



# THE PULSE

*the newsletter of the Taranaki District Health Board*

**NEW MEET AND GREET SERVICE  
TONY RYALL'S VISIT  
HIQ'S 5TH BIRTHDAY**



## Comments from CEO Tony Foulkes



Tony Foulkes  
Chief Executive

This edition of The Pulse includes a wealth of examples of celebrating the achievements and contributions of many people to the Taranaki health sector, past and present, combined

with the opportunity to welcome a number of key new members to the team.

These combined with the stories on a sample of the initiatives going on to improve the service and experience for patients and visitors are an indication of the great work that continues to be done by so many people in a challenging environment.

There are a lot of changes underway at a national level in our health system to ensure it is better prepared to respond to the economic reality we face. These have to proceed together with ongoing effort and willingness at a local level to look at doing things differently in order

to continue to offer access to good health care for our community.

The local PHOs are busy working with others from outside Taranaki after selection as part of two of nine 'expressions of interest' supported nationally to develop a business case to speed up the implementation of the New Zealand Primary Health Care Strategy. It is important that hospital and community based clinicians take the opportunity to input and comment on any proposed changes, through this national process with tight timeframes.

It is really exciting to see the concept design stage of Project Maunga completed, after a tremendous contribution by user groups and staff in affected areas, working together with the design team. The pictures look great and really help to visualise a facility our community will be proud of. Whilst the detailed design continues next year we'll also have the challenge of reprioritising the services for and content of any Stage 2 business case that is more realistic in the economic environment.

The Hon Tony Ryall, Minister of Health, was pleased with progress to date on the project and also really enjoyed the opportunity to talk with a range of staff around Base Hospital during his recent visit.

The Minister has a keen focus on DHB's performance against the Government's six health targets, which were publicly reported recently. Whilst only a snapshot of the wider range of important activity that goes on, they do provide an indication to our community on how we are going compared to the targets we set. The sound progress in most areas is a good indication of our intention to meet the targets in the next year.

Thank you to everyone who has played a part in the Taranaki health service over the last year, and very best wishes for the holiday season and 2010 to you and your families. A special acknowledgement and thanks to those working to provide services and support to the community during this time.

## Board and Advisory Committee Updates

### Board Update – November

- The consolidated financial result at end of first quarter is \$697k, which is better than planned
- Hospital Services remain in deficit, offset by surpluses in the funder, governance and administrative arms
- The new National Health Board structure was outlined including recommendations from the Ministerial Review Group
- The Public Health Strategic Plan was adopted
- The 21 DHB's Year in Review Report was presented illustrating the collaborative achievements for the year ending June 30 2009

### Hospital Advisory Meeting – November

- The financial result for year-to-date is \$71,000 better than budgeted
- Presentations to ED have increased by 7% compared to last year
- Ambulance Service funding has been confirmed by NASO towards employing three additional ambulance staff and volunteer education
- The Allied Health review implementation phase has commenced
- Project Maunga user groups are meeting and progressing with design principles
- Model of Care implementation for Hawera Hospital continues – a proposed model of staffing is out for consultation with staff

### Community & Public Health/ Disability Support Advisory Committees – October

- Project Splice is underway with an independent review of current services
- The draft Te Kawau Mara, Taranaki Maori Health Strategy was endorsed by the committees
- A review of the Memorandum of Understanding between Sport Taranaki and Taranaki DHB was accepted

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# A Day in the Life of

## A Telephone Operator



■ It's all go for the Taranaki DHB telephone operators in the switchboard room at Base.

The telephone operators at Taranaki Base Hospital answer between 4000 and 5000 calls a day - but that's not all they do.

The 12 part-time and full-time operators have a heap of other tasks to keep them busy between the hundreds of calls that come through the switchboard.

They are based behind the main reception at Base Hospital but deal with calls coming from Hawera Hospital and Stratford Health Centre numbers, as well as from internal lines and emergency calls from Fonterra.

