



## Media Release

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**To:** Marlborough Media  
**From:** Andy O'Malley, Communications Administrator  
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**Date:** 27 March 2008  
**Subject:** **Decisions on Future Staffing for Wairau Hospital and Health Centre**

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A new workforce model for Wairau Hospital has been approved by the Project Steering Group.

Final decisions on workforce issues were made after an extensive process of staff consultation over the new model of care to be introduced in the redesigned hospital. These would be phased in during the next 12 to 24 months.

Submissions from hospital staff prompted the Project Steering Group to agree to an extra four full-time-equivalent (FTE) positions than had been originally planned.

The new workforce model also made provision for stronger staff leadership at Wairau Hospital and ensured all leadership roles for Wairau's services would be based locally. The role of the Health Care Assistants was also extended in the workforce model.

NMDHB chief operating officer Keith Rusholme said staff and their unions were extensively consulted and all feedback has been considered.

"We have given all the submissions full consideration. This new way of working needs staff support if it is to succeed and staff had many good points to make. The increase in staffing numbers is a direct result of their representations," he said.

Some staff roles and job descriptions would change under the new workforce model but there would be no staff redundancies; no reduction in hospital services. And re-training or up-skilling would be available to staff required to take on new roles or responsibilities.

Mr Rusholme said decisions on the new workforce model were made on the basis of 85% bed occupancy at the hospital. The model made allowance for that occupancy rate to rise beyond that level from time to time, he said.

"I want to emphasise that the figures we have used in this workforce model will remain under constant review to ensure safe staffing levels are maintained at the new Wairau Hospital and Health Centre," he said.

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