

**Public Health Association of New Zealand
Media release 23 September 2010**

New brand carries healthy eating message in Paeroa

Hauraki Iwi Health Provider Te Korowai Hauora O Hauraki has adapted a unique approach to encouraging healthy eating amongst Paeroa whānau. The organisation has developed a brand called 'Hauraki Healthy Kai' which food outlets use to identify food that contains less than 10 percent fat.

"Paeroa was identified as a high deprivation area. We have a higher rate of diet-related disease compared to the rest of the Waikato and the rest of the country," Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki, Iwi Health Promoter Tania Young told the Public Health Association's national conference in Ngaruawahia today.

Te Korowai Hauora O Hauraki approached all 18 local food outlets to take part in this project. The response was positive with 12 agreeing to be part of the initiative. Food outlets were then asked to identify three items on their menus for lab testing of fat content.

The stores have 'Hauraki Healthy Kai' stickers which they put on items that have less than ten percent fat. The stickers feature a pataka, or storehouse, which is where Māori traditionally stored good healthy food. Some stores also have posters showing which food is healthiest.

"We are currently developing a 'Hauraki Healthy Kai Toolkit' for other health providers to use.

"This project is a two-pronged approach. We want to influence retailers to offer healthy choices and we are encouraging whānau to buy the healthier choices," Ms Young said.

The Healthy Hauraki Kai campaign was launched by Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki with the Hauraki District Mayor giving Te Korowai Hauora O Hauraki a special challenge to recruit one of the town's notorious pie selling outlets into the campaign.

"To the Mayor's surprise we did it.

"These businesses are not losing money as a result of the changes. In fact many have responded and found they have had an increase in healthy kai sales because of the Hauraki Healthy Kai campaign."

The next phase of the campaign features the slogan "Just Ask". This is to encourage locals to ask for a healthier option when having food or coffee made for them, for example trim milk when they order a coffee or grilled fish instead of fried.

Hauraki Healthy Kai has only been going for a year but there have been some key learnings.

"Don't underestimate retailers. We needed their buy-in and we got it. It was also about listening to what the community needed and working with them," said Ms Young.

There are a few challenges ahead including the arrival of McDonald's in Paeroa Township. Te Korowai Hauora of Hauraki is engaging with McDonald's to see how they can be part of local 'Hauraki Healthy Kai' movement.

Ends

Contact: Anton Blank 021 406 031