Chaplaincy to the Waikato Hospital and Waikato DHB

The Waikato District Health Board

The Waikato District Health Board (Waikato DHB) is a progressive publicly-funded health organisation. It is responsible for funding and providing services for the 320,000 people living in the Waikato district of the central North Island. The district, is centred upon the city of Hamilton. It spans from the east to west coasts, stretches south to the ski fields of the North Island volcanic plateau and covers large areas of farmland and unspoilt native bush.

Hospital and Services

Health care is provided through Waikato Hospital, the specialist regional base hospital in Hamilton, and a network of community hospitals and services throughout the region. In addition, Health Waikato extends speciality services to other health providers beyond its own region to a total population of 700,000. It is a diverse population including relatively large Maori and rural communities.

Waikato Hospital is a 700 bed regional base hospital providing a full range of general services, plus tertiary specialist services and a regional trauma service, with a dedicated helicopter service based on campus. The hospital has 38,700 admissions a year, the fourth highest admission rate in the country after Auckland, Middlemore and Christchurch Hospitals and just above the rate at North Shore Hospital.

For most of the academic year, there are approximately 50 - 60 under-graduate medical students on campus, groups of 15 nurses involved in postgraduate nursing programmes and an increasing number of under-graduate pharmacy students.

Research and Teaching

The Waikato DHB is establishing its reputation as a centre of excellence for teaching and research. Bolstering this reputation is a world class research library and clinical skills training centre, which offers health professionals superior facilities for ongoing education and research. Not only is the Waikato Clinical School, situated in the Academic Centre at Waikato Hospital, but it is also a base for learning for post-graduate nursing, pharmacy and health management training.

Chaplaincy Services

The Waikato Ecumenical Hospital Chaplaincy Committee, a registered charity, the local support provider for ICHC is made up of hospital and denominational representatives and exercises oversight and management of the Chaplaincy Service. It meets with the chaplains regularly. The committee receives reports from the chaplains, who offer pastoral care, ministry, supervision and training within the DHB. As well as 3 ecumenical chaplains there is 1 Roman Catholic chaplain and 1 Maori chaplain. There is also a large team of voluntary Chaplaincy Assistants. There is a requirement that each chaplain will take their turn on the ‘on-call’ after hours roster, and respond to urgent calls from any of the Waikato Hospital services.

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