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Two new women GPs for the Bay

After several years with no female GP, Golden Bay is going to be blessed with two women doctors.

Joanna Howard has just started work at the Golden Bay Medical Centre, working .7 of a full time position, and Jocelyn Tracey will be working a similar number of hours from the start of next year.

Golden Bay has been without a female doctor, apart from some limited hours worked by Dr Tracey, since Helen Kingston retired.

Joanna is a graduate of Otago University who has worked in Motueka and Richmond and in remote communities at a place called Tom Price in West Australia and the northern Queensland town of Cape York. She will be settling locally in the Bay with her husband Gawen and two children Maata (5) and Carlos (4).

She enjoys the challenge of working in small remote communities and included in her training working in Indian mountain foothills. She has also seen the benefits of more community control of primary health care management.

Jocelyn is already based in Golden Bay. She has over two decades of experience of integration between primary and secondary care. Jocelyn has maintained her professional registration by doing locums in West Auckland and other locations.

Having five doctors working in Golden Bay for Nelson Bays Primary Health will ease the after hours on-call pressure for the GPs.

“Being on call one night in five is much more sustainable than one in three,” according to Andrew Swanson-Dobbs, Chief Executive of NBPH. In addition Dr Vic Eastman is working in a contracted arrangement that does not include after hours.

“They will be able to use a primary care room that has been established at the hospital. It’s an interim arrangement until the new facilities are built. It is another venue, in addition to the existing medical centre, and may be more convenient to use after hours in some instances, particularly at night.

‘It’s not set up as an emergency facility. If people need to see a doctor after hours they will continue to ring the medical centre number as happens now. After hours, this automatically switches through to the doctor on call who talks with the patient and decides what treatment is needed and where this will be done. “ Normal consultation fees will continue to apply.