

Hub of good health in Kihikihi

A community health hub in the Te Awamutu satellite community of Kihikihi, NZ, is providing a wealth of health and wellbeing services for the small town and its people.

By Rangi Paraha and
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MEMBERS of the Rotary Club of Kihikihi, NZ, and Te Awamutu Medical Centre came together with the idea of establishing a Community Health Hub in Kihikihi.

The idea was enthusiastically supported by local organisations. Kihikihi Primary School Board and Principal provided a venue on the school grounds, which the Rotary Club of Kihikihi decorated, supplying curtains, an examination couch and screens to allow for private consultations.

Pinnacle Midland PHO provided some innovation funding and Te Awamutu Maori Women's Welfare league, Sport Waikato and Inkdrop Graphic Design all played a part in the project.

The Hub was launched in March 2017, opened by the local Mayor Jim Mylchreest at a family fun day.

Since the launch, Te Awamutu Medical Centre has provided a GP clinic every Wednesday for students of Kihikihi School and their younger

siblings. The service has proved to be beneficial to the students, with the truancy rate decreasing and parents being educated on supporting their children to becoming well.

Cardiovascular risk assessment clinics are being provided thanks to the kind donation of a CardioChek Analyser by Mercury Energy. This allows for free heart health checks onsite via a finger prick, as opposed to travelling to Pathlab in Te Awamutu for a blood test. It also gives an instant result.

Free cervical smear clinics are also provided for those who find travelling to Te Awamutu difficult.

Te Wananga O Aotearoa runs a young adults' program, which provides an avenue of support for Rangatahi Māori to becoming healthier adults.

Life Unlimited has provided free monthly hearing assessments for adults.

Plunket holds a monthly "Well Child" clinic for local mothers who have no transport to travel to the Plunket rooms in Te Awamutu.

Diabetes checks and education have given patients the opportunity to learn more about diabetes and how to control it through diet and exercise, with the support of a Sport Waikato Active and Well, TAMC diabetes nurse and the community health worker.

The Rotary Club of Kihikihi is now looking at extending the Kihikihi Health Hub to introduce GP clinics for adults and a men's health clinic, as well as running all the health services presently operating. •



TOP: Dr Mary Ballantyne, left, president elect of the Rotary Club of Kihikihi Lona Paul, club member Rangi Paraha, and secretary Carol Turner outside the Health Hub. ABOVE: Health care assistant Sheryl Olsen, with Dr Mary Ballantyne, back left, Lona Paul and Rangi Paraha.