

TE WHETU MARAMA

# NOVA

THE OFFICIAL STAFF NEWSLETTER FOR THE AUCKLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD



## Inside this issue

- The good sports of Women's Health
- Success for our cancer team
- Behind the scenes in our Adult ED

## Comment from the chief executive

By choosing to forge careers in public healthcare, we each make a decision to dedicate ourselves to the service of others.

Often, this involves coming into contact with people at the most stressful and challenging times in their lives.

Therefore, it's not just the standard of our clinical work that counts. The attitudes we display and the respect we show to our patients are critical indicators in how we are measured by our community.

A smile or a kind word to a person feeling otherwise alone and vulnerable in a hospital can work wonders.

The power of communication – explaining what we're doing and why – also cannot be underestimated.

I know this is standard work practice for most of our staff who interact with patients.

But in an organisation the size of ADHB – where we admit in excess of 120,000 patients a year – there will always be situations where some patients and their families feel we could have done things better.

Inevitably, their views will be justified.

The critical thing is that we learn from these examples.

Our challenge is not just to provide excellent healthcare but to have our patients feeling comforted and reassured that they are receiving the very best care possible. Patient perception is very important.

In our drive to continually improve our systems and our 'people skills', it's also worth reflecting on the very high standard of care that is already being offered every day by ADHB to its patients.

In the first three months of the 2011 calendar year, we received 117 emails, cards and letters of compliments from patients and their families.

This is wonderful feedback that indicates we are 'getting it right' in the eyes of our key customers in a great many cases.

I recently received a thoughtful letter from one of our own staff members paying tribute to the work of her colleagues in General Surgery at ACH.

Trauma coordinator Rhondda Paice related her experiences of three cases where ADHB staff had pulled together in humanitarian situations to assist the patient.

These staff had gone above and beyond the normal call of duty to provide a level of 'extra' care that otherwise would not have been possible.

Rhondda's letter stood out to me because of the obvious passion and pride she has for ensuring patients' needs are at the centre of our thinking.

I'm sure there would be many staff across our various services who could relate their own anecdotes of service excellence.

This work is very much appreciated by our patients - and by me as CEO.

Please keep up the good work because it is noted by those who count the most – our patients.



*Garry*  
Garry Smith  
CEO

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Wendy Cook

Wendy passed away on March 22. She worked until very close to her death – her last day of work with ADHB was on February 10.

Wendy is remembered as a nurse who had an amazing life, travelling to far away and impoverished places across the globe during her career.

After ending her clinical nursing career, she worked with the Health Funding Authority until it was disbanded and then came to ADHB in April, 2001 as a Project Manager. In July, 2009, Wendy became Information Manager with Women's Health.

She was diagnosed with cancer nine years ago and fought it resolutely to the end. Wendy underwent many debilitating rounds of treatment but always bounced back with a determination that she was going to beat the cancer. Wendy is warmly remembered by staff at ADHB.

In response to reader feedback, the requirements for Staff Acknowledgements are that a staff member must have retired after at least 20 years' continuous service with ADHB or passed away whilst an employee. Human Resources advises the Communications Department of eligible staff and relevant managers are then contacted for biographical details. Communications makes two attempts to source information from managers before moving on if nothing is provided.

## Come Along to Vital Signs

The next round of Vital Signs presentations will be held from May 3-11.

It's a chance for all ADHB employees to hear directly from CEO Garry Smith about our priorities over the next six months.

Five sessions have been scheduled, so most staff should be able to attend:

- Tuesday May 3, 12-1pm, Clinical Education Centre Auditorium (ACH)
- Thursday May 5, 12-1pm, Liggins Theatre, GCC
- Friday May 6, 7.30-8.30am, Clinical Education Centre Auditorium
- Wednesday May 11, 8-9am, Liggins Theatre
- Wednesday May 11, 12.30-1.30pm, Rehab Plus, Point Chevalier

## X Factor Auditions

Staff wishing to try out for a singing part in this year's X Factor talent show are reminded that auditions will be held on Wednesday, May 11.

