

# PreScribe

NORTHLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD STAFF MAGAZINE



**Jim Carney Cancer Treatment Centre Begins**

Page 8

# From the CEO's perspective



We're at the end of February already and I hope that most of you had a restful break over Xmas and New Year and feel somewhat refreshed for another challenging year of healthcare in Northland.

Firstly, we welcome two new board members since the October elections and I would like to offer my congratulations to Debbie Evans and Dr Chris Reid. I would also like to acknowledge the re-appointment of board chair Tony Norman and deputy chair Sally Macauley.

The new board met for the first time on January 28, where new members were welcomed with a Powhiri and the full board also met with the Executive Leadership Team.

During our last board meeting, the subject of workplace bullying arose from discussion on what the Northland DHB's stance is and the steps staff are able to take if they believe they are being subjected to this. We have done a lot of work on this to clarify what is and isn't bullying and what to do about it. The last staff survey showed an improvement in this area and that we benchmarked well against other DHBs. However, we cannot be complacent as I know it still occurs.

Therefore, in this edition we look again at the problem of bullying or inappropriate behaviour. Unfortunately, victims are often too afraid to speak up.

Northland DHB has a zero tolerance to workplace violence, bullying and harassment and on pages 6 and 7, as a refresher, our guidelines are outlined for the steps one should take, should they find themselves in this position. I would also urge you to find out what training courses are available via our Learning and Development team. Courses, such as Courageous Conversations and Managing Unacceptable Behaviour in the Workplace, will provide you with the tools you need to ensure staff behaviour is of the standard we expect.

The Quality and Safety Review team are now finalising the review in preparation for presentation to the March or April board meeting. One major recommendation that had already been planned was the implementation of patient and family (whanau)-centred care. This involves shared decision-making with our patients and their families, and is quite different to the traditional way that healthcare is practised. To be patient-centred, we also need to be empathic - the ability to "put oneself in another's shoes". An appropriate statement or gesture of empathy takes only a moment and can go a long way to enhance rapport, build positive relationships and even improve difficult ones. Our new Service with Excellence programme will also be focusing on this essential aspect of care.

Another area of improvement is that we need to clarify and strengthen clinical leadership and the Management Clinician partnership. Clinical partners may not be one person or one profession - at times it may be appropriate for it to be a senior nurse or Allied Health clinician rather than a doctor. We also need to be better at getting our clinicians involved earlier in the planning and decision-making. We are commencing a year-long leadership programme for 20 of our people including Primary Care. If this

is as successful as I'm hoping, we will be offering it again, as we are keen to offer a suite of staff and organisational development opportunities.

As usual there are many positive things happening within the Northland DHB, Primary Health Care and the community, and this edition of PreScribe captures only some of them. Have a read of the heart-warming story of one woman's plight to help others through her passion for photography.

Also two of our young doctors, Tom and Matthew, have managed to put a positive spin on working night shifts by taking part in a gruelling multi-day fitness challenge on next to no sleep. Read about their dedication to training for the event on page 12.

If you missed the story in the newspaper about our mental health clients stepping up their fitness regime thanks to the generous donation of fitness gear, you can read about it here. Likewise with a young local woman's unplanned journey into occupational therapy.

I want to acknowledge the immense community support in raising the money needed to build our new Jim Carney Cancer Treatment Centre. As seen on the cover, Mary Carney and I turned the first sod of dirt signalling the beginning of construction. The new centre, which will replace the cramped conditions in the current oncology department, is a purpose-built facility that will be for the benefit of all Northlanders.

I look forward to another challenging but positive year ahead and, in particular, to further improvements in the safety and quality of care that we provide; ever-strengthening relationships with Primary Care and our community providers; all of us working together toward a healthier Northland.

Regards,

*Nick*



# Seeking light through photography

From a young age Tracey Stevens has loved images. She got her first Kodak Instamatic at ten, along with two boxes of black and white films, and set about capturing hundreds of images which still hold a place in her heart today.

Fast-forward 45 years and she is now using her passion to enrich the lives of others.

The Northland DHB orthopaedic typist was nominated for the New Year's Honours' Nominations for her photography work donating her spare time to CanTeen, IVF, Breast Cancer and The Brain Injury Association, amongst others.

"This is a passion of mine and I do black and white before and after portraits. I was shocked I was nominated and still don't quite understand why," says the modest Whangaroa Harbour-based mother of two sons and nine step-sons.

Tracey is surrounded by her images which hold memories of her life and others and "let's me travel in the security of my mind".

"Most of them are faded black and white with strangers looking out at me which have become very familiar. This is where my love of portrait photography began - the people and the stories they hold behind the faces they wore when they looked into my lens.

"I can clearly remember an image I took at the Auckland Museum with the light coming through the side window and the soldiers' names on the wall that looked like they were glowing. There was a statue of the thinker in the room and the light bounced off him. I loved that image. Most of all I loved the light and how it made certain things stand out that colour never could.

"When my children were young I took photos. When I travelled, I took photos. My life is surrounded by images of people. Give me good light and my life is complete."

Tracey's charity work takes her all around Northland and recent and current projects include a breast cancer fund-raiser, in which a portrait sitting worth \$600 will be raffled, and an IVF photo she took for a good friend who

had been trying for years to conceive.

"I am currently in the middle of a Ta Moko series (facial tattoos) which could take the rest of my lifetime but is something I am prepared to wait for until I feel it has reached as far as it can go. I'm also collaborating on a book, which hopefully will be out at the end of this year."

