

Ōtorohanga Medical - Project Overview

This incredible community project started as a dream in 2017, between local resident John Oliver, and a then Director of OtoMed, Dr Bob Le Quesne. Their idea was to build a fit for purpose, new medical facility that would improve the range of services offered to the community, and provide space for increasing patient numbers.

The Ōtorohanga Charitable Trust became involved in May 2017 when John & Sarah Oliver kick started the project with a 1M donation to the Trust, who now own the building. The Trust worked alongside the Ōtorohanga District Council, and in particular the then CE Dave Clibbery, who was instrumental in securing for the project the wonderful address the building now sits on. Council were also to be financially involved with agreeing to support the project with a substantial loan to the Trust.

The staff at OtoMed were given the incredible opportunity to design a 'dream' facility, with architect Peter Chibnall, from Chibnall Buckell Team Architects in Hamilton.

On Tuesday February 13, 2018, the Trust hosted a 'Turning of the Sod Ceremony', led by Dr Tom Roa, and the project was officially underway. Livingstone Building started onsite on September 16, 2018, and the excitement in the community continued to mount from this point in time.

The new facility was designed with two distinct wings, with the west wing offering a modern space for general consult delivery, and a pharmacy and Pathlab facilities.

The east wing was conceived as a part mini-emergency facility, being constructed inside a precast concrete 'bunker' perimeter, sufficient to withstand earthquakes and extremes of environmental exposure. This wing is in everyday use with provision for triage, resuscitation, and casualty along with ultrasound and x-ray services.

The new facility is designed with a meeting room for whanau meetings and the ability to facilitate group education sessions. The building is future proofed for growth with room to accommodate a further three doctors, and also has dedicated space for visiting specialists. The ability to house all these services under one roof make the project an incredible improvement for the people who call Ōtorohanga and its surrounding districts home.

The directors believe the new medical facility will make it more attractive for the retention of and sourcing quality staff for the future, and it will make a difference to healthcare to have a facility that is able to meet the changes of medical services in the future.

The Trust hosted and spoke at a number of community meetings during the course of the project where we informed our locals of the project, the benefits to the community, and we asked them to consider financially supporting the project. The response was absolutely overwhelming. At a Black Tie event attended by those who had made financial contributions over a certain level, the locals were absolutely stunned when a second family, the Knutsons, announced they would be matching the Oliver donation of \$1M. This combined with the other very generous contributions from more than 100 local families, catapulted the Trust into the position of becoming debt free on the project. The Trust will move from contributing around \$15K per year into the community, to around \$100K every year.

The project, through the incredible generosity of a community, will provide a modern space for healthcare under one roof, and a Trust who will support its people and their projects financially at a level never before thought possible.

Ōtorohanga Medical had its official opening on Saturday 8 June at 10am, and opened for business on Monday 17 June, 2019.