

MEDIA RELEASE

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Murchison Health Centre to join Nelson Bays Primary Health

Murchison Health Centre is joining Nelson Bays Primary Health, the primary health organisation (PHO) that organises and delivers primary and community health services across the Nelson and Tasman district.

Andrew Goodger, Alliance Support Manager for Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH), says that all Murchison Health Centre patients will be asked to sign a new enrolment form and some may notice beneficial changes. These include:

- Reduced fees
- Easier access to appointments
- Timely appointment and recall reminders
- Free visits for children under 13 years (from 1 December 2018)
- Access to free health programmes
- Access to a range of free aged-related services including childhood immunisation, cervical screening, breast screening, diabetes annual reviews and flu vaccination

Mr Goodger encourages people to talk to centre staff if they are unsure of the changes, and notes that enrolment under the new centre structure is optional.

“You can choose not to enrol and you will still be able to receive services at the health centre, but you would miss out in some of the benefits noted above.”

Mr Goodger says the new arrangement will also benefit NMH and Murchison Health Centre staff. Benefits include:

- Being able to access clinician education provided by the PHO.
- Ensuring NMH has a fuller understanding of its population; PHOs in New Zealand collate information about the people in the region they serve so that NMH makes better decisions about regional health services.

How is this different from the current situation?

The PHO currently contracts for, or directly provides, all the general practice services across Nelson and Tasman except for Murchison. Instead, the Murchison centre is managed by Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH).

NMH will continue to manage the centre and will also continue to employ the Murchison staff but, in 2019, will sign a contract with the PHO so that Murchison patients benefit from PHO services and expertise.

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