

Waikato District Health Board

# GP Liaison Newsletter

August 2021

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## COVID-19 updates

Please see the following resources for latest updates on COVID-19:

1. [HealthPathways](#) - COVID-19 pages regularly updated, and more being developed.
2. [Ministry of Health COVID-19](#)

## Cyber Incident Latest Updates

### Radiology Referrals

All referrals for USS and Plain X Rays continue to go directly to private providers until further notice. All referral criteria still apply.

All referrals for patients needing X Rays who live in Thames, Tokoroa, Te Kuiti and Taumarunui (and requesting the service in their home town) continue to be referred to the local hospital radiology service.

All referrals for patients needing ultrasounds who live in Thames (and

requesting the service in their home town) continue to be referred to Thames Hospital

### **Clinical Work Station**

Work is under way to restore primary care access as soon as possible. It is anticipated that this should become available again within the next two weeks. Thank you for your patience.

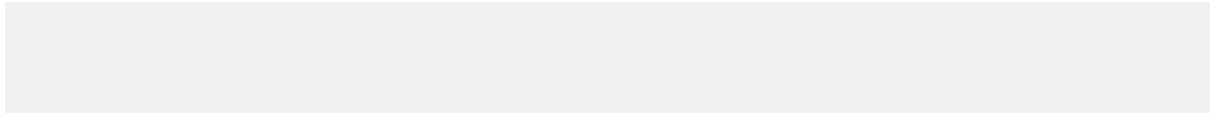
## **General updates**

### **Welcome to Dr Julia Carr**

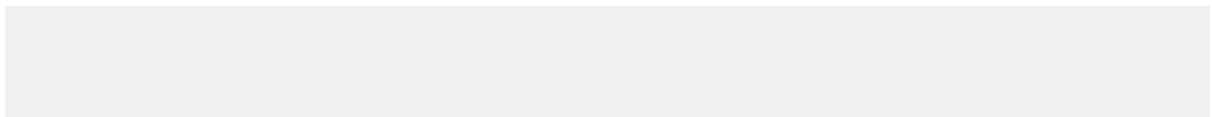
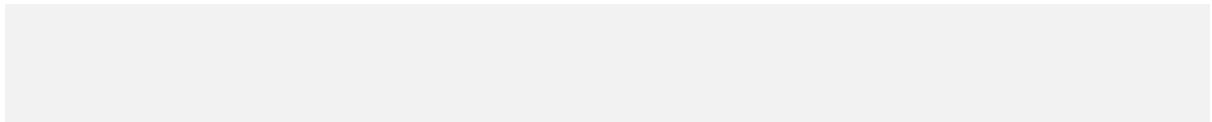
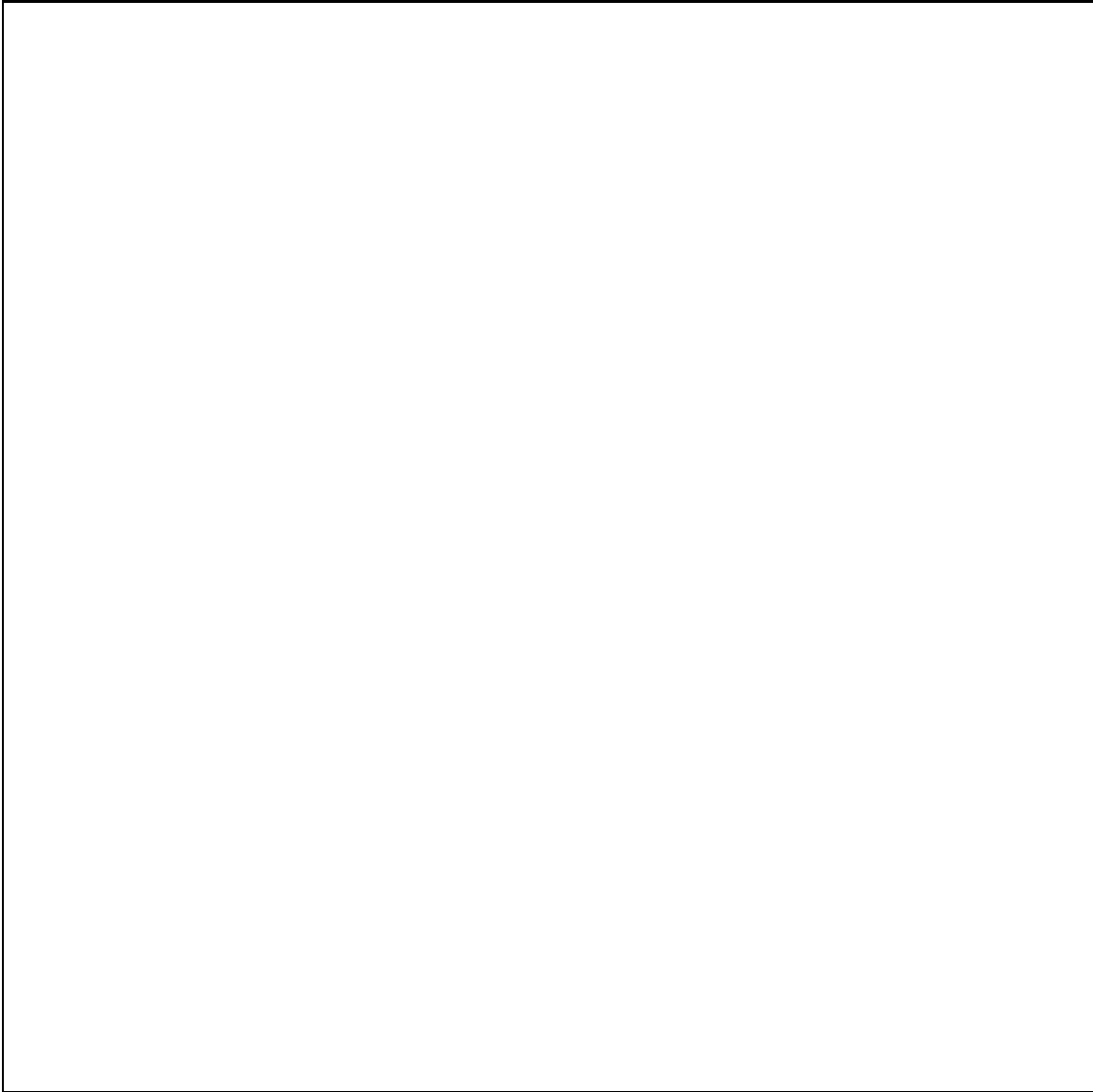
Dr Julia Carr is Waikato DHB's new Chief Medical Officer, Primary Health Care. She is a GP and public health physician.

