



'Here to help u' new tool delivering support during COVID-19

16 April 2020

Hamilton residents can now access social service support during COVID-19 at their fingertips thanks to a pioneering community response website 'heretohelpu.nz'.

'Here to help u' is a community initiative supported by Hamilton community service providers, volunteers and funders to provide hardship and social service support to locals during COVID-19.

Hardship and social service support includes free assistance with food parcels, prepared meals, collection of items service, mental health support, and safe social connection.

To access this support you go to www.heretohelpu.nz at any time and submit a request for help. A support line staff member will respond to your request.

Community Waikato chief executive Holly Snape says the 'Here to help u' website is a new initiative for the community and provides a safe and easily accessible way for someone who needs support to access it.

Development of this website was led by the Wise Group and planned as a collaborative initiative to provide the public with a useful tool and be an asset for the hard-working community sector.

Wise Group and Houchen Hub Operations Lead Erana Severne says the community collaboration and website development has come together in a phenomenally short timeframe. It was front of mind for the group to get this off the ground fast so that when the social service needs increase during the COVID-19 lockdown and beyond, the right support is available to respond appropriately.

"We're committed to doing whatever it takes to meet the community's needs and support the wellbeing of our local people, whānau and communities," says Erana Severne.

Holly Snape says the heretohelpu.nz website will soon be accompanied by a freephone, with information about this number being available shortly. In the meantime, she says, for those who do not have access to a desktop or mobile device, they can call the Civil Defence emergency helpline (freephone 0800 800 405).

For more information or to request help for yourself or someone you know go to www.heretohelpu.nz

ENDS

For further information please contact:

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Kei konei mātou hei puna āwhina mōu