

Media release

Wairarapa Hospital wait times meet target for first time in years

23 October 2020

Compliant now for the first time in three years, Wairarapa Hospital has no patients waiting longer than 4 months for a first specialist appointment, or for treatment.

Generally known as “ESPI targets”, the Elective Services Patient Flow Indicators measure whether DHBs are meeting the required performance standard at a number of key decision points on a patient’s journey through the public planned care system. Wairarapa DHB is ahead of its plan to be compliant by year end, reaching target in September.

ESPI 2, Patients waiting longer than 4 months for their first specialist assessment (FSA) and ESPI 5, Patients given a commitment to treatment but not treated within 4 months, have been behind target in Wairarapa for some time and the hospital team has been working hard to change that – succeeding last month for the first time in three years.

“The effort invested to achieve these targets has been significant,” says Dale Oliff, Chief Executive, “and I am extremely proud that we are fulfilling our promises to patients.”

“The whole team, from management and clinicians through to the Outpatients and Theatres staff and our administrators, have all been involved in what has been a magnificent effort to reach full compliance.”

The community has a part to play in managing wait lists too.

“As well as our staff, our patients also need to be commended as they are an essential element in the surgical process,” Oliff said.

“People coming in for surgery have a significant part to play in preparing for their operation. If a patient doesn’t come in on time, or doesn’t fast as they are instructed – for example if they eat inside the restricted food timeframe – we have to cancel theatre.”

“That sets the clock back and has a significant effect on the next patient in line, so we really appreciate our patients all doing what they need to do to prepare for their surgery to help us manage our waitlist.”

There is a lot of work going on at Wairarapa District Health Board (DHB) as part of its quality improvement focus. Under the banner ‘Whakapuāwai – together we thrive’, hospital service delivery is being considered and fine-tuned to ensure the most efficient, effective service is provided.

“Of course, the general public is not aware of the behind the scenes work of a District Health Board, and nor should we expect them to be,” Oliff said. “But suffice to say, there is a lot involved in everything we do, and everything we do is for the patient.”

“Focusing on ensuring timely access to our services has been at the top of our agenda for some time, and to have achieved our ESPI targets is really something to be proud of.”

“It is a super piece of work, and a great effort from the whole team.”

While the most recent, compliant results are to be applauded, the board was advised that the results remain provisional as they are reported a month in arrears and will not yet be included in Ministry of Health data.

ENDS

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