

Presenter: Heart patients in Auckland are getting some high-tech treatment from the comfort of their own home. The system being trialled delivers their vital signs straight to their cardiologist's laptop cutting out unnecessary trips to the hospital. Health reporter Lorelei Mason explains.

Lorelei Mason: It's Fergus Freeman's daily ritual. Each morning he switches on his new mobile phone and carries out three simple tests: he weighs himself, then takes his own pulse and blood pressure.

Fergus: That's much more like it, 109 over 57.

Mason: He doesn't even have to write the results down.

Fergus: This is harmless, non invasive and informative. It's a piece of cake.

Chris Bowman: The readings are automatically sent wirelessly by bluetooth® technology to the mobile phone and then automatically from the mobile phone to the database on the Internet.

Mason: Those results end up here at Greenland Hospital where the cardiac team monitors Fergus closely. Today his kilos are a slight concern.

Female Doctor: His weight has come down but it's still outside the target.

Mason: But it's reassurance for doctor and patient and it's most convenient.

Fergus: I'd rather be at home than in hospital. Have you tried the food?

Mason: ... and immediate.

Dr Rob Doughty: It's really enhancing patient care, their own self care that's the goal.

Mason: Less trips to hospitals means less pressure on busy hospital outpatient clinics. Close monitoring means less chance of a rushed trip to A&E.

Dr Doughty: For example, an increase in weight which would be a signal of increase in fluid retention and congestion can usually be dealt with by changing a patient's diuretic which is one of the tablets that they take.

Mason: There are 20 heart patients on this first New Zealand trial. All going well it will be extended to include patients with other chronic illnesses.

Fergus: Saves on parking fees a lot.

Mason: For Fergus it means more time at home with his best mate.

Lorelei Mason, Onewews.