Julia has worked as a GP in rural New Zealand and Australia, and in various roles in policy, DHB planning and funding, teaching, research and evaluation.

Julia is an advocate for general practice and primary health care-oriented health systems, and is committed to improving Māori health and equity.



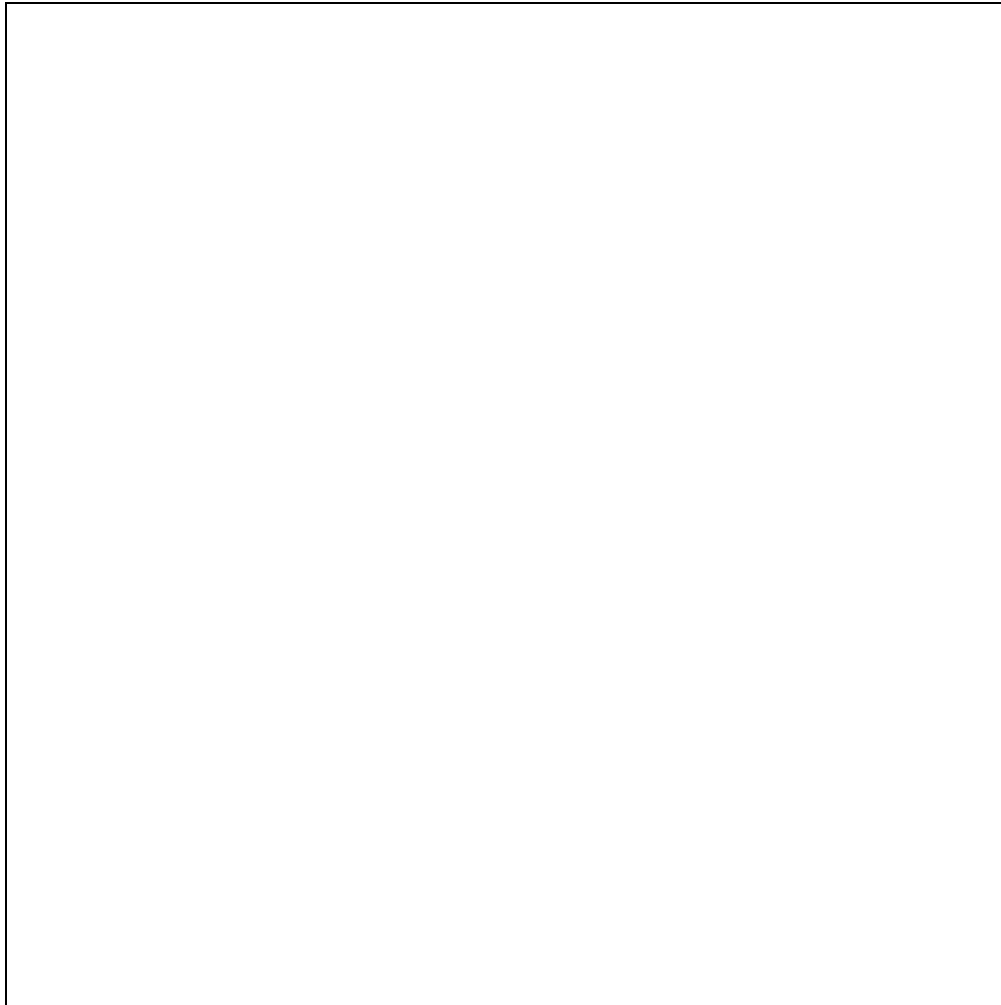
Julia is looking forward to meeting you all and working together.