The format for this year's show is 'Vince and Maria's Italian wedding' and staff who want to be considered for roles as performing 'guests' at the wedding are invited to come forward.

Contact Joyce Forsyth to secure your audition place – email [jforysyth@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:jforysyth@adhb.govt.nz), ext 24586 or 021 243 1580.

## Respecting Tupapaku

**Q:** Do you know why we ask staff not to carry food and drink when travelling in the dedicated lift to the mortuary at ACH?

**A:** To show respect for Tupapaku (deceased persons).

To better reflect the lift's use and raise awareness we are planning to make this lift look different. We would like to create an atmosphere that encourages people to treat it with respect. Your ideas on how we do this are welcome. If you want to contribute to the design please contact Gina Morgan Concord Project Co-ordinator ext 22871, email [gmorgan@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:gmorgan@adhb.govt.nz)

# Cancer Team Celebrates Target Success



**Celebrating Success:** The cancer service team celebrate reaching the waiting time health target for 365 consecutive days.

Staff and patients have gathered to celebrate a milestone in ADHB's radiation treatment of cancer patients.

The Northern Regional Cancer and Blood Service has just clocked-up 365 continuous days of treating patients within the Government's waiting time target.

Celebrating with a cake-cutting ceremony, staff took a moment to look back on around 3,500 treatments provided each month with ever-shorter delays for patients.

It was a proud moment for outgoing Clinical Director Andrew Macann, who described the result as "a phenomenal achievement"

"Many of us can remember times when the waiting list was out of control, which is very stressful for staff and patients," he said.

"The fact we have been able to pull this off is down to the effort and energy of our staff because to achieve for 365 days in a row is not easy.

"The flow of patients through the unit – peaks, troughs and tsunamis – means to achieve, people had to step up and go the extra mile. It's a real credit to the team."

Last year, the national health target was for all patients requiring radiation therapy to have it within six weeks of their first specialist assessment.

This shortened to four weeks in January but the ADHB team has proven to be up to the challenge.

"The real value of the target and the fact we've achieved it is that the public can have confidence in our department," Dr Macann said.

"They know when they need us, they can rely on us."



**Celebrating Together:** Radiation therapist Rebecca McGettigan and Auckland City Hospital patient Dave Deadman celebrate the success by cutting the cake.

## News in Brief

### Diabetes nurses authorised to prescribe

The Minister of Health, Tony Ryall, launched the Diabetes Nurse Prescribing Project at Greenlane Clinical Centre on April 7.

ADHB diabetes nurses, Jennifer Britland, Patricia Ball and Meleseini Kaufusi are among the first of a group of registered nurses to be authorised to independently prescribe a limited range of medicines to their patients, under the guidance of a medical practitioner.

### Greenlane Clinical Centre's goldfish are doing swimmingly

Since the draining of the Building 8 pond at Greenlane Clinical Centre there has been much concern from staff about the whereabouts and safety of the goldfish.

Facilities Management has given its reassurance that the goldfish have gone to a safe home, and are swimming happily in the pond of a staff member's friend.

The removal of the pond is part of the redevelopment of Building 8, and Ophthalmology.

### Greenlane Surgical Centre opened

Greenlane Surgical Centre was officially opened on April 27 by The Minister of Health, Tony Ryall. Mr Ryall was shown through the new operating rooms. The new operating rooms have been designed and built to increase ADHB's ability to deliver top quality care to patients.

### Nadia continues to master the small screen

ADHB dietitian Nadia Lim is still a strong contender in TV One's MasterChef competition. Nadia has made it to the final stages, so continue to follow her progress. The show screens on TV One at 8.30pm on Sundays.

### Home Dialysis Unit to open in Greenlane soon

Construction of the new Home Dialysis Unit has started, and will merge all home dialysis together. In the past, Haemodialysis and Peritoneal dialysis have been in different locations. This now means that one unit will cater for all home services, and will provide the ability to case manage and offer drop-in and training services.

