

Do you know who your GP is, and who else is in their team?

Our clinicians are now working in Practice Teams. By grouping our expert providers into dedicated Teams, our staff are better able to coordinate, communicate, and work together behind the scenes to manage your care.

Practice Teams have a mix of GPs, Physician Associates, Nurse Practitioners and Nurse Prescribers. The Teams are listed below.

Team 1

Dr Alison Glover

Dr Jane Cooper

Jenna Oppliger – Physician Associate

Team 2

Dr Ernst Buhrs

Dr Amanda Henderson

Manuel Pompa – Physician Associate

Team 3

Dr Herbie Taute

Dr Elan Jones

Dr Jo Vipond

Michaela Buhrs – Midwife Prescriber

Tricia Stuart – Physician Associate

Team 4

Dr Katie Reid

Dr Ayesha Haque

Fiona Wing – Nurse Practitioner

Agnieszka Tyl – Physician Associate

Why this is good

GP backup: Your GP now has help. If you are unable to book with your GP, or cannot wait until your GP is available, then you can book with another provider in your GP's Team, and they will communicate with each other about your care as necessary.

- continued on pg.2

Southern Cross Minor Surgery - accreditation

Our Surgery Room (21) is formally accredited by Southern Cross as a regional minor operations facility.

This means that patients with Southern Cross Insurance, can get their approved minor operations done at our clinic, instead of having to go to Hamilton.

When you are talking with your surgeon/specialist, ask about having your procedure done at TAMC instead of having to travel to Hamilton ■

Actively recruiting for GPs

We are constantly recruiting to find new doctors and other clinicians. Five new clinical staff joined us late last year, and we were lucky to have two overseas locum doctors helping us out over the summer. Unfortunately, the locums have finished now, and we have also had clinicians leave us in the first half of this year, so we're keeping up, but only just. Our aim is to grow our staff so that we can open our Pioneer Drive clinic more often.

The excellent news is that we are making some progress and we hope that we will soon be able to confirm some new doctors who will be arriving in the second half of the year, and in early 2027 ■

Update on Pioneer Drive Clinic

We built our Pioneer Drive clinic so that we have space for our team to grow, and so that we can improve our services to you. In time, we plan to be open on all weekdays there. We are actively recruiting as we speak to add GPs to our team. As we grow our staff, we will be open there on more days ■

Why this is good - continued from pg.1

Have a regular 'backup' person: Whenever you can't book with your GP, we suggest that you book with the same regular backup person from your GP's Team. This means that over time, you will have more than one provider in the team who is familiar with your medical conditions and history.

Easier follow-ups: You may have a consultation with your GP and they may ask you to come back in a few days for a follow up. If you cannot book in to see your GP within a few days, then you will be able to book the follow up appointment with another member of the GP's Team, knowing that the two providers will communicate with each other about your care as needed.

Do I need the GP for that? Depending on what your ailment is at the time, you may not need to see your GP at all. For example, if you have simple cold or flu symptoms, an appointment with one of our Nurse Practitioners or Prescribers may be sufficient to get you a check-up and symptom relief with a much shorter wait time. Also, you can book with our specialised clinics without having to first see your GP. See below for 'Specialised clinics still available'.

Appointments available sooner: For more urgent illness, the Physician Associate in your GP's Team is likely to have appointments available sooner than your GP. We always recommend booking an appointment rather than waiting in our Casualty queue, where the most urgent patients get priority, and wait times can be long.

Specialised clinics still available: While your GP's Team is available for general medical appointments, you can still book with any provider at our clinic for specific things, such as

- Dermatography with the nurse (skin check photos)
- GASP respiratory clinics provided by nurses and our Pharmacist Prescriber Rachel Bell (breathing related consults and changes to prescriptions, including inhalers)
- Women's Health (menopause, family planning, sexual health and more) provided by our Women's Health GPs, nurses and Midwife Prescriber
- Skin checks (by specialised GP, Dr Hemisha Patel)
- Fracture clinic follow-ups and dressing changes (Dr Krishna Chatterjee, Friday mornings).

We trust that our new Practice Team structure will enable us to provide improved levels of care for you. We welcome your feedback as we get our Practice Teams up and running in 2026 ■

ECG machine

For some years we have been working with the Kihikihi Community Health Hub Trust to provide the weekly community health clinic at Kihikihi School. The Kihikihi Community Health Hub Trust has recently purchased and donated to TAMC, an electrocardiogram (ECG) machine and a set of scales.

This wonderful donation enables TAMC to provide ECGs for patients onsite at Mangatoatoa Paa and at the Kihikihi School weekly clinic. Previously, patients who were seen at Kihikihi or Mangatoatoa had to make a separate trip into our main clinic at Bank St, Te Awamutu, to get an ECG.

This is now an onsite service at both of those clinics, which makes it far more convenient for patients. Sending a huge thank you to the Kihikihi Community Health Hub Trust ! ■

Type 2 Diabetes Change to criteria for diagnosis

New Zealand has changed the diagnostic threshold for type 2 diabetes from 1 July 2026 to align with the WHO guidance and international definitions. This means that those with an HbA1c 48mmol/mol or higher will fall into the diabetes range (previously >50mmol/mol).