## COVID-19 vaccination programme in the Waikato

Pre-lockdown the vaccination programme was steadily ramping up across the takiwā as more GP practices joined and we opened community vaccination centres to vaccinate large numbers. With our kaupapa Māori, Pacific and general practice providers along with pharmacy teams, we have now collectively delivered over 260,000 vaccinations across the Waikato, which is a wonderful effort.

Providers have responded impressively to the recent surge in public demand with vaccinations jumping to a peak of nearly 10,000 a day last week. We have included the table we posted on Facebook to show you some of our data – we've done another 14,000 vaccinations since then (and counting!).



We expect daily vaccinations to naturally level off once alert levels change and people return to work but we are very keen to maintain momentum.

Bookings open up for the general population aged 12 plus from Wednesday 1 September. This is a large population in the Waikato – approximately 12,000 rangitahi – so we expect continued demand for vaccinations.

There is no cut-off for bookings but we've seen in recent days how important it is to protect our community through vaccination – our “collective defence” as

Minister Hipkins put it. Your work in helping us to quickly build that defence by encouraging your patients and wider community to be vaccinated is greatly appreciated. Please let us know if we can help with that.

We recently sent out specific guidance to GPs on vaccinating at Alert Level 4 and the same requirements apply to AL3. [The guidelines are available on the Ministry of Health website](#). Key requirements are:

- All waiting areas set out so people can easily stay 2 metres apart.
- Patient flow should be managed to avoid bottlenecks or people bunching up outside a centre. The Ministry suggests a one-in, one-out process.
- One-way flow through the centre if possible.
- Masks required at all times – medical masks for staff and face coverings for patients. Please have a supply of masks on hand for patients if they do not have their own.
- N95 masks are not required for vaccinators.
- Support people only in cases where language, cultural or disability help is needed.

### **COVID-19 testing**

We responded to the latest community outbreak by working with partner providers to quickly boost community testing services across the region. Pop-up testing centres were established in Coromandel (run by Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki) and Tokoroa (Raukawa Charitable Trust and South Waikato Pacific Islands Community Services), and we added an extra DHB-led centre in Hamilton. These sites were also well supported by the designated general practices in these areas.

The Waikato DHB lab processed 18,568 COVID-19 tests from 18 to 29 August

with a peak of almost 3000 in one day. Demand for tests has tapered off and the pop-up centres are now closed with swabbing being handled by practices and the Hamilton Community Testing Centre.

I want to thank you for responding so well to the sudden increased demand for tests. Many practices are also vaccinating and I acknowledge the pressure this double workload places on staff. We are very grateful for your mahi.

The DHB website has the latest information on COVID-19 testing centres and designated GP practices testing both enrolled and unenrolled patients. We refer people to the Healthpoint website and this is also used by Healthline and our communications team so please do keep your practice information updated, both for vaccination and testing. Healthpoint can support you on the technical front if required.

<https://www.waikatodhb.health.nz/your-health/covid-19-in-waikato/cbac/>

- Maree Munro

SRO, COVID-19 Vaccination Implementation Programme

## Radiology Duty GP Phone

Please ask for **Radiology GP duty phone** or phone the Radiology GP duty phone directly on 027 347 3043 if you need to discuss a referral. This should be



answered between 8.30am - 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday.

## Acute Referrals Phone Triage

**A new directive** is in place for what should happen when, after discussion with the registrar, it is deemed that the patient does not need to be seen acutely, but should have an outpatient appointment:

1. If it is decided that the patient needs urgent follow up in clinic then the registrar is expected to organise this themselves.
2. If it is considered that the patient may benefit from a semi-urgent or routine outpatient appointment then the GP/ Nurse Practitioner will be asked to refer. It cannot be guaranteed that the appointment will definitely occur as it will still have to go through the SMO triage process.

All registrars have been informed about this, and if you are experiencing any difficulty with this, please let us know.

All departments require a GP phone call first, except General Surgery who are happy to avoid phone calls where the call will not change the management (e.g. acute abdomen).

Cardiology will now have an SMO taking all GP calls between 8.00am – 6.00pm.

