

PreScribe

NORTHLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD STAFF MAGAZINE



Lactation Success Story - Page 4



From the CEO's Perspective



As 2014 draws to a close, I want to acknowledge each and every one of you for all the hard work that has culminated in a very successful year.

Often it's those directly involved with patient care that get the recognition and kudos for saving or improving lives, meeting health targets, or clearly demonstrating our values, but every one of you makes an important contribution, and I extend my gratitude to you all, no matter what your position is within the organisation.

There have been a number of highlights for me this year, including the inaugural Northland Health Sector awards. We were able to celebrate the whole Northland health sector and reward projects and behaviours in line with our values (Matariki awards) and quality.

Our surgeons, Jerry Gathercole and Peter Milsom, were also honoured as the first New Zealand recipients of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Outstanding Service to Community Award. To be able to host this presentation was a real honour for me and the Board.

Another highlight has been our partnership with the Northland Community Foundation which allowed us to fundraise, build and open the Jim Carney Cancer Treatment Centre, a lasting legacy for Northland.

The dawn blessing and official opening of the Centre was the culmination of an outstanding effort from our community and I couldn't help getting swept up in the energy and positivity of this project. There are so many people to thank, it isn't feasible to do it

personally – but every contribution of time, money, fundraising, goods or services is gratefully and thankfully acknowledged.

In October last year, the DHB proactively commissioned an independent organisation-wide review of patient safety. The review took a comprehensive look at the safety and quality systems with a key focus on improving patient experience. Many areas of good practice were identified within the DHB, but the Review also identified there were some areas for improvement. There is good progress being made in the work to ensure that all the recommendations are put in place as quickly as possible.

A partnership between Northland DHB and the New Zealand Defence Force meant the dental health of 500 Far North residents was given a boost. I want to acknowledge the Kaitiaki Hospital team for hosting the exercise that delivered the 750 consultations and over 2000 treatments and our dental health service for working alongside the Defence Force to help make this happen.

Establishment of the five Northland Health Services Plan projects - First 2000 Days, Urgent Healthcare, Patient and Family Centred Care, Neighbourhood Healthcare Homes and Fit for life - are giving us the traction we need to achieve the triple aim and plan headline targets. I am really looking forward to the Values Week activity in March 2015, which will include workshops for staff (in our shoes) and patients (in your shoes). Our Values give us a platform to deliver great patient and staff experience.

I have been asked to do some unusual things throughout the year and one of the most memorable is participating in the production of the Falls Prevention video clip. While I don't see myself as a 'dancing with the stars' contender, I was certainly in great company with staff who wrote the lyrics and choreographed the dance steps to produce 'We're not going to take it' - a creative initiative to promote falls prevention.

One of my favourite events of the year is meeting with Countdown staff to acknowledge the fundraising efforts of the Countdown Kids appeal.

Countdown's support is fantastic and with help from Northlanders, raised \$129,054 for the children's ward at Whangarei Hospital this year, which is \$40,000 more than last year. Given the economic climate in Northland, this is an extraordinary effort and the donation will go a long way in providing healthcare to our Northland kids.

One of our strengths is the relationship we have with our PHOs. Knowing that cost is one of the significant barriers for families in accessing medical care, we rolled out free GP access, including after-hours consultations, for children aged between 6 and 12 years (up to their 13th birthday).

All of our 153 GP's from the 38 general practices across Manaia Health and Te Tai Tokerau PHOs have signed up to this initiative. By working together, the estimated 16,000 six-12-year-olds enrolled with either Manaia Health or Te Tai Tokerau PHO can now visit their GP for free and also pick up a prescription from the pharmacy without the burden of the \$5 surcharge.

Northland has, once again, come out on top with the highest rates in the country for exclusive breastfeeding on discharge from maternity facilities. This is a huge achievement and a team effort from LMC's (Lead Maternity Carers), core midwives, nurses (ward), lactation consultants, obstetricians and ancillary staff all working together to provide the best care to the women, partners and whanau of Northland.

Our new Maternity Unit is also progressing well and we expect to have completed the new office block by April 2015 which will bring many of our Whangarei-based services together, affording us the opportunity of better co-ordination across the organisation.

I hope that you have a restful break over Christmas and the New Year and come back refreshed for what will be another challenging year of healthcare in Northland.

Regards,

Nick

Diabetes Fun Run and Walk

Despite predicted thunderstorms, a strong crowd turned out for the Youth Diabetes Fun Run and Walk around the Town Basin loop walkway in November, far exceeding organisers' expectations.

Northland DHB Diabetes Services clinical nurse specialist Liz Allen says 511 people registered to take part in the event, which aimed to raise public awareness of diabetes in youth, as well as raise money towards camps for young Northlanders with diabetes. Around \$1,800 was raised with more donations still to come.



"This was a huge response for any event and far exceeding our expectations and even the sun came out, despite the forecast for rain, winds and possible thunder. It's amazing what Northland will do for a good cause."

There are more than 9,000 people with diabetes in Northland - that's six per cent of the total population and it's estimated to increase by 72 per cent between 2009 and 2026. There are approximately 130 children and youth under the age of 25 in the secondary diabetes

services, with the majority having type one diabetes.