The switchboard room is a hive of activity, with call lights flashing almost non-stop during the day. There are three operators on duty during office hours and two the rest of the time.

Calls work on a queuing system, with the longest wait getting priority.

It helps to have a good sense of humour in this job. Callers have been known to ring to find out the time, or the rugby score from a game they've missed.

Sandy Lockwood, who has worked as a Taranaki DHB telecommunications operator for 27 years, says they can usually find the answers to most queries or put them on to someone who can help.

She says it sometimes takes a while to find out what exactly people want, or who they need to talk to. "Patience and good listening skills are essential. A crystal ball would help too," she laughs.

Operators need to be compassionate, as callers can be distressed when they ring. They could be nervous about an upcoming appointment or worried about a family member who has been admitted to hospital.

Sandy says it's comforting for them when a person answers their call rather than a recorded message.

But it's not all about answering phone calls. Other duties include monitoring alarms and security cameras, processing death certificates, data entry, long-run photocopying, putting together surgical information packs and booking the overnight units.

The night shift staff do more of the administration work as the phones are quieter then.

Among the alarms monitored are the cardiac arrest alerts, which come from the Emergency Department and Intensive Care Unit. Staff trigger the alarms when a patient goes into cardiac arrest and it's the operators job to alert the doctors. The hospital

emergency number 777 also goes directly to the operators.

The other alarms monitored are for essential services such as freezers, chillers and emergency power.

The operators say it's a varied job. "You never know what each day is going to bring. There's a lot of multitasking."

It takes four weeks to train new operators on the basic workings of the department. "There's more to it than most people realise."

Many of the operators have been with the organisation for a long time and have a good knowledge of the hospital. "We need to know where all the areas are and what they do," the operators say.

The operators have a couple of pointers for staff. Please email them ([operators@tdhb.org.nz](mailto:operators@tdhb.org.nz)) if a staff member is new or leaves - the operators need up-to-date details. And leave a message when you call someone from a Taranaki DHB phone number. Many people ring the switchboard when the main DHB number shows as a missed call on their phones. But extension numbers don't show and it's one query the operators can't help with.

# HIQ Celebrates Fifth Birthday



**From left: Susan Zhang, Jo Neal, Cheng Xiao, and Patrick Mulligan, have been with HIQ since its inception five years ago. Absent is Darren Douglass.**

After five years operating as a joint venture with Capital and Coast DHB, HIQ is now solely focused on improving IT services at Taranaki DHB.

HIQ was created in 2004, when the two DHBs set up a five-year agreement to work together to deliver IT services. The joint venture allowed them to share resources, expertise, experience and the costs of information technology, infrastructure and systems.

The two boards have now decided to focus on the IT needs of their own DHBs. HIQ has become a fully owned subsidiary of Taranaki DHB, with the head office in Taranaki and an office in Wellington.

HIQ's focus will be to support Taranaki DHB as it faces considerable challenges in providing information services to its stakeholders.

HIQ Transition Manager Darrin Hackett says there is a need to contain costs and to make the most effective and efficient use of limited resources.

He says HIQ has several employees who were around at the formation of the joint venture, and are now contributing to the remodelled organisation.

These staff members have provided a consistent contribution to HIQ and its customers, Darrin says. "There has also been a steady influx of talented employees who are keen to make

a difference in the way health services are delivered using information technology."

He says the next five years will be full of challenges and change. "HIQ and its staff are looking forward to being a key part of delivering on that need across the health sector." HIQ has a service delivery model that allows other DHBs, Primary Health Organisations and health service providers to develop shared business services and clinical services arrangements. Implementing an IT system for improving health care for the elderly, frail and disabled is an example of HIQ collaboration across the health sector.

Since the restructuring of HIQ in July, the newly focused project team has tackled many other projects.

They include a new bar-coded system in stores, an IT system for school dental therapists, a medicines reconciliation project, viewing stations to replace traditional X-ray films and a wireless upgrade in Hawera and Base hospitals.

