

# The Pukawakawa story

## Auckland School of Medicines Northland Regional - Rural Medical Programme

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Associate Professor Warwick Bagg is the coordinator of the Pukawakawa programme, the University of Auckland's Northland Regional - Rural Medical Programme. We invited him to share some background on the course and the significance of its name.

From 11 February 2008, a group of 20 year 5 medical students from the University of Auckland will be living and learning in the Northland region. This is a new initiative for the Medical School made possible by additional MBChB funding received in 2006 and close collaboration with the Northland District Health Board. It is anticipated that the programme will assist with long-term medical staffing in Northland, especially in the peripheral areas of the district, by allowing students to develop their own links with these areas and experiencing the type of work they would carry out in those settings. The programme will also strengthen the links between NDHB and The University of Auckland.

The model for learning is based on the current undergraduate medical programme, with modifications to the design and delivery to take account of the unique nature of healthcare provision and population needs in the various Northland settings. Learning will occur in both regional and rural settings. Each student will spend about 18 weeks in Whangarei Hospital and 7 weeks in Kaitiā, Dargaville or Rawene. In the rural areas students will experience working with GPs in outpatient settings and GP led hospitals, as well as a range of community health expert practitioners. The key focus in these settings is to understand the range of skills needed for rural medicine and to identify when limitations require interaction with more specialist regional or urban facilities. Students will see many patients in the diagnosis phase of medical practice, and will have the opportunity to examine the continuity of care models and the importance of community agencies in the role of chronic care. The specific nature of this programme draws on research elsewhere, particularly in North America and Australia, on what makes for successful rural medical education. Importantly, it provides an environment in which students will become more familiar with Maori health from a number of dimensions. This initiative is a true partnership with the Northland DHB and all Northland PHOs, including the independent Hauora Hokianga Integrated PHO. The Northland DHB has refurbished the previous student nurse accommodation to meet the living needs of the medical students, and has provided space for teaching and learning environments within its precincts. Over 40 students applied for the 20 places available, indicating a strong demand to study in such regional-rural environments.

The name of the programme is Pukawakawa. Outlined below are the reasons why the programme was named Pukawakawa.

### The Pukawakawa Story

The Northland District Health Board Kaunihera Kaumatua (Council of Elders) has provided the name Pukawakawa for the Northland Regional-Rural medical programme.

There are many korero from different points in time and perspectives concerning the name Pukawakawa. Most importantly, the site where the Whangarei hospital is located was a Te Parawhau pa (the local hapu). That pa is still known as Pukawakawa. On the ridge and cliff face above the hospital running towards Maunu were large unusual reefs of rocks, some are still visible today amongst the houses. To Te Parawhau, they were steeped in cultural significance and secrecy.

Pukawakawa also refers to:

- the pa was shaped in a manner like two arms 'to embrace, or defend the people;
- Pukawakawa was also the name of a traditional Whare Wananga (place of learning)
- Pukawakawa also makes reference to the Kawakawa, a plant used as a rongoa (medicine) by Maori. This plant is still commonly found in Te Tai Tokerau and is abundantly found on the grounds of the hospital.

While the name Pukawakawa is perhaps most deeply connected to the Whangarei locality, the Kaunihera noted the references to the Kawakawa plant as a rongoa and a traditional Whare Wananga and in their view, this makes Pukawakawa an apt name for all sites in the programme.

The University of Auckland and the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences is honoured to accept this name for the Northland Regional-Rural programme.

*He honore nui tenei, mauri ora ki a tatou katoa!*

The Pukawakawa programme is an expansion of the University of Auckland's presence in Northland. The Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences runs a postgraduate nursing programme for Northland-based nurses. The University's Business School has a satellite campus in Kawakawa for Northland students taking the Graduate Programme in Business (Maori Development), and the Faculty of Education runs the Te Tai Tokerau Education Campus in Alexander Street, Whangarei.