



Te Paepae Arahi: Supporting vulnerable whānau

Te Paepae Arahi is providing a range of much-needed support to reduce the impact of isolation on Hutt Valley whānau during COVID-19.

From its base in Lower Hutt, Te Paepae Arahi offers combined kaupapa Māori and mainstream clinical practices free to whānau in need across the Hutt Valley.

Their service provides assistance with anything from mental health and addiction issues to broader welfare needs, and works within a collaborative of community support providers.

Like other services, Te Paepae Arahi have expanded their services to help reduce the impact of isolation overall during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A mother, who wished to remain anonymous, said the service meant she was able to keep her immunocompromised tamariki at home, safe and warm in their bubble.

“Support with kai packages via text and calls has been a lifeline to myself and my five tamariki,” she said.

“I have been able to provide them with nutritious meals and it is a great weight off my shoulders. The lockdown has meant my electricity, internet, and kai costs have all increased, so thanks to them, I have one less thing to worry about.”

General manager Jeremy Tumoana said the impact of COVID-19 was being felt by all vulnerable communities.

“Although we are a kaupapa Māori service, we provide services for all Hutt communities. Wider community support has increased over the recent weeks and we’re helping people from all cultures and backgrounds.”

The team has been working from their homes during the lockdown, and is focused on working effectively to support our communities during this challenging time.

“Moving from ‘aa kanohi’ (face-to-face) to a virtual support approach, has been both challenging but also rewarding. There has been a lot of learnings and understanding gained on how best to support people when they need it and where they need it.”

The service will expand further in the future to offer more support to GP practices with high-needs populations.