# The good sports of Women's Health

It's easy to find excuses to skip regular exercise in a busy, stressful lifestyle.

A group of ADHB Women's Health team members are refusing to take any soft options – and are enjoying the health benefits of working out.

By eating healthily and spending the suggested minimum 30 minutes of moderate activity five times a week, they are reducing the risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer as well as gaining a sense of wellbeing and achievement.



Left to right: Caroline Bree (swimmer), Diana Austin (kayaker), Libby Cain (netballer), Marjet Pot (bike) and Janet Pihigia (lawn bowls).

Midwife Caroline Bree said busy working lives combined with anti-social hours and family responsibilities can make exercise seem like an impossible goal.

But she said the effort of making the commitment to get off the couch paid big dividends.

"Biking to and from work takes around 45 minutes and also saves money on petrol and parking. On my days off, I walk or run with our dog, increasing my distance in spring to train for the Auckland Half Marathon," Caroline said.

"I also swim once a week at Takapuna Beach in the summer and in the pool for the rest of the year.

"I have noticed that a significant number of my Women's Health colleagues are keeping fit and maintaining a healthy weight while enjoying the extra benefits of friendship and being outdoors."

They include Tamaki Ward midwife Diana Austin, who began kayaking as a way of placing less strain on her body when she developed arthritis.

She combines short trips around the Manukau and Waitemata harbours several times a week with longer overnight camping trips.

Marjet Pot, Community Liaison Coordinator for Women's Health, is so enthusiastic about cycling that twice a week she adds an extra 50 km loop onto her usual commute to work.

High-Risk Clinic midwife Libby Cain started 'The Doris' netball team eight years ago with friends and plays on Wednesday night at St Lukes.

Janet Pihigia is employed as a cleaner with OCS Health Care and usually works in Ward 96/98. She started playing Lawn Bowls in 2003 and has competed at the last two Commonwealth Games.

Caroline said the common theme among the group was that exercise needed to fit into their lives as working women.

"Health care professionals who are constantly multi-tasking, answering bells and solving complex problems during work hours value 'time to think,'" she said.

"And, after days spent caring for others, 'doing something for myself' restores the life-work balance."

## Neighbours Day

Auckland City Hospital staff sampled the sweetness of Neighbours Day on March 25 as cafeteria staff gave out free chocolate and pastries to show their support for the initiative.

"It let everyone know that your neighbours are important, and you should get to know them," said Louisa Pi.

Other highlights of the day included a Neighbours Day breakfast between the senior leadership team, Grafton Residents' Association and the Cancer Society, and a lunchtime seminar that included speeches from Amanda Bradley of the Mental Health Foundation and John McCarthy from Lifewise Trust.

BEHIND THE CAUSE: From back to front, ACH cafeteria staff Kaz Tanaki, Julieta Ighani, Louisa Pi and Rohani Kumar wear Neighbours Day t-shirts to support the cause.



# Striving for perfection

When our Adult ED took the bold step of asking for feedback, we had no idea what we'd hear back.

More than 400 patients filled out survey forms – and 87% gave us the thumbs-up, rating their care as 'excellent'.

The view from within was positive, too, with three in four AED staff saying they were satisfied in their jobs. Some great feedback was also given by the inpatient specialties. All this helped to put together a picture of AED.

The feedback was shared with the AED team and four key areas for improvement have been agreed:

- Communication with patients.
- Communication with in-patient specialties.
- Timeliness of care.
- Access to pain relief.

This was all part of the Service Excellence programme aimed at improving the patient experience and making ADHB a better place to work.

"These are good results but if we strive for perfection, we know we can do better," said nurse consultant Karen Schimanski.

A video featuring some of the feedback is available to watch on the Healthcare Excellence intranet site.



Images of a typical day at AED.



## What the AED patients told us...

“I felt safe and cared for.”  
“AED full of drunks nevertheless provided the best care they were able to”  
“could not find a fault at all.”

