



Immediate Release
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New Te Kūiti Hauora Report reveals mounting pressure on rural 'health hub' serving the wider district

[Te Tiratū Iwi Māori Partnership Board](#) has today released its 48-page [Te Kūiti Hauora Report](#), revealing the growing strain on one of the Waikato region's key rural health hubs, where local services are supporting not only Te Kūiti residents but whānau from surrounding communities who rely on the town for everyday healthcare.

The report is the latest in the [Hauora Report Series](#) by the Iwi Māori Partnership Board examining health across ten localities in the Tainui waka rohe - Taumarunui, Putāruru, Tokoroa, Paeroa, Thames, Te Kūiti, Ōtorohanga, Te Awamutu, Raahui Pookeka and Ngaaruawaahia, and Kirikiriroa.

While every community has its own story, the Te Kūiti report identifies a unique challenge - a comparatively young Māori population combined with the responsibility of delivering healthcare across a much wider rural catchment.

Te Tiratū Board member and Chief Executive of Te Nehenehenui, Sam Mikaere said the report demonstrates why rural communities require different solutions than larger urban centres.

"Te Kūiti isn't simply providing healthcare for one town. It is a rural service hub carrying the health needs of communities across the wider district. That means pressure on local services is constant, and when capacity is stretched, the effects are felt far beyond Te Kūiti itself."

Almost 47 percent of Te Kūiti's population is Māori, with nearly half of residents under the age of 30. At the same time, local providers are managing increasing demand from surrounding communities for GP services, maternity care, dental care and chronic disease management.

Unlike reports that focus solely on health statistics, the Te Kūiti Hauora Report combines the lived experiences of whānau with local health data revealing how transport, cost, workforce shortages, childcare and the availability of appointments influence whether people can access care early or delay treatment until conditions worsen.

The findings Mikaere said point to a straightforward conclusion.

"Te Kūiti doesn't need the health system redesigned. It needs sustained investment in the local services already carrying the load. When whānau can access care close to home, they stay healthier, avoid unnecessary hospital admissions and the whole system performs better."

The report found that many whānau experience difficulty enrolling with a GP or securing appointments when they need them. Travel to Hamilton often becomes the alternative, adding cost, time and disruption for families already balancing household expenses.



Providers are also managing sustained demand from long-term conditions including diabetes, asthma, cardiovascular disease and mental health concerns, while high levels of deprivation continue to shape everyday health outcomes.

Rather than proposing new structures, the Te Kūiti Hauora Report calls for practical investment in the services already supporting whānau, including:

- Greater access to primary care and GP services.
- Stable local maternity services.
- Expanded dental care.
- More specialist outreach clinics.
- Better transport connections for rural communities.
- Stronger kaupapa Māori services and whānau navigation.

The report also calls for Ngāti Maniapoto to be genuine partners in designing and leading health services, recognising that locally informed solutions produce better outcomes for whānau.

"Decisions about rural healthcare must reflect how rural communities actually live. The evidence shows that when services are local, accessible and designed with communities, people receive care earlier and health outcomes improve," he said.

All the Hauora Reports combine population health data with insights from the Whānau Voice engagement programme run by Te Tiratū Iwi Māori Partnership Board out in the community to inform future health planning and investment.

Each edition in the series reflects the unique health challenges, strengths and aspirations of its community, recognising that no two localities experience healthcare in the same way.

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Background

Locality of Te Tiratū Iwi Māori Partnership Board represents 121,300 local Māori from:

1. **Waikato** – Central North Island, extending from the west coast (Raglan) inland to Hamilton and south towards Taupō.
2. **Hauraki** – Northern Waikato and the Coromandel Peninsula, bordering the Firth of Thames.
3. **Maniapoto** – Western-central North Island, covering the King Country, including Te Kūiti and Ōtorohanga.
4. **Raukawa** – South Waikato and central North Island, including Tokoroa, Putāruru, and Tirau.
5. **Ngāti Hāua** – Western-central North Island, around Taumarunui and the western Ruapehu district.