

# Care packs help dozens of families

A sobering sight in recent days has been the number of care parcels organised and distributed from Piritahi Marae.

Last Friday saw the first batch of 117 boxes go out, followed by 54 more on Tuesday and Wednesday – the result of a phone call between Judy Davis, the general manager of the marae-based primary health care clinic Piritahi Hau Ora and Donna Tamaariki.

It's a sure sign that what was once a health crisis has now changed into an economic crisis for many of the most vulnerable families on Waiheke.

The packages included essentials such as women's sanitary items, shampoo, conditioner and Milo for the kids – all high-priced items that could easily be left off a shopping list when budgets were stretched, or missed entirely if families were staying clear of shops because of illness, age or having children to look after at home.

Judy said when Donna called asking how she could help, Piritahi Hau Ora already knew of around 4500 people struggling with the early onset of the Covid-19 restrictions and could easily pinpoint 100 or so whānau who would be in need of a care package.

"When we contacted them and asked permission to deliver the packages, we had many in tears and so many text back to say thank you. This was new territory for all of us and it brought up a lot of fear and misunderstanding about how to cope in this new environment. The boxes were just about helping to get them through that difficult time."

The boxes were dropped off thanks to the staff of the Oneroa and Piritahi clinics, who all used PPE to ensure contactless de-

livery, and the reactions of many recipients showed their relief in getting the handouts.

Judy said one woman had cycled in from Rocky Bay with her last \$18 to spend on food when she was informed of her package and that they would deliver it. And among 10 people she knew who had been made homeless as a result of the initial level four restrictions, one family of four had lost their accommodation when their landlords had decided they wanted their holiday home for their own lockdown retreat.

"Being offered this help has allowed some of these people to keep their mana intact," Judy said.

Some of Judy's work at Piritahi Hau Ora has been highlighted over the past week on the Ministry of Māori Development's website with Te Puni Kōkiri senior advisor Eruera Morgan calling her a hero.

"Māori have a strong sense of resilience. We pull together as communities at these times of adversity," says Eruera Morgan. "We're lucky to have Judy there. You need people like her, they activate!"

But Judy says it's simply a matter of working with all the available contacts – including people such as midwives – to pinpoint where the need is most required and spot some of the more hidden issues that have come from the lockdown; the use of alcohol, drugs and family tension.

"Our counsellors working remotely report some people drinking heavily. So we're figuring out how to effectively engage with them, how to get them thinking

about alternatives to alcohol, and putting safety plans in place," says Judy.

As the weeks roll on, parents and tamariki have sometimes been hard-pressed to occupy themselves. Judy and the team grabbed the opportunity to start up small, positive parenting Zoom groups in the first week of the lockdown.

There have been some surprising results. After lots of initial anxiety about the virus and restrictions, some parents are enjoying 'reconnecting' with their children.

"One woman told the group 'I've now realised how grown up my nine-year-old is. I feel like I've missed a lot of time. We've talked past one another for so long'. Over time there's been more talk about the positives and understanding about why we're doing this."

After the initial fear and hopelessness of the start of the coronavirus crisis, Judy says she's started to see far more kindness among the people she deals with on Waiheke. But she warns this is still the start of a long road.

"We're still going to see a lot of job losses in hospitality and tourism – we're already hearing from many people who can't pay their rents. The need is only going to increase." • James Belfield and Shona Geary



Judy Davis, Piritahi Hau Ora general manager, makes up the packages at the marae for delivery to whānau in need.

Photo Tessa O'Shea



**TANKMAN**  
WATER TANK MAINTENANCE

<b>TANKCheck</b> ..... <b>\$FREE</b> FREE onsite check of tank, gutters, spouting, and water quality.	<b>TANKSterilise</b> ..... <b>\$100</b> Sterilise & deodorise discoloured and smelly water back to healthy.
<b>TANKClean</b> ..... <b>\$300</b> Vacuum sludge & residue from bottom of tank. Sterilise & deodorise water.	<b>TANKSmartMeter</b> ... <b>\$450</b> Supply & install a smartphone water monitoring meter.
<b>TANKClean+Fill</b> ..... <b>\$550</b> Combine our TANKClean service with delivery of 10000L+ water.	<b>TANKIntakeFilter</b> .... <b>\$600</b> Supply & install a 50 micron intake filter to eliminate debris entering your tank.

**Don't put clean water in a dirty tank!**

\*Surcharges may apply for underground tanks & rural residences. Prices exclude additional consumables.

**09 372 4442**    [www.tankman.co.nz](http://www.tankman.co.nz)



**WEATHER**

**MAX RAIN**  
16.0

**MAX TEMP**  
21.3°

**MIN TEMP**  
13.4°

**Week 18:**  
27 Apr – 3 May 2020

**RAINFALL mm**

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.5	16.0
1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.0	39.0

**MAX TEMP °C**

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
21.1	21.3	21.2	20.0	19.7	20.4	19.4
23.0	21.1	22.8	22.1	20.6	20.9	19.9

**MIN TEMP °C**

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
16.0	13.4	13.9	14.9	16.2	16.0	16.1
14.7	10.3	12.5	11.3	17.2	17.8	15.6

**RAINFALL: LAST 12 WEEKS vs PAST 2 YEARS**



Data by WeatherWatch Auckland 024-4022-910