The fun run/walk was organised by Diabetes NZ Northland and Diabetes NZ Northland-Youth with the support of Northland Health Diabetes Service staff to draw attention to the types of diabetes and their causes to counter discrimination and provide contacts and support.

"It's a hard road for many and the camps provide an opportunity for much-needed friendships, education and support. They learn about their diabetes management, enjoy healthy food and outdoor activities," says Ms Allen.

Scott Burdett was 18 when he was diagnosed with diabetes ten years ago and has found the camps beneficial.

"It's amazing what Northland will do for a good cause."

- Northland DHB Diabetes Services clinical nurse specialist Liz Allen.

"The camps are very informative. I have learnt a lot – how to prepare meals that are healthy, yet delicious and, as a result, my blood sugar levels are the best they have been while on camp. I've also made a lot of friends in similar situations."

Says Ms Allen: "We would like to thank everyone who supported the event and made it such a success. If anyone missed the opportunity to make the event, we hope to hold it again next year."

The 4.2km fun run and walk set off from the Canopy Bridge, Town Basin and ended with spot prizes for both kids and adults from the many sponsors.

Living with Diabetes

When Toni Mitchell's only child, daughter Aayden, was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at the age of five, she thought her world was caving in around her.

A long grieving process followed while adjusting to the lifestyle change over the last year.

"It's been a massive learning process and I'm still learning," says Toni.

Toni recalls the first signs anything was amiss when Aayden was constantly hungry, drinking 'ridiculous amounts of water', lost quite a lot of weight in a month and had stomach pains.

Although diabetes doesn't run in the family, the Northland DHB radiographer had an inkling it might be diabetes when she was diagnosed some weeks later.

Following the diagnosis and shock, came the lifestyle upheaval.

As well as changing her dietary habits, Aayden required three insulin injections a day.



Toni and Aayden.

"The biggest challenge for us is making her life as normal as possible."

- Toni Mitchell.

"The first time she was screaming - she was absolutely petrified," recalls Toni. "But now she can inject herself and that has proven easier than the dietary changes."

"Her mood changes when her blood sugars are high and when they're low, she gets quite shaky and loses the colour in her face."

"The biggest challenge for us is making her life as normal as possible."

Despite being the only pupil at Maunu Primary School with diabetes, Toni has been 'blown away' by all the support.

Aayden and Toni took part in the Youth Diabetes Fun Run and Walk and were joined by a strong turnout from the school, including the Principal.

"This is something she will have to live with for the rest of her life and I'm so incredibly proud of her. She's got this strength and tolerance and perseverance. Kids are so adaptable. When we were first in hospital I couldn't stop crying and she said 'Mum, don't be sad, just smile'."

Northland Tops the Country in Exclusive Breastfeeding

Northland has, once again, come out on top with the highest rates in the country for exclusive breastfeeding on discharge from maternity facilities.

With an overall rating of 94.7 per cent, it exceeds other regions with Whanganui at 90.6 per cent and Hutt Valley trailing at 76.3 per cent.

The Northland DHB lactation consultation team was phoned by the New Zealand Breastfeeding Authority to congratulate Northland for retaining the lead for the fourth year in a row.

Lactation consultant and Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) co-ordinator Helen Parker, who has worked tirelessly on breastfeeding in Northland and to make Northland DHB hospitals become baby-friendly accredited, says the team have increased their leading margin and it is something to celebrate and congratulate all staff on.

“(The New Zealand Breastfeeding Authority) commented that Northland DHB had the best rate of exclusive breastfeeding on discharge “by far” compared to the rest of New Zealand.”

Exclusive breastfeeding is when only breast milk from the breast or expressed and prescribed medicines have been given from birth.

World Health Organisation recommends exclusively breastfeeding babies for the first six months and continuing with the introduction of solids.

Exclusively breastfeeding a baby decreases the risks of allergies, obesity, tummy bugs, infections, meningitis, urinary tract infections, diabetes, childhood cancers and SUDI (sudden unexplained death of an infant).

For mums, breastfeeding decreases the risk of cancer of the breast, ovaries and cervix, osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease.

Within Northland's 94.7 per cent success rate, regionally, Kaipara scored the top marks with a 100 per cent exclusive breastfeeding rate on discharge, with Whangarei 95.4 per cent, Bay of Islands 93 per cent and Kaitia 89.4 per cent.

Ms Parker says Northland has come a long way since she began ten years ago.

“In November 2003 our exclusive breastfeeding rate on discharge was 64 per cent. I was employed in 2004 to implement BFHI in Northland. I saw many changes in Northland and, particularly, Whangarei.

“Our nursery was removed and all babies remained with their mothers, so they could feed their babies on cue and, for as long as baby needed to feed. We implemented the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding policy development and implemented education for staff and support services for mothers, such as lactation clinics.

“BFHI has made some big differences in Northland and breastfeeding gives our babies and mothers in Northland a healthier start to life.”



The lactation consultant team behind Northland's breastfeeding success (left to right): Angela Yendell, Helen Parker and Janine Parsons.

“Our nursery was removed and all babies remained with their mothers, so they could feed their babies on cue and, for as long as baby needed to feed.”

- lactation consultant Helen Parker.

Ms Parker says the success rate was due to a consistent, evidence-based practice. “With consistent advice, women do not get confused.