HIQ is also upgrading the MHSmart System used by the Mental Health Department, the Cognos reporting platform for operational reports, electronic discharge summaries and implementing a new service delivery tool to address the needs of Taranaki DHB and primary care users.

Another project is the Referral Management/ACC project, which will significantly improve the way referrals are done within the DHB, and to and from external health providers.

# Show Raises Funds for Equipment



■ Staff, children, their parents and members of the Egmont Lions with the toys donated to the Child Health Outpatient clinics.

Egmont Lions' World of Festival Magic raises funds for equipment for children using hospital services.

Egmont Lions president Graham Whittle said the magic show has run since 1988 and is used to raise funds for the community.

This year the Heart Children Taranaki received \$5000 and the Taranaki DHB for Child Health received \$5000 also.

"It has a two-fold gain for it achieves pleasure for the children who would not normally get to see a show like this and the money raised goes back

in to the community," Mr Whittle says.

Clinical Nurse Manager Child Health Leonie Mercer says it is wonderful to be in a position to purchase educational equipment that aids developmental learning in children using the service.

The worthy beneficiary of this kind donation is the Child Health Outpatient clinics. "We have focused on educational toys and equipment for the three clinic rooms as the other toys were old and outdated. It has been a long time since we've had any new equipment for the clinic rooms and it is very much appreciated," Leonie says.

## Sad loss

This year, Taranaki sadly lost two women who were leaders in their medical fields and dedicated to helping others. Eye specialist Dr Heather MacIntosh died in August, and Paediatrician Dr Robin Fancourt in October.

**Dr Fancourt** was a strong advocate for children who were the victims of all forms of abuse.

She recognised the impact that early life experiences had on the child's developing brain and how that affected their life course.

Born in Dunedin and growing up in Taranaki, she returned to work as a paediatrician for Taranaki DHB in the mid 1980s. Her work has been recognised nationally and internationally.

Dr Fancourt founded the Brainwave Trust Aotearoa and co-founded Doctors for Sexual Abuse Care. She was an author and researcher. In 2003, she was made a Companion of NZ Order of Merit for her services to children.

Dr John Doran, a Paediatrician himself, said Dr Fancourt was committed to helping children. "Robin was passionate in her advocacy for children and a pioneering leader in her field. The key areas she was involved with will continue to flourish because of the vision she had."

Dr Fancourt's family has a long association with medicine. Her husband, Michael Fancourt, is a senior surgeon at Taranaki DHB and two of their three children have gone into medicine. Dr Fancourt's brother is a GP and her father was a pathologist.

**Dr MacIntosh** worked for Taranaki DHB for more than 20 years as an ophthalmologist and was holding clinics right up until her sudden death.

The much respected eye specialist was a founding member of the Save Sight Society. The society's aims include raising public awareness of the causes of blindness, encouraging early detection of preventable blindness in children, and improving the quality and access to eye care in New Zealand.

The society was one of Dr MacIntosh's passions. "She was a true leader and ahead of her time in some areas," TDHB Chief Medical Advisor John Doran said.

Dr Doran said Dr MacIntosh was a gentle, kind woman who was always willing to help her patients. "Heather was genuine and approachable, and always supported her colleagues in a very professional manner."

Taranaki DHB Deputy Chairman Dr Peter Catt told the Board that Dr MacIntosh was possibly the most universally loved and respected doctor in the community.

# Taranaki a Hit with New Arrival



■ James Alonzo

Taranaki DHB's new Obstetrician/ Gynaecologist has moved here all the way from Pennsylvania.

After investigating several opportunities throughout New Zealand, Dr Alonzo and his wife, Debra, relocated to New Plymouth.

"Of all the options available, something just drew us here," he says. "There is a real sense of community, the people are wonderful and I hope to be of benefit to the hospital and the women of Taranaki."