## Nova Survey – What you told us

We recently asked for reader feedback on your monthly copy of Nova.

The results of 1,012 online responses – and a handful of written replies – have now been collated and we can share some of the key findings.

What you want:

- More bite-sized snippets of information, such as News in Brief.
- Fewer long and 'boring' stories.
- More 'readable' stories that a secondary student could comprehend.
- More focus on human interest stories featuring staff.
- Less 'management-speak' and jargon.
- More candid photos and better visual appeal.
- More profiles on staff at all levels, not just senior clinical people.
- Celebration of our people and our diversity.



We're listening to your feedback and plan further research in the coming months to test some new ideas.

In the meantime, you should start seeing how your opinions have influenced the look and feel of Nova. If you don't think we've changed enough, please tell us – [novan@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:novan@adhb.govt.nz)

### Anything is possible – if you put your mind to it

Superior performance is simply a matter of having a mindset of possibility as is wonderfully expressed by Henry Ford who said “if you think you can or if you think you can’t – you will be right on both counts.”

In this context, one of the critical health targets for all District Health Boards to achieve is for 95% of patients to be admitted, discharged or transferred from the emergency department within six hours. There is good clinical evidence to support this health target in that patients dealt with promptly in the emergency department have better outcomes.

The Auckland District Health Board's historical performance to this target had effectively flat-lined in the high 70% range in 2010 and in the low 70% range in 2008 and 2009. In the latest published results (quarter two October – December 2010) the Auckland District Health Board was positioned 19th out of the 20 District Health Boards on performance for shorter stays in emergency departments and for the first time the Waitemata District Health Board's performance ranked higher than Aucklands.

With a renewed emphasis on health target achievement at the Auckland District Health Board our emergency department staff in concert with a wide range of our staff throughout both Auckland City Hospital and Starship Hospital have lifted the health target performance from 78% in the quarter October – December 2010 to 88% in the quarter January – March 2011. This is a very significant improvement and worthy of high praise.

But wait for it ... in the month of March 2011 the performance reached 94%. This is an excellent performance turn-around and demonstrates the level of performance elasticity we have in our organisation. The challenge now is to make this level of performance sustainable.

In the quarter October – December 2010 the Auckland City Hospital emergency department's result on the 6 hour target was 73% which has increased remarkably to 95% in March 2011 – an incredible result. In the same timeframe the Starship Hospital emergency department's result on the 6 hour target was 85% in the quarter October – December 2010 and has increased to 93% in March 2011 – again a brilliant performance.

This performance against the shorter stays in emergency departments target (which effectively measures the efficiency of the flow of urgent and acute patients through public hospitals and home again) is wonderful news for our patients.

On behalf of the Auckland DHB Board, congratulations to all involved in this incredible turn-around and let us now make sure that the same renewed effort and commitment in achieving this result is channelled into consolidating it.



Dr Lester Levy, Board Chair

## From the professional partners

### The Clinical Ethics Advisory Group – the who, when, why, how?



Karen Smith

The Clinical Ethics Advisory Group (CEAG) held its first meeting in 1997. The aim at that time was to provide a forum for clinicians to discuss ethical dilemmas that arise in everyday clinical practice. Over the last 14 years, that role has remained largely unchanged.

The CEAG is a subcommittee of the Clinical Board. It comprises senior medical officers, a GP, an ethicist, external representation from other DHBs, representation from Allied

Health, Nursing, Management, Maori Health and lay membership. Our longstanding lay representative, Catherine Ryan, is a hugely experienced lawyer in the areas of health and research.

When would someone use the CEAG? Most healthcare practitioners use resources around them to make decisions when the ethical issues are complex. This may be peers, head of departments, specialists in other fields, supervisors, family, friends, etc. This usually works well. Occasionally, despite these resources, there is a wish to have a forum to either discuss the ethics, the decision, the dilemma or the conflict that is persisting.