“This is a huge achievement and a team effort from LMC's, core midwives, nurses (ward), lactation consultants, obstetricians and ancillary

staff all working together to provide the best care to the women, partners and whanau of Northland.”

She added that the new maternity unit will also greater benefit women with two and single-bed rooms, as opposed to four-bedded rooms and singles.

Breastfeeding Definitions

Exclusive Breastfeeding:

The infant has never, to the mothers knowledge, had any water, formula other liquid or solid food. Only breast milk from the breast or expressed and prescribed medicines have been given from birth.

Fully Breastfeeding:

The infant has taken breast milk only and no other liquids or solids except a minimal amount of water or prescribed medicines in the past 48 hours.

Partial Breastfeeding:

The infant has taken some breast milk and some infant formula or other solid food in the past 48 hours.

Artificial Feeding:

The infant has had no breast milk but has had alternative liquid such as infant formula with or without solid food in the past 48 hours.

Close Call Leads to Becoming a Safe Sleep Ambassador

When Lael Perry started smoking again in the last month of her pregnancy, she knew it was wrong.

The stressed out Kaitiaia working mother of (then) three daughters had given up when she became pregnant but says it was a weakness that drove her to have the odd cigarette after work in the last month.



Lael Perry has become an ambassador for safe sleep messages after her daughter Jordan was born at 31 weeks.

"I felt terrible. I should have done something different like have some sugar or a drink of water. It was kind of like self-torture, I knew it was bad for me and baby.

Further adding to the guilts, it was discovered her baby, a normal weight up until 27 weeks, had stopped growing.

"I felt so bad and I do think that it was from smoking," says the 38-year-old.

Lael's daughters are 18, 14, four and now she has Jordan, four months. But it was touch and go with her youngest.

Jordan was delivered via caesarean at 31 weeks, weighing just 0.9kg (two pound) due to IUGR (Intrauterine growth restriction). She spent her first eight days in Auckland, before being transferred to SCBU in Whangarei Hospital for six weeks.

"I stopped smoking the day I went into hospital and will never do it again," says Lael, who has since become an ambassador for SUDI (sudden unexpected death in infancy).

"No one's pin-pointed it but I think smoking was the reason she was not growing."

While away in hospital, Lael's partner and mum held it together for the other three kids in Kaitiaia.

"Life changed, everything changed. While I was in hospital my mum and partner would call me stressed out. Their worlds fall apart. You have to juggle a baby in the special care unit and you have to still keep control of the household but from afar."

When Lael and Jordan were finally allowed to go home at 38 weeks, via a two-day transfer stay in Kaitiaia Hospital, it was "wonderful, yet scary".

"SCBU was like I was in a safe haven. She came off the monitors and I'd have to watch her all night long. The first night was exciting but scary too. I was on constant alert and no one was allowed near the baby. I just kept her on me.

"My midwife said, as soon as you get home, strip off and take all baby's clothes off and keep the skin to skin contact

because you've got that freedom to at home and you can really bond. It was beautiful.

"I only really held her once a day in hospital and just focused on her growing."

Lael is a self-confessed 'preacher' now when it comes to smoking.

"Most of the mothers in SCBU were smoking. I said things to them all the time. We tried to make a support group and talk to each other about different things. They were all in there for different reasons but the common thing amongst about 80 per cent of the mums was they all smoked."

Lael is encouraging family members, including her partner to quit.

"My partner smokes outside and now wears a smoking jacket which he takes off after. He also brushes his teeth and washes his hands before he holds the baby."

Despite being around smokers, Lael says it is not hard to stay smoke-free.

"It's not hard at all. I think it's disgusting. Not only because of what it did to baby but it is gross and expensive."

Other changes Lael has made towards safe sleep include sleeping Jordan in a pepi-pod, which is offered to SCBU mothers and those at risk of SUDI.

"I'm so glad I got it because it means I can be close to her. I wanted to sleep with her but was scared I might smother her.

"I just love that I can put baby in the pepi-pod and she's safe and warm and secure and it's mobile. I can take the pepi-pod with me wherever I go and can always keep an eye on her and it's just so easy."

Lael is also exclusively breastfeeding, another contributor towards safe sleep.

I didn't go through labour but luckily I had only just stopped breastfeeding my four-year-old the month before. I told her I had to stop to make the colostrum for baby Jordan. The milk had dried up but my breasts were still familiar to milk so it wasn't hard to make the colostrum come.

"I felt terrible. I should have done something different like have some sugar or a drink of water."

- Lael Perry.

"I can't say enough for the breast feeding consultants. They have the most important role. I wish they could be on the ward 24/7. I think they should have every single resource to be able to do that because the mothers in SCBU should be happy so that their milk can flow and their babies can feed. I saw actual miracles happen in the SCBU unit with the lactation consultants helping stressed out and upset mothers feeding their babies. There was this one young girl and, once it happened, her whole face and body visibly changed and she just relaxed and fell in love with her baby."

Lael says, despite the rocky start, family life is now great. "The big girls love their little sister. She is now ten pounds. It's hard to believe she was so tiny."

National Safe Sleep Day is in December.

Promise Fulfilled and Delivered



In the words of the Minister of Health Dr Jonathan Coleman "You wouldn't get better than this" when it comes to our new cancer treatment centre.

"It's absolutely state of the art and I think it's going to really energise staff," he said during a tour at the opening ceremony.