Other accolades include photographing celebrities, becoming a finalist in this year's Northland Art Awards in Kerikeri. Tracey has been invited to exhibit her work on a number of occasions, including in New York, but she says the cost of prints and framing is too expensive for this to likely come to fruition.

She also takes photography, on some occasions, for people who can't afford to have memories taken.

Tracey, whose artist statement is: "I am a seeker

of light. I work only in natural light. My work is sometimes raw and not retouched. I have always been a seeker of truth and my art reflects that", begins her day job at 5am which enables her to carry out her photography from mid-afternoon.

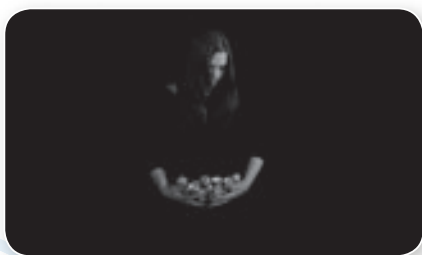
Her work is carried out mostly from her home which provides natural light and is perfect for keeping things personal.

Tracey says when she was sent the newspaper article about the New Year's Honours' nominees, she noticed the photo and caption of another Northlander by the same name and thought the clipping had been sent to the wrong Tracey.

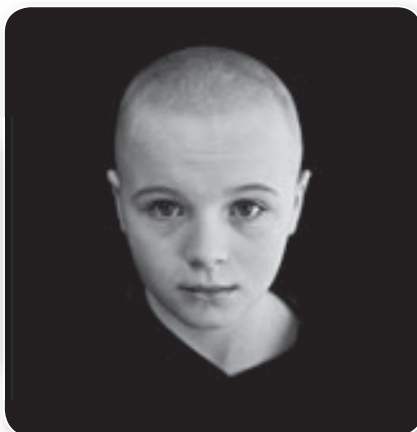
"I emailed them about it and they mailed back and told me to read the article next to it with the New Year's Honours' Nominations. I'm delighted to be in a line-up of some pretty outstanding people."

# To view more of Tracey Stevens' work or to contact her, go to her Tracey Stevens Photography page on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/pages/Tracey-Stevens-Photography/231694023512633](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Tracey-Stevens-Photography/231694023512633) or at [matapouribamboo@xtra.co.nz](mailto:matapouribamboo@xtra.co.nz)

**"My life is surrounded by images of people. Give me good light and my life is complete,"**  
photographer Tracey Stevens.



Broken eggs, broken lives, the pain and joy of IVF and miscarriage. The eggs represent the number of eggs and babies lost while trying to get pregnant. Alex (pictured) is eight months pregnant in this photo.



Grace, 11, (pictured) was one of the youngest to shave her hair in support of Angels for CanTeen last year.



One of Tracey's photos from the Ta Moko series.

# Sue Wyeth heads to Tasmania

When Sue Wyeth first hinted that she was leaving her role as general manager of Mental Health, Addiction and District Hospitals to take up a position on Australian shores, chief executive Dr Nick Chamberlain tried desperately to change her mind.

Such was her impact to these areas over her 14 years with Northland DHB.

Sue began as Medical and Disability Support Services' group manager, with her energy and experience soon seeing her appointed general manager of the Mental Health executive leadership team the following year.

Sue's extensive experience and passion saw her play a leading role in the re-development of Kaitaia Hospital, and the new Mental Health Inpatient Unit. She also continued to develop and expand community mental health services throughout Northland.

At Sue's farewell this month Nick spoke of her significant contribution in a number of areas and recalled being asked by Sue – his then boss – in 2002 to provide some GP input into a cardiology plan that she had developed.

"I remember just being in awe because I didn't understand what managers did at that stage but also that she could write this plan while also managing a fairly significant medical and disability services at the time and I guess that epitomises how Sue has done things – she identifies problems and actually gets in there and mucks in and does quite a lot of the work herself."

He said there have been many challenges over the years "but Sue's enthusiasm, professionalism, vibrant personality and can-do

attitude have helped us overcome them."

"The last few years have been particularly tough on Northland,

**"You can't look at the beauty without acknowledging the pain that's here,"**  
*Sue Wyeth.*



Kind words from Nick

and Mental Health Services (with youth suicide, psychosis and 35 per cent growth in two years) and our rural communities have borne the brunt of our broader socio-economic problems.

"These issues affect all of us but Sue has faced and successfully addressed them on a daily basis. It certainly takes its toll, and Sue has accepted a role in Tasmania managing Mental Health Services. I am sure that she will quickly get sick of helping Australians and, like so many of us, her heart is in Northland, so I'm confident we will see her back here in the not too distant future."

He noted her "Zest for life" and love of sun, surf, golf and socialising and said she lives life to 110 per cent-plus.



Sue with Jen Thomas

Following heartfelt speeches, tears and waiata from co-workers, Sue said she was humbled by all the gratitude and had an "awesome, amazing experience while falling in love with the real Far North".

"Every time I'm travelling around Northland I have never failed to appreciate the beauty of Northland and, unfortunately, along with that - and I think that's why it's probably good for me to take a break - some of the scenes, trauma and some of the things that are in Northland are really sad. You can't look at the beauty without acknowledging the pain that's here and the pain that's inflicted on our lives along the way, and certainly mine, but it is a special and wonderful place."

