

Waikato Public Health Bulletin

Public Health Waikato

July/August 2025 | Hōngongoi/Hereturikōkā 2025

Tēnā koutou katoa. We hope you enjoy this edition of the Waikato Public Health Bulletin and we welcome your feedback.

The bulletin is written for GPs and colleagues in primary & community care.

In this month's bulletin:

1. Braemar Charitable Trust Community Surgery Day
2. Staff news
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4. Notifiable diseases trends

September 13 set for free community surgery day

Braemar Charitable Trust has announced Saturday 13 September as its next full Community Surgery Day. It follows an extremely successful two Saturdays of free surgeries in late 2024 in which more than 70 people received surgeries or procedures.

The Trust owns Braemar Hospital, one of New Zealand's largest private hospitals. Surgeons and anaesthetists who are credentialed to work at Braemar donate their time for the surgeries, and the Trust pays for drugs, supplies and consumables, which Braemar Hospital provides at cost.

Surgery recipients are referred by specialists, GPs, dentists and nurse practitioners as well community health providers and are aimed at people who have been declined or have little chance of surgery within a reasonable time frame in the public system and who don't have insurance, ACC, nor the financial means to pay for the procedure in the private system.

In the most recent financial year ended 31 March 2025, Braemar Charitable Trust enabled 159 free surgeries for those in need, an increase of 124% on the previous year.



Photo: Pictured at a Braemar Charitable Trust Community surgery day in November 2024, from left, Trinity Koha Dental Clinic Coordinator Julia Parker, Tui Dental's Fiona Koshy, Trust Manager Paula Baker, and Mercedes Dizon from Tui Dental.

The Trust spent \$88,000 on associated costs but estimates these surgeries would have cost \$500,000 if performed privately.

Trust Manager Paula Baker says Braemar Hospital will kindly open four theatres and one endoscopy suite on Saturday 13 September just for the free surgeries, and between 20 and 25 patients are likely to have surgeries or procedures. Thanks to donations of time from surgeons and anaesthetists, these will include general surgeries, gynaecological surgeries, endoscopies, and children's general surgery and ENT procedures. A free dental mobile clinic will also see patients.

More than 70 staff volunteered to help during last year's surgery days, and Ms Baker says they will be offered the chance to be part of the day once more. "We had an amazing response to the call for help in November – to the point where we had to turn people away. On the day, so many patients commented on how special they felt knowing that people were giving up a Saturday to help others. It's very inspiring seeing how our specialists and staff come together for our community."

Suppliers to the hospital even got on board, supporting the Community Surgery Day by donating nearly \$9000 of goods and consumables for the procedures.

Already in the first three months of this financial year, the Trust has spent \$27,000 on 52 free surgeries and procedures performed by specialists adding free surgeries to their existing Braemar Hospital patient lists, or through community based initiatives. These surgeries and procedures happen year-round as part of the Trust's kaupapa of advancing health equity and access.

"We are seeing increasing numbers of referrals, and providing the surgeries helps relieve pressure on Waikato Hospital," Ms Baker says. "We encourage GPs, nurse practitioners and dentists to review patient lists and see if some of their patients are eligible for our free surgeries and apply to us." [Referral forms can be found here.](#)

Braemar Charitable Trust has also made it simple for anyone to donate to its work via an [online donations portal](#) where donors can choose to fund a specific procedure. For example, a donation of \$1500 will enable 1-2 children's ENT surgeries which would cost between \$2700 and \$5300 if performed in the private sector.

To find out more about the Trust, visit braemartrust.co.nz.

ECE respiratory illnesses

In response to queries received by NPHS Waikato we have provided advice overleaf regarding respiratory illnesses in the setting of Early Childhood Education centres (ECEs).

Staff News

Dr Leo Burnside has completed his House Officer rotation at the Public Health Service and moves back to the hospital for the next quarter. Leo has been an excellent member of the clinical team and we wish him well for the rest of his career.

Leo is succeeded by House Officer **Dr Daham Nanayakkara** who has started his three-month Public Health rotation. Daham has already contributed excellent mahi in his time at NPHS Waikato, including writing and editing items in this bulletin.



Photo: PGY2 House Officer Dr Daham Nanayakkara.

Public Health Medicine registrar Dr Julia Fu has completed her attachment at NPHS Waikato. We wish Julia all the best! She is succeeded by new registrar **Dr Vinay Patel** who is keen to be part of the work at NPHS Waikato, including compiling, writing and editing items in this bulletin.



Photo: Public Health Medicine registrar Dr Vinay Patel.

Waikato Public Health

Respiratory Illnesses in Early Childhood Education Centres

Unwell children or staff or cleaners should stay at home to recover and stay away from Early Childhood Education centres (ECEs) until they are feeling well and free of viral symptoms like a **runny nose, coughing** or **sneezing** and **fevers**. There is no set amount of time for recovery and those who have been unwell can come back to the ECE as soon as they are feeling well.

Any respiratory virus can lead to children being unwell with **breathlessness** and if this happens, they need to see a health professional **as soon as possible**. Signs of difficulty breathing include: **rapid breathing, using the neck and stomach muscles** to breathe, a **heaving chest and rib cage, wheezing**, and **poor feeding**.

