



Thursday March 4 2016

### **Dr Tom's mission of the heart to hit the Far North**

The Far North is the next region being targeted in an Auckland-based emergency doctor's personal crusade to save people from preventable chronic diseases.

Dr Tom Mulholland – or 'Dr Tom' – is scheduled to offer free diabetes and health checks at key Far North sites starting next Tuesday 8 March in Takahue.

The comprehensive checks include testing of blood lipids, diabetes testing (HBA1C) which can indicate pre-diabetic risk, blood pressure and lung function, if needed. People who have not undergone diabetes or heart checks in the past three years are eligible for the 20-minute consultations, which give immediate results.

Dr Tom is based at Auckland Hospital Emergency Department but has worked from Kaitaia to the sub-Antarctic islands in a career spanning 25 years. In that time, he says he was made some disturbing observations of the state of New Zealanders' health, adding that most of the people he treats suffer from preventable illnesses.

"Health is the one thing we most take for granted. It can be difficult to change behaviours, like smoking and sugar. However, the key is to work out what is important to you, then be ready and willing to make changes," he says.

He adds that making time to visit your GP and get a warrant of fitness is key. "We are often too busy to get to the doctor or get to the pharmacy, or have access issues. Most of the people I see with chronic diseases wish they had done something a lot earlier. It is soul-destroying for everyone dealing with something like end stage emphysema," he says.

In addition to the scheduled visits, he says people who reside in remote towns with difficulties in accessing GPs can go to [www.drtonamission.com](http://www.drtonamission.com) and nominate their town for pop-up clinics. The remaining free days of the Far North tour fall on Thursday 17 March 17, Friday 18 March, Monday 21 March and Wednesday 23 March.

Dr Tom, his team members Meleane Bourke and Barbara Docherty and iconic retro ambulance will be onsite at the following places and times:



Tuesday 8 March	Takahue Hall, Takahue	12.00pm to 1.30pm
Wednesday 9 March	Far North District Council, Kaitaia	10am to 1pm
Friday 11 March	Far North District Council, Kaikohe	10am to 1pm
Monday 14 March	Kerikeri Public Library, Kerikeri	10am to 1pm
Tuesday 22 March	Four Square and Whangaroa Marina, Kaeo	10am to 1pm

For more information, visit [www.drtonomission.com](http://www.drtonomission.com).