The day began with a dawn blessing comprising Northland DHB staff, Northland Community Foundation (NCF) members, cancer survivors and patients, and was described as 'emotional'.

"What you've done here through the community is really going to make a huge difference to Northland."

***- Minister of Health
Dr Jonathan Coleman.***

Later in the morning, guests packed a nearby marquee to await the Minister of Health as he was welcomed in a powhiri which was preceded by a Wero (challenge) from Takawaenga Ned Peita, of Northland DHB's Te Poutokomanawa Maori Health Service and Arama Morunga, Public and Population Health.

Minister Coleman later commented during his speech: "I've had some welcomes in my time but this was particularly

impressive. That was a pretty focussed one and I wasn't taking my eye off you for a minute," he addressed Ned.

Amid karakia and waiata, speakers also included Northland DHB chairman Anthony Norman, chief executive Nick Chamberlain and Northland Community Foundation chairman Richard Ayton, who explained the background behind Project Promise.

He remembered patients praising the staff but being horrified by the facilities and said Northland was not going to attract oncologists unless it got the facilities.

Minister Coleman said cancer is right at the top of the government's priority list and he acknowledged Mary Carney for the Carney Family Trust's contribution and support and said the new centre showed what high regard her husband was held in.

"I think this has been a real team project over a long, long period of time and it's a fantastic achievement. I can't emphasise enough how much this is going to do for the people in Northland.



Oncologists Lisa Dawson and Vince Newton try the chairs in the new facility.

"What you've done here through the community is really going to make a huge difference to Northland. This is a very uplifting day for Northlanders but also New Zealand. It's got a real feel-good factor about it and you're going to remember it for a long time."

Dr Chamberlain said everyone has encountered cancer in its many guises. The community support has been astounding and "I couldn't help but get swept up in it all so much so that I had a very, very dry July."

Northland MP Mike Sabin thought it was fantastic the way the community had bonded for something that was important to it.

Following the speeches, guests moved to the new centre where Mary Carney cut the ribbon and tours were conducted.

"It's turned out even better than I expected," she said referring to the vision five year's ago in comparison to the end product. "I think there's been a great deal of thought put into it – it's great.

"I feel so embarrassed because it's not just us who have contributed – it's everybody," she added modestly.



Mary Carney cuts the ribbon to the new Jim Carney Cancer Treatment Centre.

Inspirational Woman Fights Cancer for her Family

For Diane Green's children, cancer is a way of life. They've lived with it since the oldest, Lauren, 16, was nine months old when Diane was first diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma.

Lauren and her fostered siblings – Nathaniel, 11 and Abby 10, who Diane and husband Peter have had permanent custody of since they were six months old and 28-hours old respectively, have watched their beloved mum go through the devastating journey that is cancer all their lives.

After eight years in remission, it returned twice and, then earlier this year, a fourth time with a vengeance – in the bone marrow.

"My aim in life is to see my kids grow up and settled."

- Diane Green.

And so the gruelling rounds of chemotherapy and radiation began again. But this time, it was from the cramped confines of Whangarei Hospital – the family having moved from Christchurch following the earthquakes.

Despite being impressed with the new cancer treatment facility, she is hoping she will not have to use it.

"It's amazing and has so much room compared to the one tiny room (in the old facility). The chairs look so comfortable but I'm hoping that I don't have to have any more treatment,"



says the teacher aide at Blomfield School, who has had to stop working for now but hopes to return in the New Year.

So what is it like living with cancer and how does she keep fighting it?

"Even when you're well, if you get a little niggle or ache or pain, you're always worrying is it coming back, is it something to worry about or is it just old age?"

"It's very exhausting but I have a very supportive husband and the kids keep me positive. My aim in life is to see them grow up and settled."

The Gift of Giving

The gift of giving just keeps on going at the new Jim Carney Cancer Treatment Centre with a cancer patient presenting a \$5,000 donation to the centre this month.

Jan Webb has been undertaking treatment for lymphoma until recently and says she has been treated so well, she wanted to say thank you to the staff by giving something back.

"I would have loved to have been able to give to the A&E department as well as CCU and ICU who also treated me wonderfully."

Jan and husband Keith, a keen golfer at Pines Golf Club, spent months organising a golf tournament which attracted 25 teams of four. The sponsors prize table totalled \$5,000 worth of donations from near and far, including travel vouchers courtesy of an Australian flight centre.

The couple's daughter works at a flight centre across the



Keith and Jan Webb handing over the cash and Espresso coffee machine to Janet Hullah and Ros Martin.

ditch and raised \$340 (Australian) amongst her colleagues, which was matched by management. The total amounted to NZ\$750 which was put towards travel vouchers.

"We also got a signed cap from Adam Scott, who was the number one world golfer until recently," adds Keith.

Between the entrants' fees and

auctioning of some of the prizes, the amount raised came to \$4,665. In addition, Harvey Norman donated an Espresso coffee machine for the centre's staff room.

Registered nurse at the centre Janet Hullah said the coffee machine would go down well with staff, who like their coffee. Staff was settling in well and everything was ticking along nicely at the new centre, she said.



Out & About



Merry Christmas!

Nick Chamberlain

Merry Christmas everyone. I want to extend a big thank you to staff who will be working over the holiday period. For those of you who are heading off on leave I hope you have a wonderful time with family and friends.