If a child is unwell see a health professional or phone Healthline on **0800 611 116**

Children, staff and carers who are unwell:

Stay at home – anyone who is unwell should stay at home until symptom free and feeling well. Once they are well, they can come back to school/ECE/kura.

Handwashing – ensure hands are washed before and after eating, after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose and after touching something that could be contaminated.

Cleaning – anything that is touched regularly (including door/cupboard/drawer handles and toys) should be washed in warm water and detergent at the end of the day, or if they are sneezed on or mouthed at any time.

Ventilate – ensure windows are open if possible (both at home and in Early Childhood Education Centres) to circulate fresh air.

There is no need to diagnose the virus using expensive rapid diagnostic tests. Knowing this does not change how tamariki should be managed (stay at home to recover) or seek medical help if breathless or unwell.

Staff (including teachers, kaiako and cleaners) who are unwell should NOT enter ECEs even if there are no tamariki present – some viruses can remain on surfaces and spread infection to others.

Parents, carers and whaanau who are sick with a viral illness should NOT enter ECEs. They can stay outside for a short time, wear a mask and/or stay in the car for drop-offs. They can work and come inside if they are feeling well.

Respiratory viral outbreaks in ECEs are self-limiting and cleaning and remaining away when unwell are the main control measures to be taken; it is good practice to maintain a log of absences and ECEs are welcome to contact Public Health for further advice.

More information on respiratory illnesses can be found [here](#).

Medical Officers of Health (MOoH)

Dr Felicity Dumble, Dr Richard Wall, Dr Richard Vipond, Dr Elizabeth Becker, Dr Geoff Cramp, Dr Kaitlin Greenway

After Hours:

MOoH: 021 359 650

HPO: 021 999 521

If there is no answer, please contact Waikato Hospital's switchboard 07 839 8899 and ask for the on-call MOoH.

During Office Hours:

Public Health (MOoH or HPO): (07) 838 2569 Notifications: 07 838 2569 ext. 22041 or 22020

Notifications outside Hamilton: 0800 800 977 Fax: 07 838 2382

Email: notifiablediseases@waikatodhb.health.nz

Notifiable Diseases – Trends

Notifiable diseases (Waikato District) - period to: August 2025

*Stats NZ estimated 8.69% of the population resided in Waikato in 2021

Disease name	Waikato cases per month			Cases per month over the last year (mean)		
	June	July	Trend	Waikato	National	% Waikato*
Botulism	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Brucellosis	0	0	-	0.0	0.1	0
Campylobacteriosis	22	41	▲	57.3	553.0	10
COVID-19	333	218	▼	511.8	6,507.8	8
Cryptosporidiosis	2	0	▼	7.3	73.6	10
Decompression sickness	0	0	-	0.0	0.2	0
Dengue fever	1	3	▲	1.6	23.3	7
Diphtheria	0	0	-	0.0	0.3	0
Gastroenteritis - unknown cause	1	3	▲	2.3	20.8	11
Gastroenteritis / foodborne intoxication	6	4	▼	7.6	22.7	33
Giardiasis	12	11	▼	11.2	82.1	14
Haemophilus influenzae type b	0	0	-	0.0	0.1	0
Hepatitis A	1	1	-	1.3	6.8	19
Hepatitis B	0	0	-	0.0	1.8	0
Hepatitis C	2	5	▲	0.8	3.8	21
Hepatitis NOS	0	0	-	0.1	0.5	20
Hydatid disease	0	0	-	0.0	0.3	0
Invasive pneumococcal disease	6	5	▼	6.0	74.4	8
Latent tuberculosis infection	2	2	-	2.9	11.8	25
Lead Poisoning	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Legionellosis	0	0	-	1.4	16.0	9
Leprosy	0	0	-	0.0	0.2	0
Leptospirosis	0	1	▲	1.9	8.9	21
Listeriosis	0	0	-	0.0	3.2	0
Listeriosis - perinatal	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Malaria	0	1	▲	0.3	3.5	9
Measles	0	0	-	0.0	1.0	0
Meningococcal disease	0	0	-	0.3	3.6	8
Mumps	0	0	-	0.2	1.3	15
Murine Typhus	0	0	-	0.0	0.3	0
Pertussis	25	5	▼	13.2	278.1	5
Q fever	0	0	-	0.1	0.3	33
Rheumatic fever - initial attack	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Rheumatic fever - recurrent attack	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Salmonellosis	5	4	▼	6.1	88.1	7
Shigellosis	1	3	▲	0.7	16.3	4
Taeniasis	0	0	-	0.0	0.3	0
Tetanus	0	0	-	0.0	0.2	0
Tuberculosis disease - new case	5	9	▲	4.4	36.7	12
Tuberculosis disease - relapse or reactivation	0	1	▲	0.2	1.6	13
Tuberculosis infection - on preventive treatment	0	0	-	0.1	0.3	33
Typhoid fever	0	1	▲	0.8	5.0	16
VTEC/STEC infection	11	19	▲	15.9	109.4	15
Yersiniosis	4	13	▲	7.0	110.7	6