She said achievements could not have been accomplished without the support of teams and CEOs.

"It's just been a wonderful ride working with you guys and I know I'm leaving services in really good shape and that we've got wonderful leaders and really talented people. It's just been a wonderful experience."



Neta Smith farewells Sue



Sue's farewell

# NZQA National Certificate for Porters

Northland DHB is proud to be one of the first DHBs to support its porters through the newly-developed NZQA National Certificate for Porters. This NZQA qualification has been a joint venture between the DHBs, Careerforce and the Service and Food Worker's Union.

Careerforce is the industry-training organisation for health, disability, aged support, mental health, social services, cleaning and urban pest management sectors. They work closely with employers to set skill standards, design qualifications and support workplace learning.

Hotel services manager, Deb Borovich says the team are very enthusiastic about the opportunity the qualification provides to recognise porters' skills, whilst at the same time providing opportunity for further learning.

Learning and development officer, Mike Tansley will facilitate workplace assessments based on the NZQA unit standards.

General manager, finance and commercial services Meng Cheong says: "It's a great opportunity to have our highly-valued portering service recognised through a national qualification and we will be doing everything to support to them."

The Whangarei porter service is a 24/7 highly-interactive delivery and collection service to clinical and non-clinical areas.



Whangarei porter service team with (clockwise from top): hotel services manager Deb Borovich, general manager, finance and commercial services Meng Cheong, director of strategic projects Brett Halvorson and learning and development officer Mike Tansley.

The voluntary programme, which commenced in Whangarei last month and in Dargaville this month, provides the opportunity to recognise prior learning and ability through the assessment framework.

## Welcoming the newly-elected Northland DHB board members.

### Debbie Evans

Debbie has three year's experience on the health board as a government appointee 2007-2010 and aims to use her experience to serve Northland again. Known as 'a voice for the community', Debbie is CEO of the Kaipara Community Health Trust and has NZ Institute of Directors training.



Debbie Evans

She sits on several Northland funding boards and is passionate about social housing. Raised in Ruawai, now married and living on a dairy farm in Mangakaramea, Debbie is committed to Northland. Her focus is making sure we have a quality public health system that serves the needs of urban and rural Northlanders.

Debbie has made a commitment to dedicate her energy to get the best from your taxpayer dollar. Debbie's goal is to ensure locals have access to the best health care as close to home as possible.

### Dr Chris Reid

Dr Chris Reid is full-time GP in Kerikeri and fellow of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (current board member for the Northern Faculty). He lives in Russell with his wife and son (who was born in Whangarei Hospital).



Dr Chris Reid

"Northland is our home and I want us to have the best healthcare service.

"Healthcare needs to be accessible, affordable and fair. The DHB structure needs to show transparency and it's essential we continue to better integrate primary and secondary care."

As a former medical officer for the Royal Marines, Chris understands the importance of leadership in large organisations like the DHB and acknowledges all the hard work that is currently being done by all the health care professionals across the region, particularly in the rural areas.



# No place for Bullying

There's no point waiting for the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff when it comes to workplace bullying – it needs to be nipped in the bud immediately, says a conflict specialist.

Director of Ignition – an Auckland-based learning and development company – Colin Cox says bullying behaviour is condoned by being passive and doing nothing.

"I see it as the same as taking domestic violence too lightly. It's the by-stander effect and diffusion of responsibility. I think, rather than turning a blind eye to it we all need to take responsibility to make a stand towards workplace bullying."

Northland DHB HR advisor Mark Stroud, who has been involved in the development of policy, process and training to challenge unacceptable behaviour, agrees:

"By-stander apathy is a significant problem in combating workplace bullying. Since the Unacceptable Behaviour in the Workplace policy was adopted in May 2011, my colleagues and I have been successfully supporting managers and affected staff in dealing with workplace bullying."

Colin has been working in the field of leadership development and the growth and development of high-performance teams, specialising in conflict, for around 15 years and has seen definite patterns.

The most common scenario he sees is conflict within a team across the same context with 'us and them' polarising situations, followed by leaders or people in a higher position bullying those below them. Although it is rare to find bullying upwards, in some cases, reporting unjustified bullying of a boss can be classed as bullying itself.



Colin Cox

Bullying can stem from frustration, disgruntlement, life change, organisational culture and competition, to name a few.

"It's certainly across all places of employment – small and large teams. I've found situations where senior management teams and middle management teams are bullying the front-line team. Equally it can be the opposite – there are so many variations but the behaviour is consistent."

"I've found bullies to be very intelligent – they know the rules, they know how to play the rules and they know how to subtly break them – they're not fools."

"It's not like on the rugby field where men are going to have a punch-up and afterwards they'll quickly make up and forget about it – that's not going to happen. I think it's got nothing to do with the yelling and screaming, stomping feet, swearing and slamming the door on the way out-scenario that we may typically associate with bullying. One of the most common traits is the subtle mannerisms and behaviours - treating staff as though they are invisible, ignoring their contributions and dismissing them, eye-rolling, huffing and puffing, not saying 'Good morning' – it's the implicit behaviours that are the most insidious."

Colin believes workplace bullying is a learned behaviour and often derives from the school playground.

"They've learnt that threatening and intimidation can achieve outcomes so if that's what they've learnt is successful they can mistakenly continue to use those behaviours to achieve an outcome and it's certainly not restricted to any particular level within an organisation."