Remember to enjoy the little things, make sure those around you know how much you appreciate them and, if you're travelling, stay safe on the roads. Best wishes and enjoy a well-earned break.

Jeanette Wedding

Merry Xmas everyone. I would like to acknowledge each and every one for this year's contribution to our services. It has been an extremely busy year for everybody but I have been extremely heartened by the dedication and hard work to ensure our patients and our communities receive the best possible health outcomes from us. Have a safe Xmas. To those who will be working, I hope that you get some well-deserved rest sometime over the break too. I look forward to working with you all again in 2015.

Chris Farrelly

It is my privilege to have spent another year as part of the greater Northland-wide health team. We can be proud of our significant well-known achievements, such as the new Cancer Centre, the early roll-out of free primary care for under-13s, and the Whangarei Youth Space, but also the little-known acts of quiet care, and human touch and compassion which make up a day in the life of a health care worker. I wish all a happy and safe Christmas period and a deep sense of the good that we collectively do.

Rose Lightfoot

2014 has been a huge year as we have worked to achieve the goals of the Northland Health Services Plan.

Te Tai Tokerau PHO has truly valued the way we have worked in partnership with our health colleagues to achieve across the system benefits for our patients. We wish you all a safe and healthy festive season with time to relax and restore over the holiday time ready for the challenges we face in 2015.



Kim Tito

A special time ahead to share with whanau, family and friends, to reflect and refresh and be 'fit for life' and work in 2015. A special thanks to the dedicated staff of Mental Health & Addiction Services, Te Poutokomanawa and our Kaumatua Kaunihiera. Meri Kirihimete me nga mihi mote Tau Hou.

Andrew Potts

A big thank you to all staff for their hard work in caring for patients over the past year. The last few months have been extremely busy with what seemed like an endless winter peak period for acute patients. Increased numbers of elective patients have also been seen and treated as we reduce waiting times for patients to a maximum of four months. The contribution of all staff to looking after patients is greatly appreciated. I also wish to acknowledge the dedication of staff on duty at Christmas. I appreciate the sacrifice that this entails and hope that the hospital is relatively quiet. I hope that everyone has a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Neil Beney

This has been another challenging year for all our teams. Hopefully we are all getting used to the idea that change will be a constant feature of our working lives as we strive to make improvements in delivering services to our people. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff for continuing to seek better ways of doing things and to encourage us all to accept the challenge that the status quo is never good enough. Thank you to those people that are working through the holidays, and best wishes to those that are taking time off to spend with their families. Thank you and happy Christmas.

Mike Roberts

I hope that everybody will enjoy a well-deserved break over the Christmas period. The last year has been very busy and it has only been because of the enormous commitment shown by staff that we have maintained a high-quality service for patients. I hope you will take time to reflect on your achievements with pride. Happy Christmas.

Meng Cheong

I'm so happy to be a part of such a great team of people. During my first year in Northland, there has been the joy of milestones achieved, and the challenges of a major flooding event cutting off access to many Northland communities. Real examples of the unique Northland spirit has shone through in both the good and hard times. I wish you and your families a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Sam Bartrum

A very Merry Xmas and Happy New Year to everyone. A big thank you to all for all the hard work and dedication given which is often noticed but not always celebrated as we go about our busy days. Next year will be one where we fully embed the organisation's values and, with that, enhance our patients experience (Patient & Family Centred Care) and also staff engagement. Look out for the "in your shoes in our shoes" listening sessions and please contribute. 2015 is shaping up to be a cracker!

Margareth Broodkoorn

A big thanks to all our staff for all your hard mahi this year. I am so proud to be part of such a fantastic organisation. Throughout the year there have been many instances where our staff have gone above and beyond, for example during the floods we saw staff going out of their way (literally) who found innovative ways to get to work through flood waters, and the teams that stayed on-site to cover shifts.

Have a safe and happy Christmas with whanau and friends, and remember those who will be going without this time of year or take a proactive step and donate to your local foodbank to support those in need. Meri kirihimete me nga mihi arohamote Tau Hou 2015.



Christmas for Us

Visitors and staff around Whangarei Hospital were asked what they are doing for Christmas and what Christmas means to them.



Communications Manager Liz Inch:

"I'm heading to Christchurch on December 23rd for Christmas with my father and his partner. My sister, brother-in-law and niece are coming home from Australia so it will be great to see them. My baby sister is getting married on the 29th at a vineyard in Lincoln. I am the photographer so it is going to be quite a busy time but I'm really looking forward to the wedding and then back to Whangarei for a week of R&R."



Visitor, Lybia Buttersworth:

"I hope to be working. I've done that for years. I'm a care giver and only recently moved back from Sydney because my children live nearby. I've done the family thing myself at Christmas for years but I'd rather help people out there who don't have anybody. I go into their homes and dress up the place with glitter and turn on the lights and play their favourite CD. It's really heart-warming."



Surgical registrar Ben Cribb:

"I plan to spend Christmas with as much family as possible between shifts. Christmas for me is about family and spending time with loved ones."



Visitor, Janet Graham:

"I'm heading to Pukekohe to spend it with family. I'm hoping to go to the beach over the holidays and do some visiting. I'm also babysitting grand kids in January at Te Akau. Christmas to me means family time."