A list of direct dial numbers for specialities is attached.

[GP Phone Triage for Referrals](#)

**Waikato Bowel Screening**

[GP newsletter](#)

**Gait Clinic**

Children with gait issues should be referred to orthopaedics. These referrals are triaged and managed through orthopaedics, and if appropriate, sent to the gait clinic, which is a physiotherapy led clinic.

Please do not refer children with gait issues directly to physiotherapy. The

physio-led gait clinic is based in orthopaedic outpatients.

Problems commonly seen include:

1. Intoeing
2. Bowlegs/ knock knees (genu valgum)
3. Flat feet

HealthPathways for the following conditions will soon be published:

- Bow Legs
- Curly Toes
- Flat Feet in Children
- Intoeing
- Knock Knees (Genu Valgum)

## Survey on obesity management barriers

Professor Ross Lawrenson is overseeing some research into the barriers that exist for primary care's management of obesity.

The aim of this research is to understand and identify ways in which general practice can be better supported with obesity management, and improve health outcomes.

Please click [here](#) to answer three quick questions to tell us about your experience, and have your say about what is needed for effective weight management in your practice. Your contribution to this is most appreciated.

## Health Pathways Update

Our HealthPathways site has been updated from the Midland Region Community Health Pathways to Te Manawa Taki Community Health Pathways. The information for DHBs, PHOs, etc, will remain the same, and there will be no changes to how you access the site.

### **New pathways:**

- Giant-cell arteritis
- Diabetes in pregnancy
- Nausea and vomiting in pregnancy

If you need a login, please contact: [healthpathways@healthshare.co.nz](mailto:healthpathways@healthshare.co.nz)

# Education

## Update from the Waikato Postgraduate Medicine Office

### Remote Transmission – ‘TEAMS’ – GP CME evening sessions

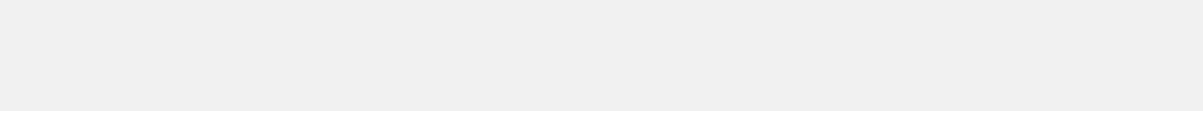
I am pleased to advise that we have changed to the ‘TEAMS’ transmission system which has replaced the ‘VMR’ system previously used. This does not require an initial download or set-up.

‘TEAMS’ will be available to all our GP members, and the link will be forwarded individually, once you have registered for the specific session and confirmed your mobile phone number. The option will still be available for those who want to attend in person.

There is a different link assigned to each session, so make sure you pre-register for the specific session to get the correct link. Mobile phone numbers are required, so direct contact can be made should there be any issues with individual log-ins. A record of your CME attendance will continue to be maintained as per usual, and also updated on the RNZCGP website for those who are college members.

### CORE Skills Courses

There are some places available on the following dates, but they are booking up fast.



If you need to register for one of these courses, please let me know as soon as possible.

- Thursday 2 September
- Thursday 28 October
- Thursday 2 December
- Thursday 16 December

Courses commence at 5pm and finish around 10pm. The course fee is \$287.50 (GST Incl). These are the non-assessed courses that GPs are required to complete every three years.

Please continue to use the following details to contact me. I will be using my gmail account for all email communications, until my DHB email account is restored.

Email: [sally.costello24@gmail.com](mailto:sally.costello24@gmail.com)

Phone: 07 839 8891 (No message service available)

Mobile: 021 272 1951 (can ring or text)

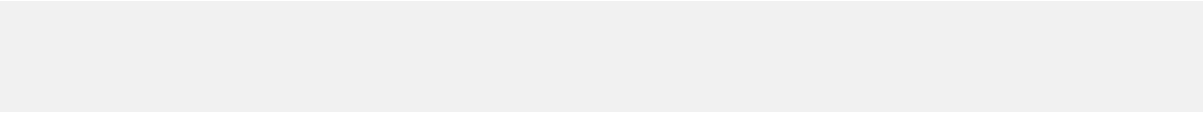
Thanks,

Sally Costello

Administrator

Waikato Postgraduate Medicine Inc

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## Online Hepatitis Education Modules launched

Read more below.

[Online hepatitis education modules launched](#)

For feedback or questions, email the team at:

[GP\\_Referrals@waikatodhb.health.nz](mailto:GP_Referrals@waikatodhb.health.nz)

Fiona Campbell

Angela Fairweather

Geraldine Tennent

Mark Taylor

Sheril-Ann Wilson

**Please provide your mobile number in  
correspondence for ease of communication.**

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