The function of our committee is to listen, clarify what key ethical issues are involved and should be considered. Our opinion surrounding the ethical issues present will hopefully form some part of the tools the clinician will use to ultimately decide how to proceed. The CEAG is not a judiciary nor does it make clinical decisions.

Why do people come? Over the years there has been a wide range of issues. Some include access to health care in non-New Zealand residents, organ transplantation, sterilisation and severe disability, end-of-life issues in very old and very young, extremely expensive therapy and best use of resources.

How do you know if the CEAG may be useful to you? Easy. Our contact details are up on the intranet under Clinical Ethics Advisory Group or contact Susanne Biddick, the secretary for our committee. If you are not sure if we would be helpful, we can always discuss the issue with you in advance to see if we will be of help.

In future columns, we will look at different ethical issues or scenarios that are faced in everyday clinical practice.

*Karen Smith  
Chair, Clinical Ethics Advisory Group,  
Auckland District Health Board*

# ADHB consultant leads medical charity mission to Fiji

Dr Sunil Pillay, a specialist obstetrician and gynaecologist at Auckland City Hospital, is on a mission to help his homeland by providing much-needed medical relief to Fijian patients.

A founding trustee and chairman of the Friends of Fiji Health (FOFH) charity, Dr Pillay went on a two-week exercise in Fiji late last year with 33 volunteer medical professionals to help with specific needs identified in the areas of internal medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, general surgery and primary healthcare.

"We undertook a scoping visit mid-last year and what we found were enthusiastic medical staff doing some good work despite shortages of equipment, infrastructure, supplies and enough hands," said Dr Pillay. "We wanted to do our bit to help our Fijian medical counterparts."

The FOFH volunteer team included 12 specialist doctors, 18 nurses, three anaesthetists, several technicians and a physiotherapist and comprised Fijians, Fiji Indians and Kiwis

working in the New Zealand medical system – both private and public.

During the visit, the team completed 61 surgical procedures, treated 150 patients and took endoscopic procedures to the districts, formulating comprehensive management plans for 300 patients with complex medical problems as well as performing 89 endoscopic procedures.

"The local authorities and patients were delighted! What we achieved has exceeded all expectations and we are now inspired to do more this year," Dr Pillay said.

## ADHB staff who participated in the mission:

Sunil Pillay, Lisa Meyer, Chern Lo, James Lai, Jack Hill, Andrew Warmington, Brenda Knowles, Asaf Mall, Vasemaca Naborisi, Kanta Muttu, Roma Singh, Rohini Wong, Jannette Hennings, Verenika Vabete, Atelaite Luma, Rakshana Rekashni, Talei Kolibasoga and Janine Mortimer.



## Midwives make a beeline for Christchurch babies

"My machine was thundering along and getting hot. Rather than stopping, I took the bulb out."

These are the words of dedicated ADHB midwife Annie McDonald who was one of 60 midwives and mums who volunteered their time at the National Women's pepi-pod sewing bee at Auckland City Hospital on March 22.

Led by midwifery educator Judy Cottrell, more than 300 pepi-pods were made as part of a nationwide appeal for 1000 pepi-pods to be sent to Christchurch.

"I think the whole project took on a life of its own as people were so eager to help and contribute. There were midwives and staff members from all around the hospital, women with new babies who were passionate about the safe sleep issue, and various sewing groups. Many people came in on their days off. The atmosphere in the room was incredibly heartening and people loved being part of it," she said.

A pepi-pod is a plastic container large enough to fit a baby, and is covered in material with a small mattress underneath. Since the Christchurch earthquake, many families have had to leave behind bassinets and cots, and have been unable to provide their baby with a safe place to sleep.

Nicky White, a Christchurch mother who had been given the first pepi-pod following the quake, stopped by the ACH working bee.

"The generosity and kindness of these people is so overwhelming. I know a lot of people in Auckland have felt helpless since the earthquake, so this is a fantastic way to give back. They're helping babies become more safe, and will give a lot of mothers peace of mind," she said.



