

# Media Release

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## **Health targets show BOP communities ahead in health**

Bay of Plenty District Health Board (BOPDHB) is making progress toward meeting the Government's six health targets.

CEO Phil Cammish says it's good for the community to see that everyone needing radiation treatment for cancer in the Bay of Plenty is accessing this within six weeks of their first specialist assessment.

"Similarly with improved access to elective surgery. The Ministry's figures show we have achieved 93 per cent of the target for the quarter, despite record levels of acute and emergency presentations, and we are on track to reach 100 per cent by June next year. These numbers show our hospitals are working hard for our people," he says.

The Ministry's table shows on average 87 per cent of people attending the two emergency departments at Tauranga and Whakatane hospitals are admitted, discharged or transferred within six hours of arrival, and the DHB has a working group of clinicians in place to ensure we reach the 95 per cent target set by the Minister of Health.

The appointment of a diabetes specialist this year has enabled the DHB to improve its diabetes and cardiovascular services, another key health target set by the Minister. Dr Kingsley Nirmalaraj has led the establishment of a community-based diabetes service, supported by local GPs, district nurses and primary health organisations. "We have focused on taking the service to those who need it most, particularly in rural areas," says Mr Cammish. "We are currently training more health workers to provide diabetes education and management, along with satellite clinics across the region."

Immunisation remains a weak area for the Bay of Plenty and a number of initiatives are underway to improve immunisation rates for the region's under-tuos. "We have worked hard to make the most of opportunistic immunising opportunities, such as children in hospital and those taking up the free B4 School checks, as well as increasing our

school-based programmes, but there is still work to do in this area and we acknowledge that.”

Smokers admitted to hospital are being assisted by the DHB to take up the option to quit smoking. A training programme for staff is being put in place to help them help smokers to quit.

“The target aims for 85 per cent of hospitalised smokers to be provided with advice and help to quit by July next year. We are actively working to make this happen,” says Mr Cammish.

Whilst he is pleased with the DHB’s performance across the spectrum, and proud of the staff who have worked to improve health outcomes for the community, there are clearly some areas where improvement is required.

“People who work in health genuinely care about the welfare of others. The fiscal environment is tight, the population continues to grow, but we are all working together to provide high quality health services for our communities,” he says.

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For more information please contact:

Carol Wollaston  
Communications Manager  
Bay of Plenty District Health Board  
Tel: 07 579 8411  
[Carol.wollaston@bopdhb.govt.nz](mailto:Carol.wollaston@bopdhb.govt.nz)