Hutt Hospital. A recovery plan is in place to address this and the flow-on impact to treatment and FSA waitlists.
30. There is presently high local and media interest relating (in particular) to orthopaedic service levels. The Group Director Operations hopes to meet with local media in the week beginning 24 February to share more information about current activity underway to address waiting times.

## Appendix 1: Runsheet and location map - Wairarapa Hospital visit, 26 February

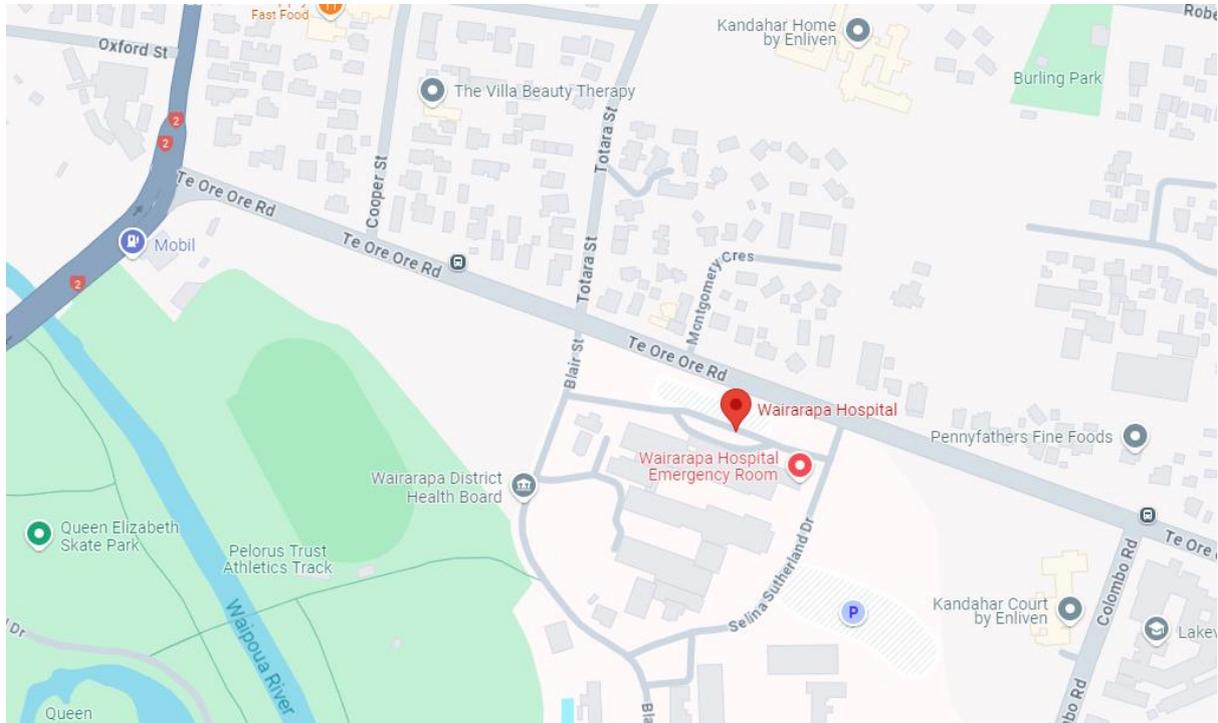
### Runsheet

Main contact: Kieren McCann, Group Director Operations - 021 181 9980

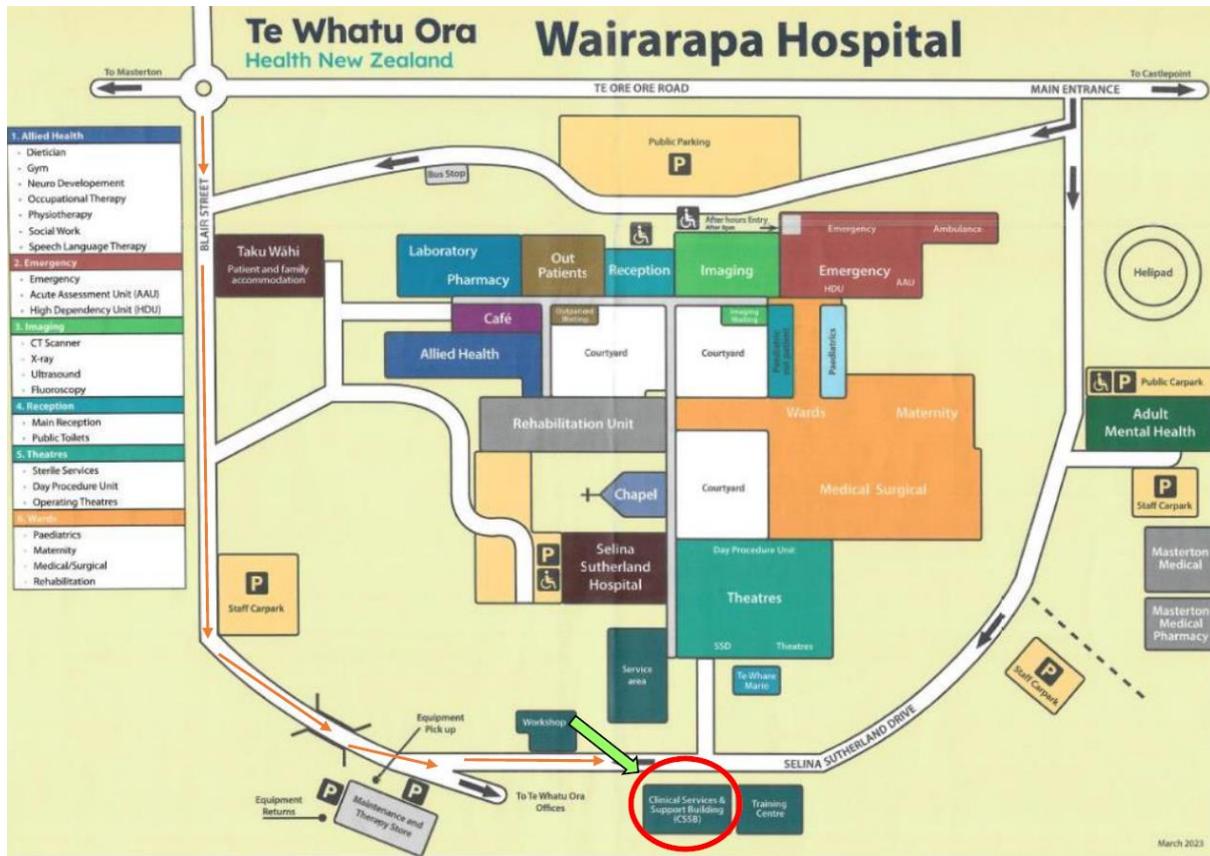
Time	Activity	Location	HSS Lead
13:00 Arrive	Meet and greet on arrival	In Front of Corporate Support and Services Block (CSSB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Robyn Shearer (<i>Deputy Chief Executive Central Region</i>)</li> <li>▪ Kieran McCann (<i>Group Director Operations, Wairarapa</i>)</li> <li>▪ Janeen Cross (<i>Maori Health Manager, Wairarapa</i>)</li> </ul>
13:05- 13:25	Round Table with Senior Leaders	CSSB Lecture Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Robyn Shearer (<i>Regional DCE</i>)</li> <li>▪ Kieran McCann (<i>GDO</i>)</li> <li>▪ Steve Earnshaw (<i>Chief Medical Officer</i>)</li> <li>▪ Janeen Cross (<i>Maori Health Manager</i>)</li> <li>▪ Gemma Askew (<i>GM Planned