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## Health Care Homes going from strength to strength

Hundreds of thousands of people are on track to receive enhanced services and improved access options at GP practices and medical centres across greater Wellington.

A year on from being implemented, the Health Care Home initiative continues to go from strength to strength – with 15 existing Health Care Home practices, and another seven practices signed up for a January and April 2018 start.

From early next year, half the region’s population will have access to the enhanced range of health services that Health Care Home practices offer in the community.

“This initiative puts the needs of patients and families at the heart of local health care delivery,” said Capital & Coast DHB chief executive Debbie Chin.

“It is an investment by the DHB and local PHOs in ensuring a patient-centred approach to enable people to stay well in the community, and get services locally.”

Health Care Homes aim to ensure patients can request prescriptions, make appointments, and message the doctor online. Patients can expect improved response to phone calls and – for urgent appointment requests – a conversation with a GP or nurse that may save a trip to the practice.

These practices also offer extended hours, and allow patients to access their clinical information online through patient portals.

In addition, Health Care Home’s Community Services Integration initiative aims to ensure that general practice teams’ in-depth knowledge of patients’ wellbeing and up to date primary clinical intervention is shared with community services. This ensures the delivery of a coordinated and integrated mobile community service.

“This model aims to build on what is already good about general practice, and to make it even more convenient and effective for patients through better use of technology and by working closely with community health services,” said Compass Health CEO Martin Hefford.

“I’m proud of what we’ve achieved in just over a year, and look forward to increasing momentum and success to better meet the growing demand for health care in our region.”

*Image: The Johnsonville Medical Centre was one of the first practices to sign up to the Health Care Home model and offer patients enhanced services and improved technology options.*

**More information, and a snapshot of the Health Care Home initiative to date, is available in the project’s [First Year: Achievements and Reflections](#) document.**

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