Profile of the Gisborne Hospital and the Hospital Chaplaincy Service in the Tairawhiti DHB area

The Tairawhiti DHB is a provider and funder of public hospital and health services to people on the East Coast of the North Island. Tairawhiti’s population is around 45,000 (30,000 live in Gisborne City). Tairawhiti has a larger proportion of Maori (46.4%) than any other region in New Zealand and with Pacific Island people at 2.7% this makes up a Polynesian population of 49%. Tairawhiti also has proportionately the largest youth population nationally, plus a high level of people aged 65 + compared to New Zealand as a whole. Maori make up 60% of admissions to Gisborne Hospital.

Gisborne Hospital provides health and disability services for a large area of the East Coast of the North Island, stretching from beyond Hicks Bay in the north to the Wharerata Whanauora Ranges in the south.

Gisborne Hospital is a comprehensive secondary hospital. It was opened in 1985 and is modern and well equipped. Health and disability services provide for: medical (24 bed ward), general surgery (22 bed ward), a 3 room operating suite, orthopaedics, mental health & addiction services, gynecology, obstetrics, maternity (700 approx births a year), child health, intensive care / high dependence (2 bed unit) and coronary care (4 bed unit), assessment and rehabilitation, emergency department (14,000 patients a year), laboratory, radiology, physiotherapy, dietetics, occupational therapy, audiology, Maori health, social work, domiciliary care and palliative care.

Tairawhiti DHB is committed to the needs of Maori and has developed a Maori health focus which respects the tikanga of Maori patients. This is supported by the organisational bi-cultural and Treaty of Waitangi policies of the DHB.

Gisborne Hospital gets clinical backup and support from Waikato, Auckland and Starship Hospitals. This includes the urgent transfer of patients to these hospitals when required. Some patients also transfer to Palmerston North for oncology treatment.

The Chaplaincy Services
The Chaplaincy team at Gisborne Hospital consists of one full-time Ecumenical Chaplain as well as a team of volunteer chaplaincy assistants. (A locum chaplain will be available to cover the full-time chaplain’s leave etc)

The Chaplaincy Committee
The Tairawhiti Healthcare Chaplaincy Association Inc is responsible for the support and management of the chaplaincy team based at the Gisborne Hospital on behalf of the Interchurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy Trust Board. The committee is made up of representatives of the hospital management and denominational churches in the DHB area. The committee meets with the chaplain and chaplaincy assistants regularly, administers the ICHC personnel policies and procedures, fund raises and promotes the needs of the chaplaincy service to the Churches and community.

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