

Welcome Haere Mai | Respect Manaaki | Together Tühono | Aim High Angamua

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of those who took time to respond to our survey and all the stakeholders that gave up their time to talk with us and share their thoughts.

This report was written by Auckland and Waitemata DHBs Planning, Funding and Outcomes Unit. If you have any questions about the report or require further information please contact us on:

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Waiheke Island has some unique needs owing to its Island location, the number of visitors, and changing demographic patterns such as an increasing older population. Auckland DHB have recently conducted a review of health services on Waiheke Island to ensure the health needs of its residents and those that visit the Island are currently being met, and these services are best positioned for the future.

Information was collected from the community via a public survey, and through a series of stakeholder interviews.

What do people want?

People were asked what they would like from health services on Waiheke Island, and the following attributes were most commonly identified;

- Affordable
- Accessible i.e. able to see a doctor when they need it
- Locally based as much as possible
- Co-ordinated
- Caring
- Information that is easy to understand
- Welcoming
- Trustworthy competent and confident

What is working well?

People are very appreciative of the health services available on the Island and feel services are of a high quality. More specifically;

- General Practices are perceived as offering high quality services
- Community and health services are seen to be relatively comprehensive, efficient and committed to the Waiheke community
- People see services like community nursing and home help as being accessible, comprehensive and helpful
- Other health services that people appreciate are emergency services like St John and the Air Ambulance Service, along with the Waiheke community pharmacies which are perceived as providing very comprehensive services to the Waiheke community
- The blood testing service on the Island 'Labtests' is also well regarded

Ideas for improvement

The following were consistently identified as areas for improvement;

- After-hours services too restricted, particularly with no Accident and Emergency services on the Island
- The affordability and accessibility of General Practice services
- Better access to radiology services including ultrasound on the Island
- Improved access to mental health and addiction services on the Island, particularly respite and crisis services. Ideally there would also be more mental health support for children, young people and their families on the Island.

Next steps

Work is already underway as a result of this review including;

- A separate review of Waiheke Island radiology services
- A review of General Practice 'Under 13 years' fees is underway
- Venesection kits have been supplied to General Practices on the Island so they can better support haemochromatosis patients

In addition, this report will be provided to the Auckland Waitemata Rural Alliance, a group of health providers whose objective is to improve health services for both rural health providers and their patients. This report will help inform their future planning and innovations.

Waiheke Island health services - A community perspective

Why is Auckland DHB interested in Waiheke Island?

Auckland District Health Board (DHB) is responsible for ensuring that residents of Waiheke Island, and those that visit the Island, have access to high quality health services. In 2013 8,238 people¹ were usually resident² on Waiheke Island. This was an increase of 549 people, or 7.1%, since the 2006 Census. Waiheke Island represents approximately 2% of the Auckland DHB population.

It is important that the DHB understands the population's health needs so it can ensure appropriate services are in place. Waiheke Island is unique, and has complex health needs driven by;

- A diverse population
- Isolated by the nature of being an Island
- Seasonal fluctuations in the population caused by large increases of holiday-makers and day-visitors over the summer months

Review of Waiheke Island health services

Auckland DHB recently conducted a review of healthcare services with the view of ensuring:

- People have access to good quality health services regardless of their income
- Health services meet the needs of Waiheke Island residents and visitors
- It is easy for people to get appropriate health services
- Health services are coordinated and connected with each other
- Future health needs of Waiheke Island residents and visitors are planned for
- Services are able to adapt to seasonal changes and likely population growth

This document summarises responses to a public survey and a series of structured interviews with external stakeholders conducted to help Auckland DHB undertake the review. Information was also collected through larger meetings with current health care providers, but some of the information collected from the health care providers has been kept separate due to commercial sensitivity.

The 'Big Issues' on Waiheke Island

The big issues raised by the people we spoke with or heard from are:

- The pace of social and economic change
- Housing and associated living costs
- Ageing population
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Family violence
- Disparity

¹ NZ Census 2013

² 'Usually resident' is a count of all people who usually live, and are present in a particular location, like a town or city, in New Zealand on a given census night.

- Suicide
- Road safety
- Unmet needs amongst Youth
- Pollution

These issues are described below.

Pace of social and economic change

People we spoke with feel that Waiheke is changing rapidly, which is creating a great deal of stress within the community.

"My observation is that the population is under stress – fluctuations in stress driven by population pressure, tourism and second homes, etc."