Dr Alonzo came from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he practiced for more than 20 years both in solo private practice and with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre (UPMC) in a university group practice.

He was a Clinical Instructor and Associate Clinical Professor of Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Reproductive Sciences at Magee

Women's Hospital of the University of Pittsburgh. He was also Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, as well as Division Chief of Gynaecology at Shadyside Hospital, a tertiary hospital.

Dr Alonzo's interests are in all areas of Gynaecologic Surgery with a focus in minimally invasive endoscopic gynaecology and operative hysteroscopy.

For the past two years, Dr Alonzo worked as an administrative and clinical consultant for UPMC with a project in Qatar. While working in the Middle East he developed an interest in international medical practice and began exploring opportunities of practicing in different parts of the world.

# Geriatrician Impressed by Region



■ Henriette Badenhorst

Henriette Badenhorst had high expectations when she arrived in Taranaki to start a new job as a geriatrician - and she hasn't been disappointed.

She'd heard about Womad and that New Plymouth had received awards for being the best place to live. But she had never visited the region before moving here and is now enjoying the outdoor activities on offer.

Dr Badenhorst, who previously worked at Tauranga Hospital, started working for Taranaki DHB's Older People's Health and Rehabilitation Service (OPHRS) in November.

The service provides a range of

services for the elderly and people with age related conditions such as strokes.

The OPHRS team visits wards and clients' homes, and work closely with other departments including Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Mental Health.

Dr Badenhorst says geriatric medicine has a multidisciplinary focus which means a range of areas, including physiology, psychology and sociology, are looked at when helping patients live independent lives. "We take a holistic approach."

She says people are living and staying healthy for longer than ever before. "Eighty is the new seventy."

# Fellowship a Surprise for Chief Pharmacist



■ Elizabeth Plant

Elizabeth Plant's contribution to the pharmacy sector has been recognised by her peers.

The TDHB Chief Pharmacist has been made a Fellow of the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand (PSNZ).

"This is huge for me, and something I've always aspired to," Elizabeth says. "The Fellowship is one of the most prestigious accolades because it's something your peers bestow on you."

Elizabeth is the President of the PSNZ, but had no idea about the fellowship. "I was nominated by the local branch (of PSNZ) and that means a lot to me."

This year, three nominations were considered and endorsed by the Panel of Fellows. The award recognises outstanding contributions to the pharmacy sector.

Elizabeth will be presented with her award at the PSNZ Symposia in April 2010.

Elizabeth thanked the DHB for its support. "I am very grateful to the Taranaki DHB for allowing me the opportunity to be involved in a number of national committees. It's enabled me to grow personally and professionally."

Elizabeth registered as a pharmacist 28 years ago and has worked for the DHB for the past 14. She worked at many of Taranaki's community pharmacies as a locum previously.



## Nintendo Wii Part of Rehabilitation

■ Roger Bryant demonstrates how to use the Nintendo Wii, as Occupational Therapist Tania Smellie looks on.

Video games are speeding up the rehabilitation process for patients at Taranaki Base Hospital.

Better known for its entertainment value, the Nintendo Wii is also proving useful in helping patients' recovery process.

A Wii video game console was among \$5000 worth of equipment donated to Taranaki DHB by the Avant-Garde Lodge division of the Masonic Trust.

Roger Bryant, a member of the lodge, was a patient in Ward One. When he was discharged he wanted to do something for the ward and therapists and convinced the lodge to use

available funds to purchase equipment for the therapists. Occupational Therapy Advisor Jacqui Herrett says patients and occupational therapists have welcomed the new equipment.

She says the patients are having great fun playing the Wii, which is a new concept to many of them.

The Wii simulates sports and activities such as tennis, bowling and balance board. "The gaming system allows patients to work in a virtual environment that's safe, fun and motivational," she says.

Research shows the Wii can be successful in rehabilitating people recovering from strokes, broken bones, surgery or who

have Parkinson's disease or cerebral palsy. Unlike traditional video games, which only use the thumbs, the Wii requires using the whole body. It tests balance, hand-eye coordination, visual perception and sequenced movement.