Northland Community Foundation Manager

Ros Martin: "It will be very family-orientated this year and we have a new baby due any minute so that will be exciting. We always have a family gathering on Christmas Eve and then a Christmas Day champagne breakfast which continues throughout the day. I'm also involved in my local Mangapai community special Christmas carol night on the 21st. We have mulled wine, carols, Santa and decorate the hall. It has a real magical, community Christmas feel to it."



Urology house officer Nick Buist:

"I'm working all day but I don't really mind. I'm like the Grinch but an ambivalent Grinch. I've been travelling for the last few Christmases so I think Mum would have liked me there but it doesn't bother me."



Frugal Present Ideas:

Christmas Mugs:

Need: Mug, sharpie pen.

How to: Write or draw a personal message on the mug and bake in a moderate oven for 30 minutes to set.

Herb Salt:

Need: Salt, dried herbs, jars.

How to: Prepare clean, dry jars of different shapes and sizes. Mix together salt and your choice of dried herbs from the garden. Pour into jars, seal and decorate.

Delicious, cheap and easy!

Striking New Blue Uniforms

Whangarei's district nurses can now be recognised by their striking new blue uniform.

There are 28 part and fulltime district nurses covering the Whangarei area and outskirts who, until now, have had the option of wearing an old uniform, with most choosing mufti.

However, says Whangarei District Nursing Services clinical nurse manager Hayley Moyle: "After discussing different aspects of our service, it was suggested we had a uniform to promote the face of district nursing."

The uniforms were designed to be comfortable, smart and practical, with additional vests during winter.

Ms Moyle says the majority of the nurses are pleased with the uniform.

"I think they look smart and professional. They look like a team and we are more easily identifiable."

District nurses work seven days from 8am - 11pm and their role includes visiting clients in their homes, workplace or clinic who require specialist nursing care for wounds, catheter management, intravenous therapy or stomal care. They also oversee and work with clients

who require enteral feeding, tracheostomy management or continence management services.

They provide a valued service to house-bound clients or those requiring complex nursing needs.

"We feel very privileged to work with clients in their own homes and this is equally valued by the clients, who appreciate the friendly service from our district nurses," says Hayley.



The district nurses kitted out in their new uniforms.

Introducing Jessica O'Donnell

Name: Jessica O'Donnell.

Title/position:

PA to Director of Nursing & Midwifery (Mondays).
Programme Support Administrator (rest of the week).

When did you start your new role?

October 20, 2014.

What does your job involve?

Providing PA support to Margareth Broodkoorn on Mondays – this involves diary organising, arranging meetings, minute taking, venue bookings, filing correspondence/documentation, etc. My other role is to provide administrative support to key programmes within the Nursing and Midwifery Directorate, including Advanced Care Planning (ACP), Cancer Control and Nga Manukura o Apopo.

What has your career involved to date?

After gaining a commerce degree at the University of Auckland, I worked for the University's Injury Prevention Research Centre, providing administrative support to the research team on a range of projects, including Falls in the Home, Drownings in NZ, and Methamphetamine and Injury, amongst others. In 2006, I moved to India and joined a company providing strategic business research to the pharmaceutical industry. More recently, I developed diagnostic assessments for the education sector in India, before moving back home (for good!) in August this year.



What do you like about your role? I enjoy the varied nature of the role, given that I am involved in several projects. It has been interesting to learn about the work being done in Northland in these areas of health care. I also enjoy being part of the friendly and helpful team in the Nursing & Midwifery Directorate.

Dislikes? No dislikes so far!

Why did you choose to come to work at Northland DHB? I was keen to work for a community-minded organisation in my hometown and, having been involved in the healthcare industry in previous roles, I felt that Northland DHB would be the right fit for me.

Hopes and plans? Professionally, I hope to continue and grow my role here at NDHB and contribute to my current programmes and any future projects that arise. Personally, my husband and I plan to – in the next couple of years – buy a few acres, plant some fruit trees, maybe get a few chickens...

Tell us a bit about yourself: I was born and raised in Whangarei before moving to Auckland for tertiary study. I spent the last eight years in India before returning home a few months ago. I have been married for 9 years and have two pet dogs that my husband I and rescued in India and brought along with us to New Zealand. My hobbies (when I get time!) include reading, gardening and baking.

Health Literacy and Diabetes Patient Education Materials

Diabetes is a complex disease and there is a lot for patients and families to understand.

The recent Ministry of Health publication, Quality Standards for Diabetes Care Toolkit 2014 (www.health.govt.nz/publication/quality-standards-diabetes-care-toolkit-2014), includes four standards relating to basic care, self-management and education.

The first standard reads:

"People with diabetes should receive high-quality structured self-management education that is tailored to their individual and cultural needs. They and their families/whānau should be informed of, and provided with, support services and resources that are appropriate and locally available."

Patient education materials used well and judiciously play a really important role in diabetes education.

This article contains a number of prompts for health professionals to think about when using patient education materials.

1. Are they readers?

Some health professionals think that people who don't read, can't read. But there is a big difference. There are a large number of New Zealanders who choose not to read, not because they can't but because it is not their thing. They prefer to get information in different ways - either from television, family and friends, or from Facebook or websites (and they don't see these last two as reading).

So, ask your patient "Do you like to read written information like this or do you prefer pictures that show you information?"