Housing and living costs

All key stakeholders we spoke to mention the increasing costs associated with housing on the Island, and the impact of this on the community. All agreed that these issues were driven by the increase in land and house values. People believe that Waiheke Island has become an increasingly desirable place to live for those working in Auckland and as a place to purchase second homes for investment purposes or as holiday homes. The following issues were mentioned in relation to housing and associated living costs;

- Rents can rise significantly during summer sometimes forcing people to move into temporary accommodation or, in some cases, even having to move off Waiheke Island.
- Older people and those on low incomes are struggling to meet housing costs as rates rise
- Most residents are using tank or bore water which is problematic in times of drought due to the need to purchase water. This can be difficult for those living on tight budgets. The quality of the water can also vary, often depending on how well tanks are maintained.
- Septic tanks are required to manage sewage on Waiheke Island which adds to living costs.
- Many houses were originally built as holiday batches so have poor insulation and, in many cases, are poorly maintained.
- The increasing numbers of, often vacant, holiday homes can lead to feelings of isolation by some permanent residents.
- A feeling by some that Waiheke's sense of community is threatened as the population is increasingly comprised of 'weekenders' and commuters. People see these trends as the *"gentrification"* of Waiheke.
- Housing shortages are exacerbated by an annual influx of seasonal workers.

The proportion of older people living on Waiheke Island is growing

Waiheke is also becoming a desirable location for people to retire, this is supported by the last New Zealand Census (2013) results. 18.6% of the population (1527 people) were over the age of 65 years, compared with 13% in 2006 (and 10.6% in ADHB overall). People are concerned that Waiheke Island does not have the facilities and comprehensive health services required to meet the needs of a population that is growing older.

Alcohol and other drugs

Although most people mentioned that there was a 'p' (methamphetamine) problem on the Island, others feel this affects a relatively small number of residents compared to alcohol and marijuana use which is reportedly widespread on the Island. Alcohol is cited as causing the most social harm on the Island.

"Drinking is like a sport on the Island"

Family violence

Those working in the social service sector, including health professionals, often refer to the "high" prevalence of family violence on the Island. This is difficult to quantify as many incidents remain unreported. Key stakeholders were unsure about how to manage this often complex issue in a relatively small community with few support agencies available. In addition, safe houses were difficult to keep secret on the Island, often necessitating the victim moving off the island to assure their safety.

Disparity

People talk about the growing disparity between wealthy, often absent Waiheke house owners, compared to those who had lived on Waiheke Island a long time. Many feel concerned that the growing cost of living was making it difficult for those on low incomes or those working only part-time.

"Much of the work on the Island is part-time and/or seasonal so some are being forced to move off the Island"

Suicide

People are concerned about the suicide rate on the Island although it is not significantly different to other parts of Auckland. However it is likely that in a small connected community like Waiheke any untimely death has a great impact. Piritahi Hau Ora Trust coordinates a suicide prevention committee and also runs support groups working in conjunction with the police, schools, general practices, councillors, volunteers and the local community. Their programme is now being replicated in other rural communities in New Zealand. People seem confident that the Island now has robust processes in place.

Road safety

People are concerned about the roads on the Island. They are often winding and narrow, and some people travel on them at high speed. The risks associated with the poor roads are exacerbated by tourist numbers, and their use of scooters. The Police are concerned about the rates of drunk driving on the Island and are actively managing this. Young people are also concerned about road safety as there are few footpaths which can make walking dangerous at times. The lack of street lighting was also mentioned.

Unmet needs amongst youth

Many spoke highly of the young people on the Island but reflected that it was difficult for young people when they left school as there were limited employment opportunities on the Island. Young people also incur high travel costs or have to move off the Island to attend tertiary training. Others feel more is required for young people to do on the Island over winter months when boredom could lead to undesirable behaviour.

Pollution

Some were concerned that increasing visitor numbers, and a growing population, would lead to more pollution. People mentioned their concern about Little Oneroa stream, which has recently been declared unsafe for swimming by the Auckland Regional Public Health Service. They also feel that more rubbish bins were needed, particularly on beaches and more regular cleaning of public toilets particularly over summer months.

What do people want from Waiheke Island health services?

Some people are comfortable with current levels of health services available on the Island while others feel a comprehensive medical facility is needed. But opinions were also divided amongst those that were interviewed.

"We live on an Island, what can we expect, if we can't get it here, we can go to Auckland."

"We need a hospital"

Generally people would like to see more outpatient services available on Waiheke, necessitating less travel and greater equity compared with those living in other parts of Auckland DHB.

However, on the whole, people are looking for services that are;

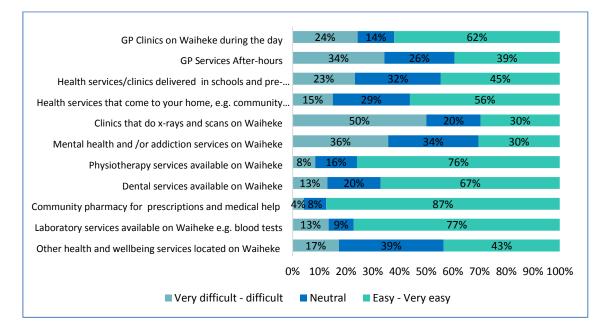
- Affordable
- Accessible i.e. able to see a doctor when they need it
- Locally based as much as possible
- Co-ordinated
- Caring

"My friend broke his arm, had to go to Auckland City Hospital, and they let him go at 1.00am, with no way of getting home as the ferries weren't running at that time. He is seventeen."

- Information that is easy to understand
- Welcoming
- Trustworthy competent and confident

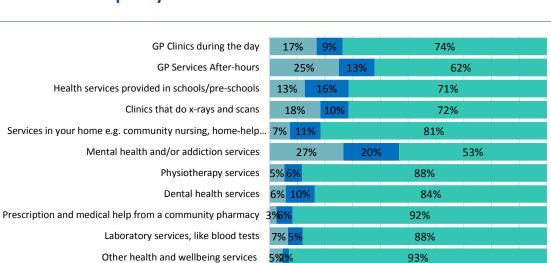
Waiheke Health Services – How are they doing?

People were asked how easy it was to access health services on Waiheke Island and about the quality of those services.



How easy is it to get healthcare on Waiheke Island?

Community Pharmacy, GP services during the day and community health services such as home help, dental services and laboratory services are seen as relatively easy to get on Waiheke Island. X-rays, GP services after-hours and mental health and addiction services are seen as more difficult to access.



The quality of health services used on Waiheke Island

The above graph shows that people feel that, on the whole, they have access to high quality health services on Waiheke Island. Areas for improvement are identified as mental health and addiction services and GP after-hours services.

0%

Neutral

Poor - Fair

10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Good - Excellent

What services are working well on Waiheke Island?

The General Practice clinics on the Island are well regarded and appreciated.

"Local GPs often go extra mile even when under-staffed."

"Comprehensive and professional GP service"

The community and health services available on Waiheke Island are seen to be relatively comprehensive, efficient and committed to the Waiheke community.

"Support and willingness to go the extra mile"

People see services like community nursing and home help as being;

- Accessible
- Comprehensive
- Helpful

"The services help people to stay on the Island, and in their own home."

Other services that people appreciate are the emergency services like St John and the Air Ambulance Service. As Waiheke does not have an accident and emergency facility, and has limited after-hours services, emergency services are seen as vital. People would like to see St John and the Air Ambulance service receive more funding. People have also mentioned that some find the ambulance service charges expensive.

Other services that had very good feedback are as follows;

- Waiheke community pharmacies provide a very comprehensive service to the Waiheke community. People appreciate the extended hours, friendly service and professional advice provided.
- The blood testing service on the Island 'Labtests' is well regarded, and described as *"warm and competent"*. However, people ideally want longer hours for this service.
- People are very satisfied with the physiotherapy services on Waiheke Island however some find the surcharges expensive, particularly compared to those available in Auckland City.
- People appreciate the school dental service and feel it works well.
- People are pleased with the midwifery services on the Island but some sensed they are working to capacity. *Please note that another midwife is now working on Waiheke Island so this additional midwife may have mitigated this concern.*
- Many people speak highly of the work done by the Adult Literacy Centre and the Budget Advisory Service. Both are seen as doing an excellent job in supporting those who are

often vulnerable. The Adult Literacy Centre has also evolved in recent times, and become a hub for many other community initiatives which support those who could otherwise become isolated.