Ignition deals with these situations both nationally and internationally and works with all parties involved.

"Each situation needs to be determined on its own merits. We look at how long it's been going on and how ingrained the behaviour is. We do team work, individual therapy and counselling may need to be provided. Sometimes health issues need to be addressed – not just psychological issues – so the more complex the situation, the more support is needed."

The preferred outcome, says Colin, is that everyone is restored back to a healthy, functioning team which has actually gained from the experience. The worst-case scenario, is the person who was bullied could lose their passion for the job and look elsewhere for employment.

"I think the most important thing is to react immediately. Organisations are far too slow in addressing complaints in bullying and they have to have an active zero tolerance and that means that you will act on complaints."

"Strong management, strong leadership and honouring the statement for zero tolerance for bullying is the resolve. Act immediately and swiftly."

Mark agrees: "Northland DHB and its appointed managers are duty-bound to address workplace bullying."

Continued on Page 7



Mark Stroud

Appropriate policy and processes are in place to manage the issue, however, the primary mistake remains the reticence to say something, to have the initial conversation with the person of concern and nip the behaviour in the bud.

“Fortunately Northland DHB has a powerful set of values and behaviours which are the organisation’s framework for the way we do things, and is our ‘guiding beacon’ providing a framework for how we treat one another. Acceptable behaviours in the workplace are those which are aligned with our values and which comply with the

Northland DHB Code of Conduct. Amongst other things, our Northland DHB values require all staff to show courtesy, care and respect, to be kind to each other and to communicate safely, openly and with respect.”

Mark encourages members of staff who are directly the recipient of, or indirectly party to, dialogue which is uncaring, disrespectful or hurtful to the extent that the recipient is offended, intimidated or humiliated, to take action.

“If you feel that your dignity, safety and wellbeing in the workplace have been affected by a colleague’s behaviour towards you, report this to someone who can assist - your manager, general manager, Union official or HR advisor. The organisation does not tolerate workplace bullying, and will continue to support affected staff members who raise concerns.”

# For information on Northland DHB procedures, phone Mark Stroud xtn 7207 or Michael Gould xtn 3193 in the HR Advisory Team. Alternatively look on the intranet under the ‘Staff’ tab and click on ‘Acceptable Behaviour in the Workplace’ for a summary of relevant information and link to the relevant policy. Or on the ‘Corporate Resources’ tab – policies – Human Resources you can download the Unacceptable Behaviour in the Workplace policy.

## Music video spreads the word on falls prevention

There can’t be many hospital wards where healthcare workers start their shift with a dance practice, but that’s how the working day begins for staff at Whangarei Hospital’s stroke unit and rehabilitation ward.

Ward 15 staff are honing their singing and dancing skills in preparation for producing a music video clip aimed at sharing falls prevention messages.

The idea to create the music video clip came after clinical nurse manager Denise Watene and associate clinical nurse manager Lisa Cutts attended last year’s APAC (Asia Pacific) Forum on Quality Improvement in Healthcare, where they saw a British hospital’s video about handwashing.

“We always come away from quality conferences energised and wanted to put into practice some of the things we had learnt. We loved the handwashing

video, and immediately thought our ward could produce something similar,” says Denise.

“Our ward has a large population of patients at high risk of falling, so we thought a music clip video would be a great way of getting falls prevention messages across

to staff, patients and families. We also have a strong team culture here and thought we could have fun producing a video together.”

A small team was formed of Denise, physiotherapist Stacey Oldfield, occupational therapy assistant Jo Malloy, communications manager Liz Inch and film studies student John Michael Hicks - the

nephew of a staff member. A storyboard and script were developed and a community contact recorded the soundtrack. Northland’s community television channel, Channel North, has been engaged to film the production.



Wonderful staff participation, including chief executive Dr Nick Chamberlain, dancing up a storm during the filming of the music video clip.





## FIRST SOD TURNED FOR CANCER TREATMENT CENTRE

The culmination of years of fundraising activities and events occurred at dawn on Monday February 20 and again later in the morning as the ground for the Jim Carney Cancer Treatment Centre was blessed before the first sod was turned.

Around eighty people attended the sod-turning event, representing the businesses, community organisations, service groups, individuals and families who have

supported Project Promise, which raised \$3m for the cancer centre in a little over three years.

NCF Chairman, Richard Ayton and Northland DHB chief executive Dr Nick Chamberlain both acknowledged the community support for the centre which will replace the cramped conditions in the current oncology department with a purpose-built facility that will be for the benefit of all Northlanders.

Nick said they had reached this day after a five-year journey which began with a simple meeting. Lots of joint planning had followed before the fundraising began in earnest.

The community support had been astounding and he couldn't help getting swept up in the energy and positivity of the project.

Jim Carney's widow, Mary, together with Nick, turned the first sod of dirt signalling the beginning of construction.



# Out and About





# Creating a healthy balance

The donation of 50 pairs of flash new sports shoes is creating a healthy balance to the lives of Northland mental health clients.

The Shoe Clinic supplied New Balance shoes to Northland DHB mental health clients to enable them to fully engage in fitness classes contributing towards improving their overall health and wellbeing.

The Activ8 Northland classes, funded by Recovery Solutions, have been running for six months and staff have noticed many positive outcomes.

Mental Health specialist Dr Vernon Reynolds says it makes sense for clients and staff to take a holistic view to health, but converting it into a reality can be a challenge. However, now one of those barriers – access to good foot wear – has been removed.