You may still give them the pamphlet because it has good visuals that help reinforce what you are saying.

2. Never give out education material without explaining:

- Why you are giving it.
- What pages are relevant (highlight key information or put post-its on the relevant pages).
- What you want the patient to do with the information.

At Workbase we always say it is the conversation that makes the difference. You can have the best patient education materials in the world, but if the health professional does not engage the patient and their whānau with the resource, it is a waste of time.

On the other hand, you can have poor education material that has been photocopied many times and is no longer good quality. Yet, with a really good conversation, that material becomes meaningful and important to the patient and their whānau.

3. Focus on visuals

Recently the Diabetes New Zealand magazine has had a number of articles with great visuals. Visuals help comprehension by creating a picture in the patient's mind. Later they can recall that visual in a way that they may not be able to recall a conversation with a health professional or the words in the patient education material.

4. Help people understand the textual cues

The Diabetes New Zealand book "Diabetes and Healthy Food Choices" uses a traffic light system which is explained on page 3. But if you open the book on pages 4 and 5 you need to explain the colours and the little icon at the top of the page.

5. Don't overwhelm with information

Health professionals are highly-motivated to share all the information they know but often it is just too much information for patients and whānau. In professional development, we use a 750ml water bottle to represent what health professionals know and point out that patients and whānau may only have a tea cup (250ml) capacity. If they are really unwell or stressed, it may only be a thimble! If you keep pouring in information, it washes away everything, including the information the patients and whānau heard in the first place. Cutting down the amount of information is not an easy thing to do so here are some helpful hints.

- Find out what patients and whānau already know:
"Tell me what you already know about your diabetes."
- Based on that information, think about what are the three pieces of information this patient and whānau need at this time. This means reduce the amount in your water bottle to match their cup/thimble.
- At the end, check you have been clear:
"We talked about three things today so can you tell me what those things are and I will listen to make sure I was clear."

Kia kaha



Susan Reid works for Workbase, a health literacy organisation, and has been working with the Northland DHB, Te Tai Tokerau PHO and three primary care practices in relation to health literacy and Type 2 diabetes. During 2014, Susan has written a regular article for Prescribe detailing the progress of the project.

It's About Caring, Not Just Counting

The new integrated patient safety software system DATIX went live across Northland DHB this month.

A clinical risk management improvement, DATIX supports the management of adverse events (incidents), complaints, the patient experience and safety alerts.

Chief medical officer Dr Mike Roberts says a major improvement with this system is the shift in focus.

"It is about caring, not just counting. DATIX provides much better visibility of adverse events across the whole organisation. It also supports a timely response to events and will help to ensure that where changes need to be made, this is done quickly and the change is sustained."



DATIX project team – Ayshea Green, Carol Thompson, Cristina Rood, Christine McKerrow and Karen Ludgate.

Implementation of DATIX is one of the outcomes of the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Review that was undertaken in October 2013. The review took a comprehensive look at the DHBs safety and quality systems with a key focus on improving patient experience.

"We are constantly implementing measures that aim to reduce the risks of patient harm and continually striving to deliver high-quality patient care, safely," said Dr Roberts.

"Having smart intelligence and focusing on improving organisational systems means that if mistakes do happen we learn from these and prevent others from doing the same thing."

Enriching and Embedding Our Values Campaign

We have made significant progress towards improving the health and wellbeing of our people and achieving a healthier Northland. One of our greatest achievements is the development of a Patient Safety and Quality Improvement culture. To achieve “a healthier Northland”, we need to provide safe, high-quality care to all our patients. Hence, we worked with our clinical leaders to agree the terms of reference for an in-depth external Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Review, which we commissioned in October 2013 and completed in April 2014.

The Northland Health Services Plan, a five-year strategic plan with a 20 year horizon, provides strategic direction to the wider Northland health sector. It has a triple aim of improved population health, improved patient experience and financial sustainability. The Northland District Health Board is committed to becoming a leader in the delivery of truly patient and family centred care. Achieving this will contribute to all three aims because we know a positive patient experience leads to better recovery from illness, better health outcomes, a better workplace and more efficient services.

To help us in becoming a centre of excellence in patient and family centred care, we are launching a campaign - Enriching and Embedding Our Values.

- *Enriching* is not about what we do, but how we do it, and how that makes our patients and families feel
- *Enriching* is about who we are - our values, our culture and our behaviours
- *Enriching* is about making sure that, alongside meeting our service targets, we meet our patients' and families expectations for a kind, safe and excellent experience too.

We recently analysed 450 compliments that patients and families have taken the time to write and send in to us about the great care that our teams have provided for them. They say we are caring, excellent, helpful, professional and kind. This is the quality of care we all aspire to. Care that's driven not just by clinical quality, but by the values we all bring in to work each day - patient and family centred care.



But we all know, from complaints and from things we see in our services that we don't consistently provide this level of care. A recent analysis of 161 complaints showed the things we need to change to be more patient and family centred.



This month we are launching a listening campaign called Enriching and Embedding Our Values. To understand what values-led care, patient and family centred care looks like to the people we serve and the people we work with. So we can see it, notice it, appreciate it, and support each other to deliver it more consistently.

