

## **National Action Plan for Hep C Launched**

World Hepatitis day really came to Hamilton this year with the Launch of Mahere Mahi mo te Ate Kaka C- The National Hepatitis C Action Plan for Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Launch was based at Anglesea Community Pharmacy in central Hamilton with around 60 invited guests and attended by Associate Minister, the Honourable Dr Ayesha Verrall and the Director General of Health Ashley Bloomfield. Also welcoming the new plan was Professor Ed Gane who has been instrumental in fighting the cause for hepatitis C treatment in NZ and Dr Frank Weilert, hepatologist and clinical advisor for the Te Manawa Taki service.

The day highlighted the new mobile hep C service soon available in the Te Manawa Taki Region. Working in collaboration with other services the mobile service will be an opportunity to reach people in the community and especially in remote areas. The service will be able to offer basic health checks where necessary and it is hoped to partner with other health providers to enhance services and improve access and equity.

The focus areas for the new plan are Prevention and Harm Reduction, Awareness and Understanding, Surveillance and Monitoring, Testing and Screening and Integration of Services and Access to Care. Work is underway on the implementation of the plan, the first phase covering the next 5 years and then moving forward to reach the elimination timeline goal of 2030.

The day was a celebration of the work already started around hep C elimination with enthusiasm for a new structured work plan going forward.





Photos:

Top: Professor Ed Gane, welcoming in the new plan

Middle: Dr Ashley Bloomfield, Nancy Carey (Te Manawa Taki hep C nurse coordinator) Dr Frank Weilert

Bottom: Dr Ayesha Verrall cutting the celebratory cake

Reference: National Hepatitis C Action Plan for Aotearoa New Zealand

Mahere Mahi mot e Ate Kaka C 2020-2030

To eliminate hepatitis C as a public health threat by 2030