

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**29 January 2016**

**New operating theatre to increase capacity for elective services**

Public and private elective services consumers will benefit from a new operating theatre to be added to the Wairau Hospital Theatre Complex.

The Board of Churchill Private Hospital (Churchill) has entered into a Heads of Agreement with the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board (NMDHB) to construct the new theatre.

NMDHB Chief Executive Chris Fleming says that the demand for elective services – public and private – is expected to increase significantly as the population grows and ages over the next two decades.

“Improved access to elective services is one of our Health Targets. We will reduce waiting times and improve equity of access to services so that patients receive similar access regardless of where they live.

“We will also deliver a minimum of 7,445 elective surgeries across both Wairau and Nelson hospitals,” Mr Fleming says.

Churchill General Manager Nicki Stretch says that broadening the range of elective services offered at Churchill is a key focus for the next three years.

“Private health insurance and private hospitals play a vital role in the delivery of elective surgery in New Zealand. Thanks to the vision of the NMDHB and local specialists over 20 years ago, Churchill Private Hospital is now firmly established as a provider of private elective surgery in Marlborough – and the benefits to our local population are significant.

“The additional theatre space will attract more visiting specialists to the region, meaning more local people can stay local for their private elective surgical and diagnostic needs,” Ms Stretch says.

A project steering group comprising Churchill and NMDHB representatives will be responsible for theatre layout and design, assessing options, ensuring all legalities and compliance issues are met and ensuring minimal disruption during the construction phase.

## **Additional information**

- Last year Churchill conducted 1,336 private elective surgeries from the Wairau Hospital Theatre Complex.
- In the 2014/15 financial year the NMDHB conducted 6,254 elective surgeries across its Wairau and Nelson hospitals
- In the 2015/2016 year NMDHB is required, as one of its Health Targets, to conduct a minimum of 7,445 elective surgeries across its Wairau and Nelson hospitals
- By the end of 2017 Churchill is anticipating some 1,700 procedures per year, with capacity to grow this to over 2,000 per year
- For information about elective services offered by the NMDHB go to <http://www.nmdhb.govt.nz/ElectiveServices.aspx>
- For information about the Churchill Private Hospital Trust go to <http://churchillhospital.co.nz/>

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