



Media Release

To: Media

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Subject: **Turning of the Sod Ceremony for Wairau Hospital Redevelopment**

The start of site preparation for the redeveloped Wairau Hospital will be marked by a 'Turning of the Sod' Ceremony and Site Blessing this Wednesday (23/07).

Nelson Marlborough District Health Board, Chief Operating Officer, Keith Rusholme said, "The effort and time that has been dedicated to the project by staff has been commendable and has assisted with the speedy completion of design.

"The turning of the sod is significant as it marks the start of an exciting future in the delivery of health services for the community of Marlborough."

Project Director, Martin Ridgway said, "Commencing site preparation, a precursor to the construction works, is an exciting time for the staff of Wairau Hospital and the Marlborough Community. This follows a lengthy staff consultation for the new design and is rewarding for all involved to see some physical progress."

The first stage of construction includes new facilities for; Inpatient wards, Allied Health (Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, etc) and Assessment Treatment and Rehabilitation (AT&R) facilities.

The first phase is expected to be completed in April 2009. The next phase would then begin which included demolition and refurbishment work on; Imaging, Emergency, Outpatients and Laboratories.

Retired General Surgeon and Board Member, John Inder will join children of Wairau Hospital Staff in 'turning the sod'.

The DHB, in conjunction with local Iwi will bury a pakohe and gold coins to mark the occasion and the partnership agreement between Iwi and the DHB.

DHB Chaplain Kevin Gwynne and Kamatua Graeme Grennell will lead the Site Blessing which will provide spiritual safety for the builders and the project throughout the construction.

ENDS