



## Media release

### **Waitematā DHB launches simple low cost surgical implant tracking system**

Patients at North Shore Hospital are the first in the country to receive surgical implants that can be tracked by a simple, low cost electronic tracking system.

Waitematā DHB's Institute for Innovation and Improvement (i3) has developed a simple system to record and store the bar codes of implants used by its surgeons.

This means patients can be quickly identified if there is a product recall.

Director of i3 Dr Penny Andrew says the previous process for tracking implants was paper-based, which meant it was costly and time-consuming, particularly in the case of a product recall.

"It can take months to review records and identify patients with an implant, and during those months, patient safety is at risk. This has become an issue for hospitals worldwide," she says.

A bar code on the implant packaging is scanned before an operation removing the need for manual entry of the product details.

Details identifying the make, manufacture date and lot number of the implant are automatically entered into the system and the information is stored in the patient's electronic health record.

Dr Andrew says there are very few implant recalls but the ability to easily identify patients if one does occur will ensure patients get the follow-up they need faster than before.

"Recalls can involve withdrawal of products from the market and notifying patients of problems with an implant," Dr Andrew says. "The system developed by our i3 team is a low cost solution to quickly notify patients who have received recalled surgical implants or to monitor any safety issues."

The new surgical implant tracking system is now in use at North Shore Hospital and at the Elective Surgery Centre located on the North Shore Hospital campus.

## **ENDS**

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