There are lots of ways for everyone to get involved:

- **a values survey** for staff to describe what our values look like in day-to-day interactions with patients and families and with each other. You can take part now on this link www.surveymonkey.com/r/NDHBvalues
- **patient listening events** called 'In Your Shoes' where patients will sit with staff and talk about their experiences in our care – the good and the bad.
- **staff listening events** to understand what it's like 'In OUR Shoes' working here.

As a member of staff here, your voice is important. We invite everyone to complete the survey, and volunteer to attend the patient listening events and the staff 'in Our Shoes' sessions. We will be reducing activity during the week of March 9, when the sessions will be held, to enable as many people as possible to take part. The details of all the sessions are shown below. Please email values@northlanddhb.org.nz to register to attend one.

If you or a member of your family has been a patient with us, then there is a patient survey too at www.surveymonkey.com/r/NDHBcare; (for patients); and we'd love them to take part in the patient listening sessions.

With your views, input and energy, we can get a really clear view of what person and family centred care looks like in our day-to-day work. By really living up to our values we can receive even more compliments.

Take part in our listening events.

In Your Shoes

For patients to talk to staff about their experience in our care.

Mon	March 9	11.30am – 1.30pm	Whangarei Hospital
Tues	March 10	9am – 11am	Kaitia Hospital
Tues	March 10	5.30pm – 7.30pm	Bay of Islands Hospital
Wed	March 11	9.30am – 11.30am	Dargaville Hospital
Wed	March 11	4.30pm – 6.30pm	Whangarei Hospital
Thur	March 12	11am – 1pm	Whangarei Hospital

(Staff should arrive 30 minutes before start time)

In Our Shoes

For staff to talk about how we can improve your experience

Mon	March 9	2.30pm – 4pm	Whangarei Hospital
Tues	March 10	12pm – 1.30pm	Kaitiāia Hospital
Tues	March 10	3.30pm – 5pm	Bay of Islands Hospital
Wed	March 11	12.30pm – 2pm	Dargaville Hospital
Fri	March 13	10.30am – 12pm	Whangarei Hospital

There are places for 240 staff at In Your Shoes and 500 at In Our Shoes.

Everyone is welcome.

To register email values@northlanddhd.org.nz

Enriching and Embedding our **VALUES**



Northland DHB's Public and Population Health Unit encourages Northlanders and those visiting the region this summer to take all possible precautions with their sexual health.

Social interaction is all part of the season. New faces and new experiences pepper our holiday experiences. Simple precautions can assist us in ensuring these experiences are not unpleasant or unnecessarily stressful. Often, in the heat of the moment, people find themselves being caught unprepared, so taking the time to plan ahead for all possible scenarios, is, not only smart, but will ensure a fun, safe and healthy summer.

This includes taking time to visit your doctor, the Northland DHB 123 Sexual Health Clinic, or your nearest Family Planning Clinic for a sexual health check and to ensure you have a good supply of condoms and/or other contraception. Don't forget to ask any questions you may have - all information is confidential. Be clear on instructions of use for any contraception, to ensure you are protected.

Ensuring your safety is worth taking the time to prepare - using a condom when having sex is best to protect yourself and others from STI's and unplanned pregnancies.



Remember the 3-P's and be protected this summer:

PLAN - be prepared

- During the summer holidays plan ahead for all situations

PACK - condoms/contraception

- Have a good supply of condoms/contraception with you when heading out for the night or a weekend away
- If you need condoms/contraception, visit your nearest 123 Sexual Health or Family Planning Clinic
- Remember condoms should be kept in a cool dry place away from direct sunlight

PROTECT - from STI's and unplanned pregnancies

- Condoms are your only protection from STI's
- Always use a condom when having sex to protect you and others from STI's and unplanned pregnancies.
- Follow correct instructions when using condoms/contraceptives to ensure you protect yourself and others.

Healthy Relationships

Communication is a key part to building a healthy relationship. The first step is making sure you both want and expect the same things - being on the same page is very important. The following tips can help you create and maintain a healthy relationship:

- **Speak Up.** In a healthy relationship, if something is bothering you, it's best to talk about it instead of holding it in.
- **Respect Your Partner.** Your partner's wishes and feelings have value. Let your significant other know you are making an effort to keep their ideas in mind. Mutual respect is essential in maintaining healthy relationships.
- **Compromise.** Disagreements are a natural part of healthy relationships, but it's important that you find a way to compromise if you disagree on something. Try to solve conflicts in a fair and rational way.
- **Be Supportive.** Offer reassurance and encouragement to your partner. Also, let your partner know when you need their support. Healthy relationships are about building each other up, not putting each other down.
- **Respect Each Other's Privacy.** Just because you're in a relationship, doesn't mean you have to share everything and constantly be together. Healthy relationships require space. ♥

Healthy Boundaries

Creating boundaries is a good way to keep your relationship healthy and secure. By setting boundaries together, you can both have a deeper understanding of the type of relationship that you and your partner want. Boundaries are not meant to make you feel trapped or like you're "walking on eggshells." Creating boundaries is not a sign of secrecy or distrust - it's an expression of what makes you feel comfortable and what you would like or not like to happen within the relationship.

Remember, healthy boundaries shouldn't restrict your ability to:

- Go out with your friends without your partner
- Participate in activities and hobbies you like
- Not have to share passwords to your email, social media accounts or phone
- Respect each other's individual likes and needs. ♥

