

# Media Release

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BAY OF PLENTY  
DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD  
HAUORA A TOI

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## Enrol with a GP and save money

Registering with a GP rather than relying on the Emergency Department at the hospital is a much better option, according to hospital doctors.

“ED is for emergencies and our staff are experts in emergency care,” says Clinical Director of Emergency Medicine at Tauranga Hospital Derek Sage. “If someone comes to ED with a condition that would be best treated by a GP and is non-urgent, we offer them the alternative of going to their GP who is an expert in primary care.”

GP Liaison Andy Humphrey says that a GP is the primary healthcare provider for ongoing care of health problems, advice and guidance and referrals for specialist care. Practice Nurses are usually available for vaccinations and cervical screening.

“It’s quick and easy to register with a GP and they will work with you to make sure you get the best possible care,” he says.

Anyone who has recently moved into the area, or isn’t yet registered, is encouraged to enrol with their GP before problems arise.

“Your new GP can arrange to get your health records from your previous GP so that your medical history is available straight away,” says Andy.

Andy says many people don’t realise that if they are registered with a GP, rather than attending as a casual patient they will save money.

“The cost to visit a GP is significantly less if you are registered with your local practice, rather than attending as a casual patient” he says. “So it’s really worth taking the time to do it.”

Anyone unsure about where their local GP practice is can find out by looking in the phone book, asking at the Citizen's Advice Bureau or at the local pharmacy.

**Having a baby?**

Are you aware that your midwife (or lead maternity carer) is only responsible for you and your baby for up to six weeks after birth? At that stage, your midwife will discharge you into the care of your GP. For the safety and good health of you and your baby, it's important that you enrol with a GP before birth, or as soon as possible afterwards.

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