



## BOWEL SCREENING TO BEGIN AT HUTT

Hutt Valley District Health Board is one of the first DHBs to benefit from the National Bowel Screening Programme. This is a free programme to check for an early sign of bowel cancer.

**Why?** New Zealand has one of the highest rates of bowel cancer in the world. Regular bowel screening can save lives by finding cancer early when it can often be successfully treated.

**Who?** The National Bowel Screening Programme is being offered to men and women aged 60 to 74 who are eligible for publicly funded healthcare.

**What?** If you are eligible to take part, you will be sent an invitation letter, a consent form and a free bowel screening test kit. The test is done at home, and is clean and simple to do.

**When?** Participants will receive their first invitation within two years of the programme starting in July this year. The programme will then be ongoing for eligible 60-74 year olds, who will be invited for screening once every two years.

More information on the National Bowel Screening Programme is available on the Ministry of Health website.



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### BOWEL SCREENING TEST - IT'S SO EASY!



The bowel screening test is free, quick, clean and simple to do by yourself at home.

All you need to do is collect a small sample from your bowel motion (poo), and put it into the tube.

You then send it in the pre-paid envelope to the testing centre and wait to hear your results.



## Bowel Screening

### Check Yourself Out

More than 20,000 Hutt Valley residents will be invited to participate during the first two years of the programme. Estimates suggest up to 50 cancers may be detected during the first two years.

*Early detection saves lives. Could yours be one of them?*

**Bowel problems? Talk to your doctor** - Common symptoms of bowel cancer may include:

- a change to your normal pattern of going to the toilet that continues for several weeks (such as diarrhoea, constipation, or feeling that your bowel doesn't empty completely)
- blood in your bowel motion.

Although these symptoms are usually caused by other conditions, it's important to get them checked by your doctor.

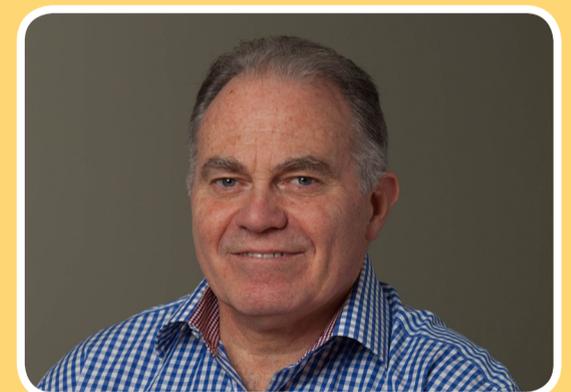
### CHECK YOURSELF OUT FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR WHĀNAU

"Take the opportunity to do the free bowel screening test."

This is the message to people living in Hutt Valley from a man who found out he had bowel cancer through taking part in Waitemata District Health Board's bowel screening pilot.

Aucklander David Vinsen, who is the chief executive of the NZ Imported Motor Vehicle Association, had no symptoms of bowel cancer and did the bowel screening test after being encouraged to by his general practitioner. He was surprised when his screening test result came back positive and, after further investigation, cancer was confirmed. He is now recuperating following surgery.

David is encouraging others to do the test as part of a regular check up.



"We look after our vehicles and have them regularly serviced and inspected, but we don't do the same for ourselves. My message to others - especially men who often avoid medical issues - is to take advantage of the opportunity to do the free bowel screening test."

*Hutt Valley DHB  
Public board meetings*

Hutt Valley District Health Board meetings are open to the public.

Visit our website for more information:

www.huttvalleydhb.org.nz