"It's a huge treatment tool from an occupational therapy perspective." Mrs Herrett says.

Occupational therapists work with children and adults of all ages, whose difficulties may be congenital or the result of an accident, illness, ageing or lifestyle. They actively engage people in activities to promote, regain or maintain health and wellbeing.

# Impressive Contribution to Mental Health



■ From left: Sandie Gray, Donna Dent, Jan Fleming, Jan Whayman, Lynne Kendall, Pamela McCarty and Vicki Magill. Absent is Jan Stockwell.

Eight staff members from Mental Health have had their long association with the DHB recognised.

An afternoon tea was held to acknowledge their service, which ranges from 24 to 34 years.

## They are:

**Jan Stockwell (34 years)**  
Psychiatric Assistant - Te Puna Waiora

**Vicki Magill (30 years)**  
Team Leader Crisis Team & Acute Home Based Treatment Team

**Lynne Kendall (30 years)**  
Community Mental Health Nurse

**Pamela McCarty (27 years)**  
Staff Nurse - Te Puna Waiora

**Jan Fleming (26 years)**  
Psychologist - Child, Adolescent Mental Health

**Donna Dent (25 years)**  
Community Mental Health Nurse

**Jan Whayman (25 years)**  
Ward Clerk, Te Puna Waiora

**Sandie Gray (24 years)**  
Community Mental Health Nurse

Acute Services Unit Manager Ronel Marais says their commitment over the years is much appreciated.

"Mental Health isn't an easy place to work. There have been many changes and they have been at the forefront of these."

Each recipient was presented with a certificate and a Pohutukawa.

Te Puawaiwhero is the name of the second Maori Mental Health and Addiction Strategic Framework 2008-2015. Te Puawaiwhero literally translated means the red blossom. The blossom is a metaphor for a coming of age through the cycle of growth and development, including enduring environmental stresses, to ensure maturity and leadership.

# Nurses' Long Service Acknowledged



■ Ward 2 nurses Alison Brown and Sue Hughes.

Two nurses in Child Health Services have celebrated a combined 60 years' service to Taranaki DHB.

Alison Brown has worked for the DHB for 35 years, and Sue Hughes for 25 years.

An afternoon tea was held in Ward 2 to celebrate the milestone.

Alison started out as a hospital aide in 1974, working night shift for 12 years in Ward 4. She later became an enrolled nurse and eventually joined the children's ward at Base Hospital as a staff nurse.

Alison thanked the DHB for its support over the years, and encouraged nurses to take ownership of the profession's future. "We need

to be part of it and lead it," she said.

Sue said Ward 2 staff members were a great team. "I can honestly say I like my job."

Colleagues acknowledged the women's contribution.

Director of Nursing Kerry-Ann Adlam said there had been significant changes in nursing during their careers. "Thank you for the service that you offer," she told them. "It doesn't go unnoticed and I hope it continues."

Ward 2's Jason Burns said Alison and Sue had a wealth of knowledge they were happy to share with other staff. "It's a privilege and an honor to work with both of you," he said.

# Scholarship Awarded to Health Promoter



## ■ Marnie Reinfelds

Taranaki DHB Health Promoter Marnie Reinfelds has been awarded a \$15,000 scholarship to undertake research into how

Maori women can be better supported to breastfeed their babies.

The Health Research Council of New Zealand scholarship will help Marnie complete her Masters in Public Health.

Marnie said she was flattered to be awarded the scholarship. "I feel that the scholarship validates the research that I want to do - it's a prestigious organisation. The selection panel consisted of people I look up to, they're my heroes."

Marnie plans to follow in the footsteps of her mother, Mahinekura Reinfelds, a well-known Taranaki advocate of Maori health and wellbeing who died in 2007.

