

Media Release

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BAY OF PLENTY
DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
HAUORA A TOI

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Youth heed HPV message

Several young women are ready to take action after hearing a presentation on Friday about the importance of getting the free HPV cervical cancer vaccination.

The women, girls and several young men from youthgroup, Te Kahui Rangatahi o Tauranga Moana at Huria Marae, also watched a video about a woman who was diagnosed with cervical cancer and her long and traumatic recovery.

Year 9 students Chaquan Nepia and Tepae Thompson say they didn't know much about the HPV vaccination before but the talk, by the WBOP Primary Health Organisation, explained a lot.

"I haven't had it yet because nobody else was getting it, but I really want to get it now," says Tepae.

Every year around 160 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in New Zealand and 60 women die from it. Vaccinating girls and young women now will reduce their chances of getting cervical cancer later in life.

One of the group's coordinators, Kura Martin, says she hopes the youth will be spurred into action and get vaccinated rather than making excuses.

"It's made them aware that this disease can affect anyone. They need to take the message home and think about it. Keep it alive, don't forget about it," says Kura.

The importance of regular smear testing was also discussed and Kura says she hopes young women will promote that message to their friends, mothers and aunties.

The HPV (Human Papillomavirus) vaccine protects against the main viruses responsible for cervical cancer and genital warts. It is available free to all girls and young women born after 1 January 1990. The BOP District Health Board is travelling to schools throughout the Bay of Plenty to vaccinate girls and young women in Years 8-13. Those who have left school can get the free vaccine from their doctor or health clinic.

ENDS



Members of Te Kahui Rangatahi o Tauranga Moana spread the message that “It Takes Three” – three doses of the HPV vaccination to protect against cervical cancer.

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