"We're trying to get people to understand that lifestyle choice is a huge part of what keeps us well – the eating, drinking, sleeping, activity, socialising in our lives, keep us going and maintains us and attention to those things is important.

"I think in our field of health especially, there tends to be a huge focus on taking medication, which is valuable but can have nasty side effects, such as weight gain and slowing (the clients) down. There's not much emphasis on all this sort of stuff that goes on around it and it's nice to push those things because they're incredibly important and I don't think we give them credit."

Occupational therapist in the early intervention of psychosis team Kaye Tolra says there is now an awareness that people with mental health conditions die earlier of cardiac disease, diabetes and other metabolic-related illnesses. Therefore, the exercise groups, including one at the Whangarei Aquatic Centre, were set up to provide physical education towards clients' wellbeing.

She says the classes have made a huge difference to clients' anxiety, negative symptoms of schizophrenia, smoking cessation, confidence, self-esteem and socialisation.

The shoes came about after staff noticed that, while they provided a free gym group, the attendees were ill-equipped.

"People were turning up in bare feet, slippers and jandals and we've realised it's more than the free gym membership that we need so, up till now, I've been begging cast-off shoes from colleagues, taking them home and washing them and then handing them out."

Soon after, Shoe Clinic, who gives shoes to charity, came on board and provided the bulk pairs of shoes.

The staff have been chuffed with the clients' reactions.

"One chap didn't want to waste his new shoes at the gym as they were the best shoes he's ever had. Another guy we gave shoes to – even though they were slightly too big – we could not take them off him because he was walking up and down the corridor telling me they were the comfiest shoes he's ever had – they're very grateful."

Activ8 Northland personal trainer Shane Dunseath says "Good, supportive foot wear is high on the list of priorities when undertaking exercise".

"Everything's connected in the body and it starts with a good pair of shoes because, from there, it goes up to protect the knees, to protect the joints, to protect the hips so if you stuff your feet up, you stuff your legs and then you can't do much."

He says, although the group only meet once a week, the social side is a big deal. "It gets them out of their environment and creates camaraderie."

Staff, including the doctor, also participate in the gym classes which, for once in the clients' lives, says Ms Tolra, puts them on a level playing field. "We are all equal."

She adds that appearance gets lifted once a client dons a new pair of shoes. "People judge people on what they're wearing on the outside so it's really good for their self-esteem."

Dr Reynolds agrees.

"Other peoples' perception is huge and when you get a pair of new shoes you get a little bit of a

hop in your gait and I think that's a neat experience."

He says the once-a-week gym session is important to the clients' week and hopes to expand to make it feature more in their lifestyle.

"The shoes are a lovely gift. I think it is fantastic support from the community. It inspires me that our community is full of resources but it's connecting them up to where they're needed. It would be great to see what else is out there."

# Recovery Solutions provides a wide range of recovery and rehabilitation services designed to empower people to reach their full recovery potential – te whakapakari rawa i tō te tangata kaha whakaora i a ia anō.

**"People were turning up in bare feet, slippers and jandals," occupational therapist Kaye Tolra.**



Clare O'Brien (left) with Kaye Tolra (right) surrounded in the 40 pairs of donated New Balance shoes.



Psychiatrist Dr Vernon Reynolds (left) and client Hare Munro (right) enjoy a gym session together complete with New Balance shoes.



# Keeping up with the Gen Y

This year has seen a great start to the New Entry to Practice (NETP) programme for new graduate nurses. Twenty-five new graduate nurses began on January 20 with a Powhiri to welcome them into the programme and Northland DHB, thus building on the nursing workforce and improving the inequities with the inclusion of two male nurses and five Maori nurses.

This intake we have graduates in Kaitiaki, Hokianga, Bay of Islands, Broadway and Whangarei, both in the hospital, as well as in Primary Health and Aged Care. This year Northland has been successful in securing extra funding to support new graduates in Primary Health and Aged Care.

NETP is a 12-month programme which begins with a comprehensive orientation and preceptorship, followed by two assessment points, completion of a post-graduate paper and submission of a competent PDRP portfolio. All this while learning the 'ropes' along the way.

Keeping up with NETP participants, is always challenging due to Northland's geographical nature. However, the Gen Y generation like to have information available at their finger tips, and now. A lot of communication is done by email and texts, and forms are distributed when we get together for study days.

A new initiative this year has been to put all the information, forms and requirements for the programme on a USB stick. This has given them access to the same information at any time especially for those not able to access the DHB intranet. The use of USB sticks has removed the need for hardcopies and folders, reducing the cost enormously.

What would normally cost \$35.19 for a folder and dividers has been massively reduced to \$16.30 for the USB stick and dividers, saving more than 50 per cent in costs. The USB also has the potential for security protection by adding a password, should it be lost, especially for those containing important or private information.

New graduate nurses are familiar with this type of technology as they participate in online learning during their student programme, and applications into the NETP programme are completed online via ACE (Advance Choice Employment). This is a national online application process for recruitment into new graduate nursing programmes.

E-portfolios for PDRP is coming in the future, this is another innovative way of keeping up with the 'Gen Y' generation'.

Raiquel TePuni



(Left to right): Tracy Clarke, Catherine Anderson, Jane Smith, Madison Curel, Joanne Thorne, Raiquel TePuni (kneeling).

