

## **Media statement: Hospital capacity set to expand.**

**Date: 8 December 2022**

**For release 9 December 2022**

Wairarapa's only private hospital, Selina Sutherland, may soon be too small for our growing population, says Selina Sutherland Charitable Trust Board Chair Dr Rob Dimock.

"Earlier this year, local orthopaedic surgeon Konrad Schwanecke introduced us to Matua Healthcare Group at the same time as we were looking at future capacity options. For several months, we explored options about how we could work together to provide more services locally and our thinking has aligned. We have now formalised our relationship with an agreement to continue to work together on delivering a solution."

Matua Healthcare Group is leading the development of a number of private healthcare facilities across New Zealand including the newly opened Kaweka Hospital in Hawkes Bay. The Group has just finalised the purchase of a block of land close to Wairarapa Hospital on Te Ore Ore Road.

Matua's founder and Managing Director Dr Colin Hutchison is excited about the potential of working in partnership with the Selina Sutherland Hospital Charitable Trust and local doctors. "I've worked in senior management roles in both public and private healthcare for many years, as well as in my clinical roles, and I know first-hand how an excellent private hospital can complement the work of the public sector. It provides people with local choices, helps attract and retain medical staff to the area, increases both services and local capacity and creates jobs. We are excited about working in collaboration with the Selina Sutherland Trust to improve healthcare for the people of the Wairarapa region."

"Even over the last two years, demand for services has exceeded what we expected," says Dr Dimock. "Looking ahead, it seems clear we will quickly exceed pre-Covid service levels. On top of this, the Wairarapa population is over 50,000, growing well beyond any earlier predictions and therefore we expect an even greater demand for private services."

Te Whatu Ora interim District Director, Dale Oliff agrees. "The opportunity to co-recruit with an expanded private hospital service will benefit public health services in the Wairarapa. It makes working here an attractive option to new clinical staff and their families, and opens the door to new services. New staff will increase our overall capacity which is hugely beneficial to the community.

"It's no secret that our surging population is outgrowing our hospital footprint. Development of a new private hospital will free up much needed space on our campus for public beds."

"Public and Private hospital services have worked in close co-operation for many years," says Dr Dimock. "We are looking forward to this next stage of growth, to serve our expanding Wairarapa population."

**Ends**

For enquiries:

Jill Stringer, Communications Manager, Director, Selina Sutherland Hospital Trust

027 273 1154

**Background:**

**Selina Sutherland Hospital** is governed by the Selina Sutherland Charitable Trust, and leases buildings, theatre time and services from Te Whatu Ora, Wairarapa (formerly Wairarapa DHB). The Trust also supports the public hospital with development of facilities and donations of surgical equipment.

The Selina Sutherland Trust was created in 1996 when the former private surgical facility, then called Glenwood Hospital, was not able to pass new audit standards. The Wairarapa Crown Health Enterprise Board at the time recognised that having a private facility was essential in the Wairarapa, so Selina Sutherland Private Hospital was opened in a vacant refurbished public hospital wing in 1998 and moved again to a purpose built wing when the current hospital was opened in 2006.

Selina Sutherland hospital has 10 beds and 5 consulting and minor procedure rooms. Prior to Covid restrictions, they were providing up to 550 surgical procedures a year.

**Matua Healthcare Group** Matua Healthcare Group was founded by several clinicians working in the lower North Island who shared a common vision for locally owned and operated, high quality private healthcare facilities. The owner operator corporate structure and state of the art facilities allow clinicians to significantly expand services offered and to deliver tailored world class care to their local community.

One of the founders led the development of [Kaweka Private Hospital](http://www.kawekahospital.co.nz) to meet the need for increased surgical capacity in Hawke's Bay. Kaweka Hospital is a four operating theatre surgical hospital that plans to deliver over 5000 surgical procedures a year. ([www.kawekahospital.co.nz](http://www.kawekahospital.co.nz).)

The Matua Healthcare Group model of local ownership and is also being employed in another development currently underway in Palmerston North.

The Matua Healthcare Group is also active in the South Island, partnering with local clinicians and a national surgical group to significantly improve services to the local community.

In Masterton, Matua expect the new hospital will be largely owned by local clinicians and local investors. It is a model which will purposefully encourage a variety of specialists and their families to relocate to and stay in the Wairarapa.