Mahinekura was involved with a project that had previously received funding from the Health Research Council. "My long-term goal is to continue my mother's research," Marnie said.

The scholarship will go towards costs associated with her research, which will take a year to complete.

The research will include interviewing Maori women, and their whanau, about what community support they need to breastfeed.

Marnie, who works in the Taranaki DHB Health Promotion Unit, said her own experience of breastfeeding prompted her interest in carrying out the research. She breastfed her two young children until they were six months old. "I would've continued for longer if I knew then what I know now."

The Health Research Council of New Zealand is the Crown agency responsible for managing the Government's investment in public good health research.

# Staff Support Samoan Tsunami Victims

Taranaki DHB staff member Shirley Kelsen is a regular visitor to Samoa and had been to the idyllic islands just before the devastating tsunamis hit.

This year, she spent two weeks at Lulu Manu Beach. "When the news of the tsunamis was broadcast and we discovered that our patch of paradise was obliterated we all felt total shock," Shirley said.

She was concerned about the locals she knew and the impact the disaster would have on their lives. "I felt I had to do something for the people of Samoa who have taken us into their hearts over the years."

Lulu Manu resident Lydia Sini To'omalatai wrote to Shirley with news the place where she had stayed during her recent holiday had been torn to



## ■ Shirley Kelsen, far right, with some of the staff who dressed up for Samoa day.

pieces in the tsunami. "I can't believe the devastation this natural disaster has done to my heart and family," Lydia said.

It was Shirley's idea to hold a Samoa Day at Taranaki DHB. Staff dressed up for the occasion and raised \$970.20 for

the Pacific Co operation Tsunami Relief Fund.

The local Samoan community sent two representatives to Base Hospital for Samoa Day. They appreciated the support from staff.

# Patients Grateful

Patients often appreciate the efforts of our staff. Here's a selection of feedback from the in/outpatient surveys received in November.

"Was so very pleased with all staff who went out of their way to help with any requests made. All had a happy attitude, and I thank every single one of them."

"Having had many visits to the hospital over the years, I can honestly say I've never had any complaints. From the surgeons down, all has been great. Near and far, I've often had the chance to praise our NP hospital."

"Very impressed with Hawera Hospital,

both ED and the ward. Very friendly staff, nothing any trouble."

"I was impressed by the fantastic care and attention given to me by Hawera staff – always there when you needed them. They are all dedicated to the job. No way can I complain, the service is wonderful."

"I was impressed by the care of the doctors and nurses and the people bringing me meals. You all are to be congratulated by the concern and care you all have shown to me." ICU

"The care, sensitivity and consideration for my family and baby shown by the midwives was just amazing."

"How helpful and friendly the staff were. They took time to introduce themselves and I was always aware who was available to help each shift. The staff were supportive of my needs, and took my questions and concerns seriously, and offered good advice and information as needed. Great job!"

"Very efficient, confident (ED) staff. All were friendly, and I felt safe and well looked after. No waiting for CT scan. All of the staff should be applauded for their service, and I thank them very much for the great care I was given."

# Lending a Helping Hand



■ John Barnes has returned to Taranaki DHB as our first meet and greet volunteer.

Lost looking patients and visitors at Base Hospital have a friendly face to point them in the right direction thanks to a new meet and greet service.

Recently retired John Barnes, who worked in the Taranaki DHB Quality and Risk Unit for 10 years, is our first meet and greet volunteer.

Instead of leaving the organisation, he's returned to volunteer his services after seeing similar concepts at other hospitals.

John patrols the corridors on Tuesdays and Thursdays, between 10am and 12noon. He may soon be joined by other meet and greet volunteers from the Red Cross.

The hospital is set out on different levels, making it difficult for some people to find their way around, John says. "There are always people who need directions, or help with ordering a taxi or getting a wheelchair."



■ From left: Rosemary Law (dietician), Dr Stuart Bramhall (psychiatrist), Dr Daniele Lonchamp (paediatrician), Julie McLean (nurse therapist), Alan Guy (clinical psychologist) and Jan Fleming (psychologist).