- The Jassy Dean Trust provides financial assistance to Waiheke Island residents with sick children. The community is very grateful for the work of the Trust, and many feel families would be less able to cope without support of this well organised Trust.
- Young people speak highly of the Paravan service, a van that provides a safe ride home at night for youth in return for a small donation. They also speak highly of the Peer Sexuality Support Programme (PSSP) run by the Auckland Sexual Health Service in High Schools across Auckland. The aim of this programme is to help students make informed decisions about their own sexual health. Others have reported that the skills developed through this programme have led to some very positive behaviour outside of school hours. Young people still attending school find the School Health Clinic, particularly the school nurse, very helpful but would prefer the service be available throughout the entire year rather than aligned to school terms. Others feel that youth who have already left school need a similar service.
- The Island is fortunate to have an active RSA with dedicated volunteers who make themselves available to drive people to the ferry terminal so they can travel to medical appointments without having to catch a taxi or use public transport on the Island. RSA volunteers even sometimes accompany people to their medical appointments in the city if required.

How could health services on Waiheke Island be improved?

On the whole, people were very grateful for the health services available on the Island, and were very appreciative of those that worked for them.

"The people who work in these services are almost without exception, amazing. I have nothing but praise for them. However they are under-staffed and under-resourced"

Most suggestions for improvement focused on:

- General practice services
- After-hours/emergency services
- Radiology services, and
- Mental health/addiction services

General Practice

In terms of general practice, most feedback focused on the need to have reduced waiting times for appointments, longer opening hours and a gender balance amongst GPs.

"It is often difficult to get GP appointments. I have been told to call back next week. My elderly mother was told there were no appointments available at all. No other options were suggested."

The need for accessible parking while visiting a practice is also a concern for some, particularly for those with mobility issues. People were concerned with the cost of medical services for young people who were no longer at school.

People also felt that the general practice facilities on the island seemed cramped and dated.

"Both practices (Ostend and Oneroa) are cramped"

They would ideally like facilities to be modern, warm and welcoming with spaces for people with varying needs.

People would also like some GPs to be better at communicating, and want to feel that their GP respects them and listens.

"GPs should explain themselves, like physios, they need to explain what they are doing and why."

While people accept that doctors may need to keep them waiting after their appointment time, and understand that they may not be the top priority, they would ideally like information about where they are in a queue, how long they will need to wait, with updates.

"People understand that doctors have emergencies that have to be dealt with first but it would be good to know how long we'll be waiting, and when this changes. Like in town, the A & E has a board that tells you where you are in the queue"

After-hours services

Existing after-hours services are appreciated but too limited and expensive.

"Expensive to use after-hours services. Weekend is not exactly after-hours"

The following feedback was provided regarding existing Waiheke after-hours services;

- The existing fee structure is perceived as unfair. It currently varies depending on what practice people are enrolled with, and which GP happens to be on-call
- There is a perceived need for the existing after-hours services on the Island to be extended beyond those currently available
- A shared patient database amongst all practices on the Island would be better as GPs would be able to obtain a person's information regardless of what practice they are enrolled with
- There is a perceived need for an Accident and Emergency Centre on the Island
- The existing phone triage service can sometimes be frustrating and slow;

"The triage nursing service...is cumbersome and you often wait on phone a long time before you speak to nurse"

Radiology services

People want more access to x-ray services on the Island. While people appreciate the existing service they found the restricted hours inconvenient;

"My daughter broke her arm at 4.00pm and it was after midnight before she got any medical attention. Car to the GP, told they couldn't help, car to ferry, wait for ferry, taxi to hospital, wait at Starship"

Many commented that the ability to access ultrasound scans on the Island would be helpful particularly during pregnancy. There was also some feedback that the surcharges payable in relation to x-ray services are difficult to manage, particularly for those on fixed incomes.

Mental health and addiction services

Many commented that they feel that more mental health and addiction support should be available on the Island, particularly crisis and respite services, as well as more visiting outpatient services on the Island.

"A dedicated unit/space for mental health crisis is required, other than a Police cell"

"More mental health support is needed on the Island. These services are infrequent and inadequate"

There is also a perceived need to improve confidentially amongst mental health and addiction service and community service providers.

Other suggestions

Other suggestions for improvement included;

- Dental services, where cost is perceived as a barrier. Although people were not specific here, it is likely that they are referring to adult dental services and orthodontic treatment, as there is a free dental care available on Waiheke for all children under 18 years old. Those that were aware of this, were very appreciative of the services available.
- Laboratory services are rated very well but people asked for longer opening hours
- Physiotherapy
 - Access to Greenlane Clinical Centre is difficult when recovering from injury/operation
 - Perceived unfairness at having to pay a surcharge when a free service (in certain circumstances) is available at Greenlane
- Having mobility parking available at all medical centres and ferry terminal, and enforcing these spaces, would make a very real practical difference to people.