Continued from Page 7

## Music video spreads the word on falls prevention

The project team is trying to involve as many of the ward's 50 staff as possible. Support has also come from further afield, with Chief Executive Dr Nick Chamberlain playing a part in the production, Northland DHB agreeing to pay for the video to be professionally filmed, and St John Ambulance staff agreeing to be involved.

The video tells the fictional story of Mary, who comes to hospital by ambulance after a fall. In the rehabilitation ward, she learns about ways to prevent falls, including wearing sensible shoes and non-slip socks, and using a call bell and a walking frame. The story ends with Mary back on her feet and leaving hospital to return home.

The music video is to be a part of a compilation of health related videos to be played in the ward's

patient lounge during peak visiting hours to deliver opportunistic health promotion and education messages. It may also be played in the Emergency Department at Whangarei Hospital on EDTV and made available to other DHBs.

The project has taken a huge amount of planning, but Denise says staff enjoyed working on the project and were delighted when patients and families on the ward gave positive feedback when they pre-tested the music track. One patient, a gentleman in his 70s thought that it was a great way to capture his attention and that it gave him clear information about falls prevention while another, aged 99, said it was a great tune for "messages like that".

# Northland Doctors Preparing For The Gruelling Godzone Adventure Race

**“Pushing hard after a block of nights can really recreate what GODZone will feel like,”**

*Dr Tom Reynolds.*

You'd think catching zzz's would be high on the agenda for those who've just completed a late-night shift. But not for two young Northland DHB doctors who are putting themselves through a gruelling physical challenge in which sleep doesn't get a look in.

Drs Matthew Jeans and Tom Reynolds are using their nocturnal shifts to their advantage by taking on the arduous GODZone Adventure Race. This involves teams of four racing non-stop for several days over more than 500km through the wilderness.

The race, based near Kaikoura, involves teams navigating between check points, taking on stages on foot, mountain bikes and kayaks, with the winning team expected to take around five days to complete on only as little as eight hour's sleep.

Dr Reynolds says the shift work and unusual hours has benefited their training and, hopefully, the end result.

“Working shifts can be a challenge and training for a race so long is no mean feat,” says Tom. “ED pm and night shifts open up more of the day for training. Pushing hard after a block of nights can really recreate what GODZone will feel like and big training weeks have been the norm this summer.”

The cyclical ED house officer roster means Matt has a constantly changing schedule. Tom, on the other hand, has been the Tumanako Unit house officer this summer and his schedule is more stable. “I have been making the most of my mornings, fitting in rides and runs to keep the hours up each week.”

Tom is also taking on the Coast to Coast so he has an added motivation to pile up the training hours.

Matt and Tom are racing for one of the younger teams on the scene. Their team, University of Auckland Adventure Racing, has an average age of 23. Matt arrived in

Whangarei in November last year joining Tom, who started in 2012. Over this time they have run, paddled and ridden over a huge amount of the terrain around Whangarei.

“Whangarei has some real hidden gems,” says Tom. “Even Pukenui Forest across the road from the hospital has a huge amount to explore.”

The team had their last training weekend in Whangarei. The schedule included two nine-hour days of training – kayaking the harbour, trekking the Tangihua Ranges and riding between trainings.

“Our team mates were impressed with the terrain up here - they can't wait to get back and explore some more. The race course usually takes on some epic locations in New Zealand's back country so it will be a chance to see some rarely-seen sights.

So the question has to be begged: “Why would one put themselves through this type of sleep-deprivation on purpose?”

“The challenge is part of the attraction for us,” answers Tom. “It will be a chance to really push ourselves physically and mentally. The goal is to get through GODZone, see how we hold up, and perhaps look to some racing in China this September.

“The biggest worry is around organisational things, making sure we don't make some sort of planning error that will have an impact on the race.”

“We're pumped about it and can't wait for it to come.”

*Matt and Tom would like to thank their sponsors: University of Auckland, Trek Bikes, Vitasport, Hansells Food Group, Cyco, Trimtex Apparel and Grassy Knoll Outdoor. They would also like to thank the RMO Unit for being accommodating with leave requests.*

# GODZone starts March 8 and will have live GPS tracking and race updates at [www.godzoneadventure.com](http://www.godzoneadventure.com). It is the first race of the 2014 Adventure Racing World Series (ARWS), a series of races that culminates in the World Championships, this year in Ecuador. Teams from across the world battle it out in expedition length races around the world, seeking qualification spots at the finale.



Drs Matthew Jeans and Tom Reynolds combine long hours on the job with a gruelling exercise regime.



# Pihirau Hauora Maori scholarship making a difference

Four years ago Alexis Chapman was a 17-year-old Maori girl from Kawakawa facing the reality that her final year NCEA credits were insufficient to gain a place in the bachelor of communications degree she desired.

Fast-forward to 2014 and the vivacious scholarship recipient is a qualified and passionate occupational therapist encouraging others to follow her path.

Following her year 13 results, Alexis admits to a moment or two of “panic mode”, before speaking to an advisor from AUT who helped her decide on a one-year sport and recreational diploma. This would enable her access to the bachelor of communications degree the following year.

“It was a bit of a scramble to get into something but I was advised to do a diploma and that would set me up to get me into what I wanted to do,” she explains.

“I loved it but realised I probably wasn’t going to get a job out of it.”

