Taupō Hospital joins university training programme

Taupō Hospital will become a long-term training site for University of Auckland medical students in 2027.



Taupō

It has been included in the university's Rural Medical Immersion Programme (RMIP) in 2027.

Year 5 medical students will spend a year learning alongside Taupō Hospital doctors, local general practitioners and multidisciplinary health care teams.

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora Group Director Operations for Lakes Alan Wilson says Taupō's inclusion in the programme is possible because of the outstanding commitment of Clinical Lead Dr Ralston D’Souza and local clinicians to growing the future rural medical workforce.

> “This is a fantastic acknowledgment of our staff and the clinical excellence that our Taupō community has available to it because of the commitment of local clinicians.”

Taupō Hospital Clinical Lead Dr Ralston D’Souza says he and his colleagues are very excited to join the programme, to train and support students and inspire them to choose careers in rural medicine.

“The team at Taupō Hospital has worked really hard to build a culture of training and pastoral care for both our students and resident doctors.

“In the last three years, we have been supervising approximately 50 medical students across years 4, 5 and 6 on short placements.

“We have tried to ensure they have a great clinical experience both in the hospital and the community and offer a teaching programme that includes early exposure to point of care ultrasound training.”

The strongest advocates for expanding the programme to Taupō have been past students, Dr D’Souza says.

While living and working in Taupō, students develop an understanding of the unique strengths and challenges of rural medicine and become part of the community.

“The Taupō community is a wonderful place to live and work — there is plenty for medical students to do in their leisure time with the lake, trails and mountain bike tracks.”

Dr D’Souza says completing the Whakatāne Rural Health Interprofessional Programme in 2016 completely changed the trajectory of his life.

> “I grew up in Auckland and now I live and work in Taupō as a rural hospital medicine specialist and GP. I’m hoping to inspire more students to do the same.”

Taupō will be the programme's fifth long placement site, joining the established locations of Hāwera, Hauraki/Thames, Te Kūiti, and Wellsford.

Source: Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora