

One year on and hospital is growing well

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MILESTONE: Ormiston Hospital's Karen French, left, and Nicole Williams are marking the achievements of their first year.

Ormiston Hospital has a lot to celebrate on its first birthday.

"In a year we have made huge leaps and bounds," says executive assistant Nicole Williams.

The services the hospital is offering have continued to grow over the past year.

A new inpatient ward with 32 beds has opened so it can now take on more complex surgeries including gynaecology, urology, joint replacements and obesity surgery.

The ward is reaching 40 percent occupancy, with about 400 patients being treated a month.

The majority of patients stay one or two nights but some stay up to a week.

About 70 percent of the patients are day-stay.

"At this stage occupancy is at what we expected given the economic environment," says patient services manager Karen French.

"We are very keen about the increasing interest from surgical specialists, and know that as we earn our credibility more and more surgeons are bringing patients here."

Four operating theatres are open with space for two more.

The hospital prides itself on having a good relationship with the public sector.

"Because the DHBs are impacted so much by their acute work they can't get all their elective surgery done and they contract that out to us," Mrs French says.

The feedback from patients is that it is above and beyond what was expected, says Ms Williams.

"They get the royal treatment here, it's like being in a hotel – some call it The Ormiston," she says.

"We were hoping to achieve aesthetics with functionality and so we've got all the medical stuff but it also feels like home," says Mrs French.

The hospital fills a gap in private healthcare between Ellerslie and Hamilton and many local patients like not having to travel.

"Our future plans are to expand, to commission those theatres, to open up the extra beds. We will look at increasing the complexity of our cases again," says Mrs French.

"This has been a really successful first step into what we hope in the future will be a health hub at Botany Junction."

Mrs French says one issue for patients is the lack of a public carpark, which has been addressed by opening the staff carpark to visitors.

The hospital now has 90 staff, up from about 30 when it first opened.

"There has been huge interest in jobs and we are being very particular about the people we take," says Mrs French.

Patient satisfaction surveys are being used as a tool to make changes.

"We are really listening to what people are saying."