

MEDIA RELEASE

25 February 2016

Update on clean-up at Wairua Hospital ED and HDU

Good progress has been made with clean-up at Wairua Hospital after the ED and HDU facilities were flooded yesterday afternoon.

Incident controller and CEO Chris Fleming says that ED is largely operational, and work is being carried out to dry out the affected areas in the HDU and undertake a final equipment check before HDU is re-opened.

An assessment and decision will be made later this afternoon. Yesterday, patients in HDU and ED were immediately transferred into the in-patient and day-stay facilities when water started to pour through the ceiling after a pipe was accidentally severed during onsite construction work.

Mr Fleming says that no harm was caused to any staff, patients or visitors and the appropriate precautions were put into place. These included:

- the erection of a St John's tent outside ED to provide capacity for ED patients
- having emergency generators on stand-by
- notifying general practitioners and other hospitals' ED departments to warn them about reduced ED capacity at Wairua Hospital
- rescheduling 12 public patients' elective day-stay procedures booked for today (excluding any cancer-related procedures)

Mr Fleming says that operating theatres, radiology department and resuscitation unit remain unaffected.

"We will be making a decision on elective activity for tomorrow (26th February) later today, however patients at this stage should assume that their procedure will occur, and they can be assured that if we have to reschedule our staff will contact them later today."

He emphasises that it is important that Marlborough residents reserve visits to ED for real emergencies, and to visit their GP or after-hours urgent medical centre instead.

An investigation into how the issues arose which led to the incident will occur to ensure we minimise the chance of any recurrence, particularly while the construction work on the Arthur Wickes Building is being carried out.

Ends

Contact: Stephanie Gray, Communications Manager, Nelson Marlborough District Health Board
DDI: 03 546 1824, Internal ext 7824 or cell 027 4466 799