It was during this initial year that Alexis found herself intrigued with the career path her flatmate was embarking on. Her flatmate was an Occupational Therapy student, and the experiences she shared, the outcomes occupational therapists aim to achieve for their patients had Alexis sold, so the following year she too embarked on a degree in Occupational Therapy.

“I really liked how it focuses on people as a whole. Not just physical health, but their environment. It also took into account the looks at both the spiritual and mental aspects and it’s really broad.”

Gaining the Pihirau Hauora Maori scholarship, Alexis embarked on the three-year Auckland AUT occupational therapy degree and has never looked back. She has enjoyed her industry placements in Northland, and after graduating late last year, is excited to get to work building her career.

“What I like about my job the most is improving people’s quality of life. Everyone deserves to have the best life they can and maybe they’re struggling and they don’t know it and they haven’t had someone come in to help them yet.”

“We’re different because we don’t just focus on the physical side - we take a holistic approach and look at what’s going on in (patients’) minds. For example, if someone broke their hip, a surgeon would do a hip



Alexis Chapman

**“You don’t have to become a doctor or a nurse - there are so many different pathways and there’s something everyone can be passionate about,”**

*occupational therapist Alexis Chapman.*

replacement. They will save a life, whereas we try and make it a life worth living so we help them get better and would go in and help with mobility.”

“So where a physiotherapist looks at walking, we look at safety awareness and helping them actually do stuff while they carry out their everyday activities, for example, can they lift a jug while they’re walking?”

“We form a plan for (the patient), assess what they can do and make goals with them to get them to where they want to be.”

Alexis says the scholarship made a huge difference as, being a “home girl”; it enabled her to travel home on weekends to spend time with whanau while still affording Auckland rent.

She encourages other young people to consider a career in health and believes, with Northlanders poor health, there is always room for more health professionals.

“You don’t have to become a doctor or a nurse – there are so many different pathways and there’s something everyone can be passionate about.”

## SIDEBAR – ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP

# In 2009, the Northland DHB chief executive, Karen Roach, established the Pihirau Scholarship Fund at \$200,000 per annum for five years.

The overall aim of the Pihirau (which translates to 'nurturing the many hundreds of young shoots') Hauora Maori scholarship programme is to encourage more Maori, who whakapapa to Te Tai Tokerau hapu/iwi, into health and disability degree level study in areas where Maori are under-represented as health professionals and over-represented in terms of health needs. The

scholarships are intended to reduce the barriers for Maori in accessing tertiary study.

To date Northland DHB has supported 135 Maori students, over four years, in a health and disability related study pathway.

In 2013 there was an outstanding response to the scholarship. Sixty-three Maori students applied and have been endorsed to receive their disbursements for their health and disability-related degree study.

Recipients of the Pihirau Hauora

Maori Scholarship who have fed back to a survey completed in 2012 categorically stated the added value and the reduction of barriers/stress the scholarship has enhanced in their ability to achieve good results in their health study pathway.

This scholarship has for the last four years supported Northland DHB's strategy to 'grow our own' workforce. While many of the recipients were studying outside of the Te Tai Tokerau rohe, many students have already acknowledged their desire to return home to work.

## WHANGAREI YOUTH GAIN VALUED STAFF MEMBER

Manaia Health PHO is losing a valued member of staff but an exciting new initiative aimed at benefiting Whangarei's youth will be gaining one.

Clinical services manager Beth Cooper is taking on the role as leader and manager of Whangarei Youth Space

**"We want to work with others to significantly reduce the suicide rate for young people,"**

*Whangarei Youth Space's new leader and manager Beth Cooper.*

(WYS) - a centre for local 12-24 year-olds aimed at providing social and recreational activities, as well as focusing on their development, and delivering a youth-friendly health service.

Beth's career has largely centred around the health sector and began as charge nurse of Ward 16 and CCU at Whangarei Hospital in 1987. She has worked at Manaia Health PHO and in primary

care for the last two and a half years. Having been a manager for most of the last 25 years Beth says leadership is her real passion.

"I relish the opportunity to empower and enable others to do great work and to support their own self-development and leadership journeys.

"I am very excited about the new role, but somewhat daunted by the amount of work there is to do. My mind is currently focused on the establishment phase – getting Youth Space open and operating, but I am very cognisant also that there is a significant journey ahead and each phase will have its own opportunities and challenges."

As well as being a place of support and mentoring for development, learning new skills and realising potential in youth, WYS will be the provider of some youth health

services. It will help connect young people with the wide range of health, social and training/education services available.

"In time, it is envisaged that Youth Space will be a hub of youth health services in

Whangarei. Improving access and appropriate utilisation of health services by young people is a specific goal of WYS.

"We want to work with others to significantly reduce the suicide rate for young people and to improve the NEET figures (not engaged in education and training).

"WYS is committed to youth: adult partnerships and enabling a strong and effective youth voice to be incorporated into community and agency development."

Beth says her roles at Manaia Health PHO and WYS are related but different.

"The Youth Space project has been led by Manaia over the last year and is now at a point that it can start to operate as an independent organisation – but the ties, the inter-relationships and linkages are strong and the two organisations will continue to work closely together into the future.

"I love a challenge and I'm an optimist, have loads of commitment and passion, and look forward to learning and growing with this new role and the Whangarei Youth Space as an organisation and as a catalyst for change in our community.

"Manaia is a very special organisation that does some great work in our community and is achieving results and outcomes to be very proud of. I will miss the Manaia whanau on a day-to-day basis, but am really delighted that I will remain connected and part of the 'health sector team' and Manaia through Youth Space's role in youth health."