Care</i>)</li> <li>▪ Belinda Bennet (<i>GM Acute Care</i>)</li> <li>▪ Phil Halligan (<i>Director of Nursing</i>)</li> <li>▪ Michelle Thomas (<i>Director of Midwifery</i>)</li> <li>▪ Nicky Rivers (<i>Director, Allied Health Services</i>)</li> </ul>
13:30- 13:55	Tour of Hospital Site - Walk through facility starting at front of hospital	Front door of Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Robyn Shearer (<i>DCE</i>)</li> <li>▪ Kieran McCann (<i>GDO</i>)</li> </ul>
		Emergency Department	Party Joined by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Norman Gray (<i>Senior Medical Officer, ED</i>)</li> <li>▪ Belinda Bennett (<i>GM Acute Care</i>)</li> </ul>
		Medical Surgical Ward	Party Joined by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Niels Dugan (<i>Senior Medical Officer, Medical &amp; Surgical Ward</i>)</li> <li>▪ Kudzie Howe (<i>Charge Nurse Manager, Medical &amp; Surgical Ward</i>)</li> <li>▪ Belinda Bennett (<i>GM Acute Care</i>)</li> </ul>
		Theatres and Clinics	Party Joined by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clare French (<i>Gen. Surgeon</i>)</li> <li>▪ Gemma Askew (<i>GM Planned Care</i>)</li> </ul>
13:55 - 14:00	Return to CSSB for departure	Wrap up and farewell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Robyn Shearer (<i>Regional DCE</i>)</li> <li>▪ Kieran McCann (<i>GDO</i>)</li> </ul>