Busy Bees: From left, Lynne Moore, team support to the midwifery team, volunteer Fiona McRae and community liaison co-ordinator Marjet Pot busily sew the material needed to make pepi-pods.

# Hair today, gone tomorrow

They may have been too late to participate in the national Shave for a Cure campaign, but that didn't stop a group of ADHB Commercial Services blokes stepping in to help their colleague.

Taylor's linen site manager Gideon Motufoaki found out his son, Dylan, had leukaemia two months ago. So five commercial services staff members decided to shave their heads, while raising \$1400 in the process.

The head shaving was held at the Level 2 atrium on April 7, with two extra ADHB staff members putting their hands up to also have their heads shaved.

Security service manager Vasu Munsamy said the guys would be keen to do it again next year.

"I knew about the Shave for a Cure campaign from seeing it on the television, and after Gideon told me about Dylan I told him I wanted to shave my head. It was just time to give something back, we've all had family members affected by cancer. We are very keen to do it again next year," he said.



Good cause: (from left), Vasu Munsamy, Gideon Motufoaki, Chris Boyce, Steve Virtue and Stephen Paterson of Commercial Services proudly show off their new haircuts.

## ORBIT WELCOME TO THE TRAVEL REMEDY

### Wanaka

A year-round destination set against the pristine alpine backdrop of Mount Aspiring National Park, a place where you have the freedom to do your own thing, away from the crowds and the hustle and bustle of big city living.

Take a scenic cruise on the Lake, sample locally made wines, or fish at one of the many easily accessible spots. Alternatively, venture into the hills and mountains surrounding Wanaka. Skiing, heli-skiing, snowboarding, mountain biking, hiking and climbing are all available in the area.



Direct flights from Christchurch Airport provide easy accessibility with cars available at Wanaka Airport. Neighbouring Queenstown is just one hour's drive away and there are regular bus and shuttle services from Christchurch, Dunedin, Queenstown, Te Anau and the West Coast.

Wanaka is the perfect place to visit for a weekend getaway; an action packed outdoor adventure or a family holiday. It

has something for everyone with a variety of activities available on land, water or in the air.

### Monthly Competition

This month's prize is a night's accommodation in a Superior Room or equivalent at any Heritage and CityLife Hotels except Rutherford Hotel Nelson.

#### Heritage Hotels

From country retreats to city suites, Heritage Hotels and CityLife Hotels offer superior accommodation in all New Zealand's major destinations. The group is one of the country's largest suite-style accommodation providers, offering a four-star plus group of hotels incorporating a mixture of historic buildings and resort-style facilities for business travellers, couples and families.

### Question:

**How many readers completed the online reader feedback survey?**

To enter, simply answer this month's question and send your entry to [novan@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:novan@adhb.govt.nz), subject line 'monthly competition', or mail to the Communications Department, Level 1, Building 10, Greenlane Clinical Centre. Entries must be received by 31 May 2011. *One entry per person.*

**Grand Prize** Air New Zealand will provide two economy class tickets to the Pacific Islands – Samoa, Tonga, Fiji or Rarotonga for the Grand Prize for *Nova* for 2011. There may be peak periods when seats are not available i.e. Christmas. To be in the draw, each month simply collect the letters (supplied at the bottom of this column) and at the end of the year correctly solve the simple anagram. Then send your answer to the address supplied in the November edition.

May Grand Prize letter: T

Conditions of entry: Tickets are not exchangeable for cash; tickets will not attract air points; tickets are not upgradeable; winner must be an employee of ADHB (show employee number) at the time of the prize draw. Tickets are valid for 12 months from the date of issue; seats may not be available during peak periods i.e. Christmas.



Contacting  
**NOVA**

**Editor:** Mark Fenwick, Communications Manager, ADHB

**Design:** Diane Stephenson, Medphoto & Graphics, ADHB

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If your department has something to share please contact the editor either by phone, extension 3952 or by email [MFenwick@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:MFenwick@adhb.govt.nz). Copy needs to be received a month prior to publication. Please send text in MSWord and photos as high-quality jpeg.