If this affects you, one of our team will be in touch to discuss what it means and ensure you are receiving the best monitoring and treatment (if needed).

While this doesn't mean your risk of complications has suddenly increased, having earlier intervention will reduce the chance of diabetes related complications in the future ■

Casualty

– how does it work?

Our Casualty unit is for patients with accidents, injuries and urgent medical issues. You are always assessed (triaged) by a nurse to determine your urgency status before seeing a doctor in Casualty.

Generally, you will be called in order of your urgency status rather than in the order you arrived. Keep in mind that our Casualty staff may also be attending to patients who have been delivered by ambulance.

You may be given an approximate time to report to Casualty over the phone. This is simply an indication of possible timing, not a guaranteed appointment time.

If you are new to Te Awamutu Medical Centre, see one of our receptionists at the front counter and they will guide you through the process of being seen in Casualty.

We cannot predict when you will be seen, or how long you will have to wait. So, where possible and if your need is not urgent, we recommend booking a (next available) appointment with a doctor rather than waiting in the Casualty queue ■

Living Will / Non-resuscitation Orders / EPOA (Enduring Power of Attorney)

If you have arrangements for any of the above with your family, lawyer, rest home or other, please advise our staff and supply the relevant documents for your TAMC file to enable us to follow your directives in relevant situations ■

Not available in Casualty

Casualty is for urgent medical treatments, accidents and injuries. The following is a list of what you cannot have done in Casualty:

- consults for WINZ forms
- employment medicals
- driving medicals – (needs a double appointment)
- regular check-ups and
- other issues that are not medically urgent.

These activities are available by booking with your GP or their support team.

We suggest that you book well in advance for a driving medical – (a double appointment), an employment medical or consults for WINZ forms, to ensure these are completed on time.

Women's Health Team

- update

There is substantial expertise and experience in our Women's Health Team. We have two GP members of the Australasian Menopause Society, our Midwife Prescriber, experienced Physician Associates and nurses.

On matters relating to menopause, sexual health, family planning, and contraception, we offer a comprehensive range of high quality services.

These services are available to all – you do not need to be enrolled at TAMC to book a consult (casual patients will need to fill out a casual enrolment form, the first time they visit).

Also, many of the services are subsidised, so often there is a reduced fee, and sometimes no fee, for advice and treatments.

Contact our reception to book – 07 872 0300. Make sure to ask our receptionist to book you into the Women's Health Clinic ■

Family Medical History

This allows your doctor to consider all aspects relevant to your health and gives your doctor a better understanding of e.g. possible testing requirements.

Let your doctor or nurse know if there is a family history of any disease or condition e.g. heart disease, diabetes, asthma, bowel or other cancers, neurological disorders, epilepsy.

Your family history is recorded in your medical records for this purpose, so remember to update us when new information is known ■

Tips and reminders

Well patient portal reminders

A reminder that we are now using the Well patient portal. If you are not yet registered and want to be, please speak to reception for instructions – it's quick and easy to sign up! Please note that only patients 16 and older can register and you must have your own email address (i.e. you can't have the same email as another patient already registered).

Can't find the clinician you want to send a message to on the list? They're on holiday! When our staff are away, we turn their Well messaging off. You can message the nurse team or reception team instead.

Only medications that have been marked as long-term are available for requesting repeats of. If you are missing a medication from your list that you think should be there, please let us know and we can look into this for you ▪

Account reminders

We have changed how our scripts are invoiced. When the GP completes a script, the invoice is done automatically as part of this process now. You will receive a link, via email or text, to pay – if you have Southern Cross insurance, please email us at accounts@tamc.co.nz so we can claim this for you.

A reminder that we do not run accounts any longer. Payment is expected on the day of your appointment. We do understand that things are tough financially for a lot of our patients at the moment – please do reach out to us if you need assistance with payment or managing your account. We want to work with you, not against you!

It is important for us to have your current contact details

Any changes to your contact details e.g. name, mobile phone, physical and postal address, post code, e-mail, next of kin and employer details for ACC incidents?

These are vital to many aspects of your care.

If your current details are available to us, we can e.g.

- get hold of your next of kin in emergency situations
- advise you of your results
- let you know the doctor would like to see you
- refer you to a specialist without delays and back and forth
- complete ACC forms without delay
- remind you of important health care reviews due
- alert you to changes that may affect you.

For our nurses, finding contact details can take precious time out of their day when they would much prefer providing services to patients in that time.

You can update your details in an email to reception@tamc.co.nz or phone 07 872 0300 – you will be asked some identification questions to verify it is you ▪

Ask any questions of us and give us feedback, negative or positive.

In doing so, you contribute to improving our contribution to you, and that is important to us!

Email, write, message via your Well portal, phone or ask a receptionist for a staff member to talk to.

reception@tamc.co.nz ▪ 07 872 0300 ▪ 220 Bank Street, Te Awamutu