## Parking at Wairarapa Hospital

A car park will be available outside Wairarapa Hospital's Corporate Support and Services Block, entrance off Blair Street. Go through the gates and stay on the road as it veers right. The Corporate Support and Services Block will be on your right.



# Wairarapa Hospital Campus Map



## Appendix 2: Wairarapa population information



### INCOME & VALUE

Average household income and property value, Q4 2022



**72.8%**

of people in Wairarapa were overweight or obese, compared to two thirds (66%) of the national population



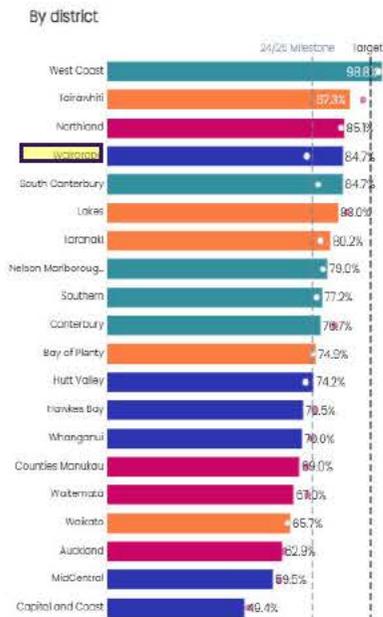
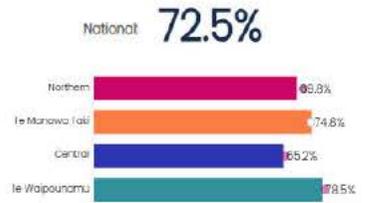
In Wairarapa, population estimates for 2022 indicate

**23%**

of our population is aged 65 years and over, being higher than the national figure of 16%

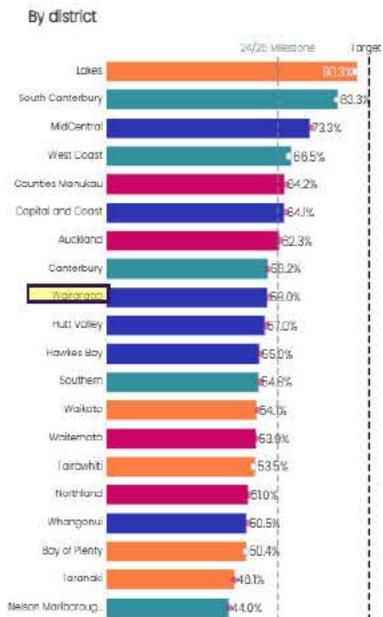
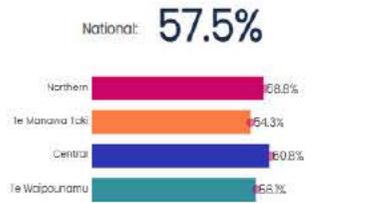
# Appendix 3: Performance against the health targets<sup>1</sup>