Service gaps

People consistently provided feedback about the cost of travel to city-based medical appointments and the difficulty of accessing medical treatment off the Island. There is a particular concern for those with children, older people and those with mobility issues.

"Cost and transport is a real big issue for people"

"Many frail and unwell people travelling...who might not have assistance with them...it is a marathon epic journey for some"

"The cost and time involved, say 5 hours for a 5 minute appointment. Use skype"

In times of need, people can access free ferry tickets to travel to medical appointments, provided through various charities. Some suggest that these could be held by health providers themselves rather than a patient having to approach a third party. People do not feel comfortable about approaching a non-health provider to access free tickets to attend medical appointments as they sometimes do not want to share the reasons for their travel.

The following services are consistently identified as service gaps when considering health services available on Waiheke Island;

- General Practice after-hours services too restricted
- No Accident and Emergency facility on the Island
- Affordable General Practice services
- Better access to radiology services including ultrasound on the Island
- Improved access to mental health and addiction services on the Island, particularly respite and crisis services. Ideally there would also be more mental health support for children, young people and their families on the Island.
- People would also appreciate more information about mental health issues including signs and symptoms of various conditions, and where to go for help.
- Young people would like more information about how to access help regarding sexuality and gender issues on the Island. They admit that they may not feel comfortable raising these issues with their family GP.
- Although young people appreciate the service they get through the high school based youth health service they feel that access to a similar service is needed outside of school hours particularly during the extended summer holiday period.
- Respite services on the Island, particularly for older people with high needs and palliative care patients
- A facility for minor surgery/short stay beds/childbirth

"A good medical centre would be great as it could provide overnight stays for minor things"

"Day night monitoring beds for patients when their condition is still being assessed to prevent needless expense and waste of time ...tripping to hospital" • More hospital outpatient services delivered on Island

"We need more clinics on the Island to save so much travelling"

• More affordable dental care. Again it is likely that this feedback refers to services for adults

"Dentists are out of a lot of people's reach"

• Rest-home and respite facilities for older adults

"The largest gap is for the long term elderly residents who need to be in a rest home/private hospital care. It is sad to witness the elderly travelling to Auckland suburbs via public transport to visit their wife/husband/partner"

• Better access to services to support vulnerable children and youth

"Disabled children are marginalised due to difficulty with transport/access off Island and lack of resources."

- The need for optometry services on the Island
- More podiatry services on the Island
- Limited face-to-face smokefree support is available on the Island
- Although GPs, practice teams and the Well Child Nurse offer excellent services for young families on the Island, it is acknowledged that there is a lack of broader support for young families such as Plunket and Karitane nursing services. In addition, there is no Parent Centre on the Island.
- Lack of hospice support on the Island, particularly in-home respite services was a consistent theme. People were very grateful for the support currently provided by GPs and the Waiheke Health Trust but more support was required after-hours.

Growing older on Waiheke

Many were concerned that Waiheke Island did not have the services in place to adequately meet the needs of a growing older population. Specifically concerns were as follows;

- Increasing demand for services
- Service gaps
- Hospital appointment times
- Discharge times
- Increasing Isolation

Increasing demand for services

As the proportion of older people on Waiheke grows there is increasing demand for community services such as household management and personal care. The Waiheke Health Trust has an excellent reputation for providing quality household management and personal care services. It has a dedicated and stable team of staff.

"Home help services available through Waiheke Health Trust are fantastic. They have a stable workforce who do a fantastic job."

Many would like community health services to be delivered a little more flexibly though, particularly if these services could operate through to the early evening.

Service gaps

Most mentioned the need for a rest home facility on the Island where older people could receive intensive levels of care. People are also concerned that although health providers such as community health nurses and GPs do a good job supporting patients with high needs on the Island, their loved ones need respite services on the Island. Often older people are scared to leave the Island, even for respite care, as they fear not coming back;

"They understand that if they leave the island, they might not come back."

Hospital appointment times

Older people are often on fixed incomes so it is particularly important for them to be able to travel to medical appointments in the city during the hours they can use their SuperGold card. This card enables them to access free travel in off-peak times. Off-peak times are between 9.00am – 3.00pm, and after 6.00pm from Monday to Friday, and all day weekends and public holidays. Older people can also find the travel quite tiring so where possible would like hospital appointments coordinated to reduce the burden of travel as much as possible. Attending appointments at the Manukau SuperClinic is particularly difficult for many, and some have had unfortunate experiences with missing connections or in some cases having to walk between train station and the SuperClinic itself, a distance of a 1.7 kilometres.

