

MEDIA RELEASE

13 June 2008

New dental clinic to cut its teeth with Mauri Stone ceremony

Construction work on the new Buckland Road Dental Health Clinic will get underway following a special Mauri Stone ceremony marking the occasion.

Buckland Road has been at the centre of the South Auckland community since the 1960s, providing dental care for children aged 0-17 years, people with special needs and adults on low incomes.

The clinic was destroyed by fire in April 2007, but thanks to a successful fundraising campaign by the Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB), building work can now begin on a new community-based oral health 'hub'.

And SKYCITY Auckland Community Trust has been a key supporter, giving a total of \$300,000 towards the rebuilding of the dental health clinic. Over the last four years the trust has invested \$600,000 in Counties Manukau District Health Board's oral health campaign, including \$150,000 last year to kickstart the 'Healthy Teeth' campaign.

Jock Irvine, SKYCITY Auckland Community Trust chairman, believes that oral health is a significant issue for the Counties Manukau community.

"More than 35 percent of South Auckland children already have tooth decay by the time they start school, which is clearly a worrying trend for our younger generation," he said.

"Counties Manukau District Health Board have been doing excellent awareness-raising work in the community, and Buckland Road Dental Health Clinic will be vital in helping children to understand the importance of looking after their teeth.

"SKYCITY Auckland Community Trust is proud to be associated with such an important community initiative, and I look forward to seeing the new clinic when it's been completed."

Due for completion by October, Counties Manukau District Health Board believes Buckland Road Dental Clinic will be the first community-based treatment hub clinic in the country – in line with the government's 'Good Oral Health for All, for Life' strategy.

Buckland Road will also provide clinical training and work placement for dental therapy students from AUT and the University of Otago.

The district health board is already making plans for similar hub clinics, which will enable children aged 0 to 17 years to access oral health services from a hub clinic, rather than the current separate dental services for pre-school, primary and secondary schools.

The Mauri Stone Ceremony will take place at **225 Buckland Road** at **1pm** on **Tuesday 17 June 2008**. **Media are invited to attend**.

For more information please contact **Michelle Kidd**.

Notes to Editors:

Mauri Stone Ceremonies

- **Traditional**
In traditional Maaoridom there was recognition of the importance of harmony between people and the environment. Resources were managed in a sustainable manner through maintaining a balance – especially in hunting, fishing and planting. If a forest had no birds or wildlife, or if a stream or river had few fish, a Mauri stone, considered a ‘life force’ was blessed by a tohunga (priest) and buried/placed to restore balance to the area.
- **Today**
In the modern setting the burial of the Mauri stone is a mark of respect to Papa (Earth Mother). The burial of the Mauri stone gives a blessing to the site and buildings placed upon Papa.
- **Legislation**
The Resource Management Act 1991 states that kaitiakitanga must be taken into account in natural and physical resource management. Kaitiakitanga is a holistic concept which views mankind as guardians for the world around us. Burying a mauri stone falls under this umbrella.