



South Island Alliance Announces SPaCE Programme – Supporting Patients and Clinicians Electronically

Today, the South Island Alliance, a collaboration between the five South Island DHBs, announces a decision to replace all their Patient Administration Systems, with a view to creating a more streamlined and effective support system for patients and clinicians across the whole of the South Island.

The new systems will offer the opportunity to improve on all of the current administrative systems, some of which have been in use for nearly 20 years, but they will do much more than this. The opportunity will be taken to take a major step forward in making patients' journeys through the health system much easier, providing better facilities and support to clinicians and at the same time saving costs by better utilising the resources available to DHBs across the region.

John Peters, CEO of Nelson Marlborough DHB, and Lead CE for the South Island Information Services Level Alliance, says, "this is a once in a generation opportunity to help our staff, our colleagues in other care organisations and most of all our patients".

"We intend to give patients speedier and more effective care and to better provide information about them and their conditions to the clinicians that are caring for them at all stages in that care. This is a major project and represents one of the first fruits of the collaboration between all South Island DHBs."

Dr Andrew Bowers, from Southern DHB, who is leading the programme is particularly excited about the opportunity to create closer links not only between clinicians in the DHBs, but also across primary and community healthcare. "With the challenges we face in respect to the greying of the population, the increasing incidence of long term conditions and the challenging fiscal situation, simply doing what we do now more efficiently is not enough. We must improve productivity across the board and this means helping our healthcare workers have better information at their fingertips and enabling the patients to become more involved in the decisions that impact their health."

"These new systems will act as a catalyst for significant change and for a major improvement in services and cost effectiveness."

The South Island Alliance will initially select a partner or partners from the supplier community, to work on the development of the strategy and its implementation across all the DHBs. The selection process will be managed by the National Institute for Health Innovation at the University of Auckland, using their Active Procurement process.

The Institute's Director, Malcolm Pollock, says "we have used Active Procurement for a number of major innovative information system projects now and it has shown that we can facilitate the making of good decisions, quicker and at less cost than is often the case using more conventional processes."

"Most importantly, the process encourages the suppliers to work in a partnership framework with their customers and this has the effect of all parties striving to achieve common goals."

The selection process, which will see an Expression of Interest being published this month, is planned to be completed in or around November this year, with the first systems being installed in late 2013.

What is the South Island Alliance and the Information Services Level Alliance?

The South Island Information Services Level Alliance is one of the work streams of the South Island Alliance, which brings together experts from across the South Island to provide governance and direction to health services.

The South Island Alliance is a partnership between the five South Island district health boards (DHBs) and is working to support a clinically and financially sustainable South Island health system where services are as close to people's homes as possible.

Alliance initiatives are grouped into six work streams or Service Level Alliances, which are the Southern Cancer Network, Child Health, Health of Older People, Mental Health, Information Services, and Support Services.

Members of the Information Services Level Alliance include clinical and nursing experts, IT specialists, and DHB representatives. The Alliance's aim is to implement the National Health Technology Plan and to improve quality, increase efficiency through shared information, and achieve better value for money.

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