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HAUORA A TOI

19th April 2010

State-of-the-art fluoroscopy unit in Tauranga

Tauranga's radiology department now boasts one of the most up-to-date fluoroscopy screening units in the country.

Radiographer team leader Peter Seager says the new unit, installed in August, is vastly superior to the previous 15-year-old equipment.

"This unit is fully digital so the picture quality is greatly improved. We can zoom in on different parts of the x-ray image and change contrasts to get better views. It is also better for patients because they receive a reduced dose of x-ray overall," he says.

"Images are available to radiologists in other parts of the hospital or even in Waikato almost as soon as the examination is finished. It's a much more efficient procedure for the patient."

Fluoroscopy is an imaging technique used to obtain real-time moving images of a patient's internal systems. It shows not only the structure but also the functions of a person's body and is mostly used for looking at the gastrointestinal tract.

For gastrointestinal procedures, patients swallow a solution which is monitored on nearby screens as it flows through the system, allowing radiologists to see irregularities or potential problems.

Peter says radiographers often examine people who have difficulties swallowing but the equipment can also be used for some general x-ray images.

“Mostly we use the unit for diagnosis, but we can also perform therapeutic procedures such as draining fluid from blocked kidneys,” he says.

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[image] fluoroscopy room

[caption] Radiographer team leader Peter Seager demonstrates the new fluoroscopy screening unit – the first of its kind in the country – which can even position the patient upside down depending on what images are required.

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