New dental teaching facility to be built in South Auckland

By DTI

The University of Otago has announced that it will begin construction of a new dental teaching facility in South Auckland in 2019. The clinic will offer high-quality care at an affordable cost.

The clinic will be designed to help meet the high health needs in the area while providing students with wide-ranging learning opportunities in a diverse community. The University of Otago’s Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Harlene Hayne, believes the NZ$82 million, two-storey, 32-chair clinic will make a true difference to the lives of patients and the broader community’s health and well-being. She noted that the Faculty of Dentistry will regularly consult the community to find out what it needs from the clinic, then work to deliver that, as well as provide a wide range of outreach activities.

With 48 final-year BDS students to be assigned to the South Auckland clinic at any one time, it will follow the long-standing social contract model operated successfully in Dunedin, whereby patients receive treatment provided by students under supervision at a highly accessible cost.

Prof. Paul Brunton, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Division of Health Sciences at the University of Otago, said the project is a win-win situation for both the local community and the university. “Patients are contributing to the education of the country’s future dentists and, in exchange, they have access to high-quality dental care,” he explained.

The design of the clinic is already underway, with construction scheduled to start in 2019 and the completion date set for 2020.