A recent training day symbolised the beginning of a more active phase of information sharing and coordinating care for eating disorder sufferers and treaters. There has been a Midland initiative to provide more specialised training and care for eating disorders in line with Australasian guidelines. Locally, Jan Fleming and Alan Guy are in liaison roles tasked

with providing training to hospital and community services. They will also provide coordination of more complex cases with staff including medical wards. "We enjoy some years' experience in working with these groups of patients and look forward to our roles with staff and community growing in the New Year," Alan says.

# Let's Make Holiday Season one to Remember



There's been a lot of great discussion and debate this year about how to reduce the harm that comes from drinking too much alcohol.

The Taranaki DHB Health Promotion Unit is encouraging people to keep thinking about the role alcohol plays

in our lives and the way we socialise when planning celebrations and gatherings this Christmas and New Year.

"At this time of the year there are a lot of things for people to think about, from who's coming round, to how much they have to budget to pay for it all," says Nedina Hohaia, Health Promoter from the Alcohol Related Harm team. "To make sure the holiday season is the best possible time for everyone, it's also important to think about whether or not there will be alcohol, and if there is, how we can manage that so that everyone's safe and happy."

"Ultimately, we want people in Taranaki to be able to look back on this Christmas and New Year's Eve with a smile and plenty of good memories," she says.

For many people this holiday season may be harder because of difficult financial times, so it's even more

important to get back to basics and celebrate in ways that reflect what this time of the year is truly about – spending time with people you care about. "Looking after people around alcohol is one way you can make sure everyone has a good Christmas and no one is hurt because of over-indulging," Nedina says.

The Health Promotion Unit suggests hosts offer non-alcoholic drinks and substantial food and to make sure guests can get home safely.

"Planning ahead can help make sure everyone has a great time without crossing the line and drinking too much, but it's also important to keep an eye on people while you're with them and stop serving them alcohol before they go too far," said Nedina.

If you're worried about your drinking or the drinking of someone you care about call the Alcohol Drug Helpline on 0800 787 797.

## Paediatrician's Efforts Appreciated



■ Alan Parsons, with his wife Pat Boulton, was given a voucher for a scenic helicopter ride as a token of appreciation.

Dr Alan Parsons says team work and the contribution of others has been an important factor in his work over the years.

A special event was held for the paediatrician in October to thank him for his service to the Taranaki DHB and the community.

New Plymouth Mayor Peter Tennent and former New Plymouth MP Harry Duynhoven, along with past and present colleagues of Alan, were among the guests at the Tukapa Rugby Clubrooms.

They spoke about their experiences working with Alan, and paid tribute to his commitment to the young people of Taranaki. Alan

was presented with a voucher for a scenic helicopter ride.

Alan has dedicated his time to improving the health of local children since arriving in New Plymouth from the UK in 1983.

Alan said the event was a great gesture and much appreciated. He enjoyed catching up with the many people he had worked with in the hospital and community. "It's not about me, it's about team work and everybody else's contribution and their efforts."

# Teams Test Their Safety Knowledge

Staff are invited to enter a caption competition for the photo below, which shows the Public Health team at the Business House Challenge. The prize for the best caption is a New Plymouth injury Safe (NPIS) goodie bag and a home-baked morning tea for your team. Send entries to [Channa.Perry@tdhb.org.nz](mailto:Channa.Perry@tdhb.org.nz) by 8 January.

Two teams from Taranaki DHB were among several workplaces to take part in an inaugural Business House Safety Challenge organised by New Plymouth injury Safe for Safety Week 2009.

The competition, held at the Taranaki HSE Centre in New Plymouth, had a focus on home safety, encouraging participants to think about how they could transfer workplace safety knowledge through to the home. Participants tested their safety knowledge and skills in a range of fast-paced practical challenges on first aid, road safety, personal safety, home safety and chemical handling.