## Shorter Stays in ED within 6 hours, Week ending 16 Feb 25



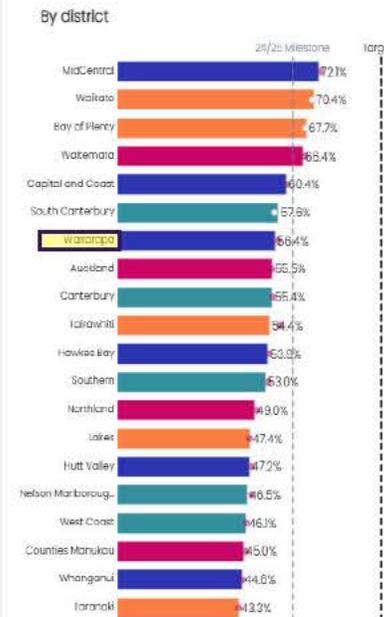
Circles indicate previous week's performance  
○ = improvement in reported week  
● = deterioration in reported week

## Waiting for FSA ≤ 4 months, Week ending 26 Jan 25



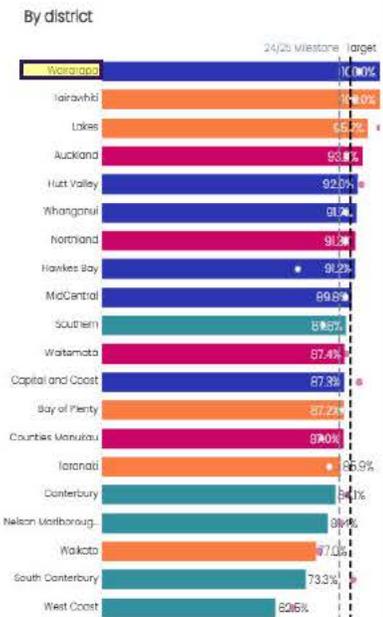
Circles indicate previous week's performance  
○ = improvement in reported week  
● = deterioration in reported week

## Waiting for Treatment ≤ 4 months, Week ending 26 Jan 25



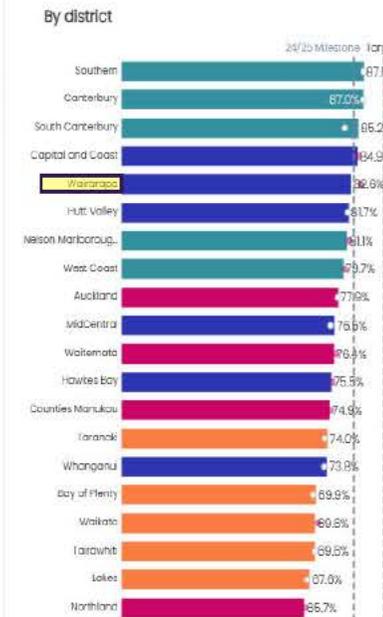
Circles indicate previous week's performance  
○ = improvement in reported week  
● = deterioration in reported week

## Faster Cancer Treatment within 31 days, for Dec-24



Circles indicate previous month (Nov-24) performance  
○ = improvement in reported month  
● = deterioration in reported month

## Immunisation Coverage at age 24 months, 12 weeks to 16 Feb 25



Circles indicate previous week's performance (12 weeks rolling)  
○ = improvement in reported week  
● = deterioration in reported week

<sup>1</sup> Data extracted on 18 February 2025.