Clinical Services manager, Manaia Health PHO Beth Cooper.



# Age Concern

Something as simple as painting the edge of a camouflaged step could prevent a fall in your home from resulting in on-going injury and trauma.

This is just one of the strategies which will be taught at this year's first Step Ahead - falls injury prevention course run by Age Concern.

Falls prevention co-ordinator Beryl Wilkinson says the course, aimed at all ages, assists people to develop strength and balance techniques and safety strategies to avoid falls.

"Simple strategies discussed are examples such as painting the edge of a step for more focal awareness, what to do if something in the wider community is identified as a hazard and how to set up a social network to maintain safety etc. We also invite guest speakers to talk on related topics and this is always a very popular element on the course."

Age Concern runs six-monthly Step Ahead programmes. Each course consists of four weekly free two and a half-hour sessions.

Beryl says that falls in older people are almost always associated with muscle weakness and impaired balance and can be reduced with the right exercise and information.

"This is an interactive and fun way to learn about keeping yourself safe. Many of our participants state they have learned so much from the course and they enjoy the interaction which takes place at each session. They particularly appreciate being able to discuss their own home situations and find solutions with the feedback they receive.

"The exercises given are easy to do and we hear that they have had fewer incidents because of their safety awareness due to the Step Ahead course."

To register by March 17, and for more information, contact Age Concern on (09) 438-8043 or email: [ageconcern.whg@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ageconcern.whg@xtra.co.nz)



Robert Smith with the mobile workshop.

Age Concern has a mobile workshop van on the road Monday to Friday from 9am-4pm, which responds to calls for urgent and non-urgent support for older people in the community who require a wide range of minor repairs and other safety issues.

These could include changing light bulbs or smoke alarm batteries to promoting safety in their own home and providing relief of anxiety and stress.

Says falls prevention facilitator Beryl Wilkinson: "The elderly sometimes become stressed over where to go at a reasonable cost when trades are not interested in attending because the job may be perceived to be minor and call out fees may be too costly."

Installing grab rails is another important focus.

"Often further needs are identified at the home visit by either the field officer or by our maintenance man and added advice and support is also given as all our services are inter-connected.

"We endeavour to ensure their safety is of paramount importance in keeping them at home for as long as possible in the safest environment possible."

***Age Concern is an organisation providing information, support and services for older people and for those who care for older people. The specific services available are:***

**Home maintenance** - including installation of rails, other preventive falls injury and maintenance and assistance;

**Field work** - if mobility is an issue or for any other problems, field officers are available to carry out home visits, while assisting with referrals and providing advocacy and support;

**Accredited visitor service** - trained volunteers regularly visit isolated older people in their own home;

**Total mobility** - Age Concern is an agency providing assessments and approval for half-price taxis and supplies taxi voucher books;

**Seminars** - topics on health and wellbeing and education. Calendar of topics available from administration;

**Dedicated Carer Relief Service** - regular scheduled social relief and time-out for full-time carers of older people.

# SMOKEFREE FOR LIFE | AUAHI KORE MO AKE TONU ATU

## Ciggies banned from bus stops

Whangarei's public bus stops are to be made smokefree as the Whangarei District Council promotes a smokefree lifestyle, thereby, perhaps making Whangarei the first smokefree district in the country.

A survey of bus users found that 72 per cent wanted the bus stops to be smokefree and that the policy should be educational, rather than disciplinary.

Signs will be put up at bus stops letting people know they are smokefree, but fines will not be imposed on people found flouting the ban.

Mayor Sheryl Mai says it was a sign of things to come, with a push to make New Zealand smokefree by 2025.

Rose Moses is a smoker and was waiting for the bus with four-year-old granddaughter Charlotte-Rose Moses. Ms Moses said she uses the bus service about three times a week for shopping and thought the ban would be a good thing. "We have got smokefree places everywhere and this is a public place so I've got no problems with it."



Rose Moses with grand-daughter Charlotte-Rose Moses at Rose St bus terminal

## Keep cars & homes Smokefree

Northlanders are being urged to support a smokefree cars and homes campaign. More than 350 New Zealanders die each year due to exposure to second-hand smoke.

2013 Census data shows 19.1 per cent of people in Northland aged 15 and over smoke regularly and, according to the ASH Year 10 survey 2012, 31.2 per cent of Northland's 14 and 15-year-olds have travelled in a car in the past seven days with someone who was smoking.

Reducing exposure to second-hand smoke in cars and homes is one way we can make a difference to preventing smoke-related illnesses and deaths.

Children are particularly vulnerable to second-hand smoke and often do not have the choice to move away from smoke.



[www.smokefree.org.nz/second-hand-smoke](http://www.smokefree.org.nz/second-hand-smoke)

## Smokefree Champions

Smokefree Champions are the link staff in Northland DHB departments who support staff to provide ABC better help for smokers to quit.

An annual study day was held on November 21 aimed at increasing the Champions knowledge of cessation options for smokers.

Guest speakers from local Maori Aukati Kaipapa Smoking Cessation Services, Quitline, Heart Foundation and Pfizer spoke about quit support, hope, greater belief in oneself and healthier lifestyles in the community and Champions.

Smokefree matters are now available on SharePoint. For more information contact Jan Marshall on 021 0200 7925.



Smokefree Champions hard at work