



Immediate Release

MEDIA RELEASE

Co-locating Agencies Create a Child & Family Wellbeing Centre in Eastern Suburbs

A small group of Christchurch's leading social services are taking an innovative approach in their support for children and their families by co-locating staff and services in one site to enabling easier access to a broad range of support services.

Aviva, Barnardos, Family Help Trust, He Waka Tapu and START plan to move into the new purpose built space on the first floor of Eastgate Shopping Centre in Linwood in late 2015. Providing their specialist services from one shared space will enhance the safety and wellbeing of children and their families whilst also enabling the agencies to share office resources, and avoid duplication.

“Our main objective is to enhance the effectiveness of our individual agencies by building our collective capability” says Nicola Woodward, CEO of Aviva. “The children, women and men who use our services often face a number of health and social challenges at any one time, but they have to go through multiple doors to get help for these. By co-locating we will create a family and community wellbeing centre that will enable us to significantly reduce that complexity. We also believe that this approach will build local community resilience and wellbeing. We call that an irresistible proposition.”

In addition to the services provided by the five partner agencies involved with the project families will also be able to access a broad range of other on-site services including microfinance and budgeting assistance, primary health care and public library resources via the Linwood Library and Service Centre, which is already located in the space. The Red Cross Outreach Services and Community Transport team will also operate from the site.

Several other support services have also expressed an interest in being part of the co-location, and staff from government agencies such as Police, Inland Revenue and Ministry of Social Development will be invited to 'hot-desk' (working at any available work station not designated for full-time staff) within the space in order to provide as much resource as possible from the Centre.

Mayor Lianne Dalziel sees the evolution of the new centre as another example of how Christchurch can take adversity and turn it into innovation and transformation. “The ability to bring together so many child and family wellbeing services is another wonderful example of our willingness to change and challenge the norm, and I think it will be a great benefit to our whole community” she says.



Better Health is leading the establishment of primary health care services on the same floor of the Centre. “Linwood Medical Centre had to move from its current premises and we wanted to bring a range of health and wellbeing services into one very accessible and visible space” says Managing Director David Jones. “With our social service partners now joining us there is a collective service offering that really speaks to holistic individual and family wellbeing – mental, emotional, social and physical – and that’s unique in New Zealand.”

The transition of so much retail space into child and family focussed support services is precisely what Eastgate owners NPT Limited have been working towards. “The 2010/11 earthquakes actually provided us with an opportunity to revitalise Eastgate as a ‘town’ centre rather than ‘shopping’ centre, by adding a public and community services element” says NPT Managing Director Kerry Hitchcock. “We’re really excited to see the redevelopment of the first floor into such a family and community centred space.”

The loss of premises for several of the co-locating social service partners was also a contributing factor towards co-location. “Several of our agencies were forced into temporary accommodation but we felt strongly that simply going back to our old way of operating was not the answer” Woodward says. “We really believe that through co-location – and the closer ways of working that will come with that – we have the potential to significantly enhance the wellbeing of families and communities by transforming how health and wellbeing services are delivered.

The social service partners are currently seeking funding for construction and associated costs of relocation and co-location. More than half the required funds have already been secured through generous support from New Zealand Red Cross, the Christchurch City Council Earthquake Mayoral Relief Fund and the Working Together More Fund.

To find out more about the project contact Aviva, Barnardos or the Family Help Trust.

--ENDS--

For further information contact:

Nicola Woodward
Chief Executive Officer, Aviva
M: 027 245 0255

David Jones
Managing Director, Better Health
M: 0212714937

Kerry Hitchcock
Managing Director, NPT Limited
T: (09) 375 9081



Fast Facts About the Co-Location Project

- Co-locating Social Service agencies involved: Aviva and Family Help Trust (fully co-locating), Barnardos Canterbury (team co-location); He Waka Tapu and START (partial co-location).
- Other community services – Red Cross Community Outreach.
- Budgeting, family law and other services to be confirmed.
- Primary Health Care, led by Better Health: Linwood Medical Centre (general practice); Mary King Pharmacy; Physio South; Nurse Maude; BUBS4U (midwives); Other services to be confirmed include mental health counselling; a breast feeding clinic; hand therapy; acupuncture; occupational therapy; and specialist medical clinics.
- Location: first floor of Eastgate Shopping Centre. Approximately 3,000 m² shared between Linwood Library, primary health care and social services.
- Time frame: open for operation by early 2016.
- Staff numbers: approximately 80 full-time equivalent staff members will be located in the social service space and 35 in the primary health care space.
- Client Numbers: Currently the five agencies support approximately 3,500 clients between them
- Space: Approximately 1,000m² each for social services and primary health services
- Costs: primary health and social service providers will fund their build separately. By financing the build and fit-out up-front, co-locating social service agencies will obtain a sustainable and competitive annual rent.