Discharge

Some believe that discharge processes could be improved so health services on the Island could be better prepared to support a patient returning home after surgery or a hospital stay.

Increasing isolation

There is concern that older residents are feeling isolated as families increasingly commute to work or some houses are left vacant as holiday homes. Longer term residents fear that the community supports are breaking down with the changes in the Island's demographic profile.

What do people want from health services?

People were asked what they thought was important when seeking services from a health service provider. It is likely the values identified below are what most people would want, regardless of where they live;

- Good communication, this included the ability to listen, understand and empathise
- Knowledgeable and competent
- Professional, friendly, on-time and respectful
- Accessible, timely, locally based, care available outside of core hours
- Affordable
- Continuity of care
- Confidentiality

How could health services be improved for visitors?

It is estimated that Waiheke Island, at times, has an influx of over 30,000 visitors, so this impacts significantly on health services available on the Island. People were asked how the services could be improved for visitors to the Island. They feel the following changes could facilitate better health services for visitors to the Island;

- Longer general practice hours
- On-Island Accident and Emergency services available, particularly at weekends
- Emergency dental care available on the Island
- Lower costs for visiting patients and after-hours
- Better communication of general practice and after-hours services. People suggest the use of better and more signage such as notices on ferry, at the ferry terminal, and other community focal points such as at the library and information centre.
- Better prevention messaging particularly around sun safety, alcohol and road safety

Considerations for the future

Auckland DHB also asked people what they should consider when planning future health services on Waiheke. These include;

- Need for facility development due to a growing population and growth in visitor numbers
- The importance of considering the needs of a growing older population, particularly in terms of respite care and the lack of a rest-home facility on the Island
- Ensure that Auckland DHB continues to talk with the community about what they want and need
- The need for services to be accessible. Accessibility means different things for different people but did include the following;
 - o Affordable
 - o Timely
 - Local services where possible
 - Coordinated when off the Island
 - Longer hours for primary care services

• The need for equitable provision of services is seen as very important, so that where practicable those that live on Waiheke receive the same services as those that live in other areas of Auckland DHB.

Another key theme of the survey was that there is the need for better communication and coordination amongst health providers particularly between primary and secondary care services.

"The demographics are so complex on Waiheke, having good communication and clear health pathways for GPs and all other providers...and be able to refer on as needed...essential"

Next steps

The following initiatives have been actioned as a result of the information gathered as a result of the Waiheke review process;

- A separate review of Waiheke Island Radiology Services
- A review of the General Practice 'Under 13 years' fees is underway
- Venesection kits are being funded by the DHB and supplied to Waiheke Island General Practices, so haemochromatosis patients do not have to travel off the Island to attend medical appointments so regularly

Other initiatives will be driven through the Auckland Waitemata Rural Alliance. The Rural Alliance aims to provide advice and improvement in care and services across the Auckland Region's rural areas, including Waiheke Island. The Alliance includes representatives from ProCare and Waitemata PHOs, and DHB clinical and funder representatives.

Who did we hear from?

A survey, along with a series of structured discussions, was undertaken to gather information required to inform this review process. Both processes sought input from the public and key stakeholders to inform the DHBs understanding concerning Waiheke Island health services. In terms of the survey, both on-line and paper survey options were available. The survey was available on Auckland DHB's website from 20th November 2015 until 21st January 2016. It was promoted through a range of channels. 312 people completed the survey.

- 74% of those who responded to the survey were female, although people were asked to respond to the questions on behalf of their family/ whānau
- The ethnic profile of those who responded to the survey is similar to the ethnic profile of Waiheke Island, with 77% of respondents being Pakeha/New Zealand European and 8.9% as identifying as Māori.
- The survey responses included a good spread of household income with 17.7% preferring not to specify their income at all.
- Survey respondents had accessed a broad range of health services both on the Island and off the Island so there was a breadth of experiences to draw from.

Additional feedback was collected through a series of structured interviews with key stakeholders, and community and health provider meetings. The following structured interviews took place;

- Six paired interviews, four of which consisted of health professionals only
- Six group interviews also took place, two of which were with groups of health professionals while another consisted of community representatives, and an additional three groups were held with children/young people
- 22 individual interviews also took place, 10 of these were with people employed in the healthcare sector while the others were with people involved in the Waiheke community, including representatives from the education, Police and the social services sectors