



COOK ISLANDS INVESTMENT CORPORATION

Government of the Cook Islands

MEDIA RELEASE

Commitment to providing quality primary care and oral health services

29 September 2024

Visitors to the newly refurbished Te Puna Ora Tumanava complex—offering primary care and oral health services—will now experience top-class facilities prioritising health and safety.

Jointly overseen by the Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC) and Te Marae Ora Ministry of Health Cook Islands (TMO), the Tupapa Primary Care & Oral Health Facility Asbestos Roof Replacement and Remedial Works Project was budgeted at \$400,000, excluding additional contributions from TMO and Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI). TMO provided an additional \$50,000 for specific upgrades.

Beginning on 15 April 2024, the project required the relocation of primary health care services to the upgraded Te Kou Ward at Rarotonga Hospital, while dental services were temporarily shifted to various puna (community health clinics and schools) around Rarotonga.

Vasie Ngatoko-Poila, CIIC's Asset Management General Manager, emphasized that replacing the asbestos roof was the primary objective of the project and was successfully completed in June.

“Given the hazardous nature of asbestos, careful planning and specialized expertise were essential,” she noted. “Close cooperation between CIIC, TMO, contractors, and asbestos experts ensured the safe and efficient removal and replacement of the material.”

Remedial works also enhanced the reception areas, patient waiting rooms, doctors' consultation rooms, pharmacy, dental laboratory, and workstations for staff. Additional improvements included sealing the car park to enhance accessibility and safety, and the establishment of a garden to contribute to the emotional, mental, and physical well-being of patients, their families, and staff.

CIIC Minister, Hon. Albert Nicholas, together with Health Minister Hon. Vainetutai Rose Toki Brown, has praised the collaboration between government agencies in ensuring the successful completion of the project, reinforcing their shared commitment to delivering quality primary care and oral health services.

“A special *meitaki* to Liz Koteka and her team at ICI for their valuable contributions. Acknowledgements also go to CIIC, Te Marae Ora, Infrastructure Cook Islands, Taio Construction, Gray8 Construction, Concrete Systems, Prime Solutions, Luduina Williams, Mark Rere, RK George, CIIC BMT Team, and all the Tupapa Primary Care and Oral Health staff,” Nicholas said.

He has also expressed gratitude to the public and nearby residents for their patience and cooperation throughout the project.

Health services at the facility will resume on Monday, 30 September 2024, at 9 a.m.

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