Activities included putting out a small kitchen fire, responding to an aggressive customer, dealing with a suspected heart attack and installing a child restraint into a car. Although



the DHB teams were beaten to the top spot, they found the exercise worthwhile and learnt a lot in the process.

Team members represented a number of DHB departments including Public Health, Planning & Funding, Quality & Risk, and Pathology.

Channa Perry, who co-ordinated the event, was pleased with how the first business challenge went. "Feedback has been excellent and highlights the strength of practical experience as a learning tool."

# Medical Officer of Health Returns Home



■ Penny Hutchinson

Taranaki's first full-time Medical Officer of Health says she enjoyed many highlights during the 16 months she spent in the region.

Dr Penny Hutchinson returned to Australia in October. A function was held in Barretts Lounge to farewell her.

Planning and Funding General Manager Sandra Boardman said it had been exciting having a full-time Medical Officer of Health for Taranaki.

Dr Hutchinson gave special thanks to the Maori Health Team, Public Health Nurses, Public Health Unit, Health Emergency Management Group and the Primary Health Organisations.

She said that during the swine flu pandemic the Health Protection Unit had demonstrated how well the team worked together.

Taranaki DHB is recruiting a new full-time Medical Officer of Health. Richard Hoskins will fulfill the role on a part-time basis in the interim.

- Dr Greg Simmons was appointed as the new Medical Officer of Health in November, and joins Taranaki DHB from the role of Chief Advisor Population Health (Ministry of Health). Prior to this he worked as Medical Officer of Health within the Auckland Public Health Service.

# Staff Join Campaign Against Violence



## ■ ED staff support White Ribbon Day.

Taranaki DHB staff wore t-shirts and white ribbons to support White Ribbon Day on 25 November.

Staff from the Emergency Department (Base and Hawera), the Children's Ward, Child & Adolescent Community Centre, Planning and Funding, Social Work, Paediatricians, the Executive Management Team all got behind the good cause.

TDHB Family Violence Intervention Programme Coordinator Nathalie Tiatia said she was proud to see so many staff getting involved. Family Violence is a serious health issue and a top priority for health providers.

The Taranaki DHB Family Violence Intervention Programme has developed a policy and procedures, systems and staff training on a brief intervention model for the health sector.

The Child & Adolescent Community Centre held a week-long promotion (23-27 November) against family violence to coincide with White Ribbon Day.

During the week there were activities including a visit by a Police dog and handler, craft activities, harakeke (flax) weaving, a display of Harley Davidson motorbikes and a hearing dog for the deaf and handler.



## Outstanding Customer Service Awards 2009

What a wonderful response to the organisation-wide invitation for nominations honouring Outstanding Customer Service Awards for 2009.

In all, 52 nominations were received for staff across a range of departments throughout the organisation.

Hawera Hospital manager Gill Campbell presented the five South Taranaki awards, with Hawera Orderly Colin Howatson's five nominations clearly identifying him as the organisation's supreme "Super Service Superstar". In recognition of his outstanding achievements and the profound effect his dedication and wonderful manner has on staff and patients alike, he was presented with a special prize.

Hospital Operations Manager Steve Berendsen presented 36 awards to Base staff. Orderly Kerry Poole, with four nominations and Human Resource's Linda Cox, with three, also featured highly. Most of us would readily agree that they are perfect examples of the best customer service possible – always smiling, always pleasant, and totally proactive in caring for staff and patients alike.

This opportunity to honour fellow staff members for their outstanding customer service skills has proved to be a popular and effective way to acknowledge staff who really live the motto "Customer Service - not just good, but very good". Check out the photo gallery of the certificate presentations on the staff intranet.

# Health Minister Tony Ryall Visits



■ Health Minister Tony Ryall visited Taranaki Base Hospital on 9 November 2009. The purpose of his visit was to be updated on the progress of Project Maunga. He had a tour of the hospital site, where he spoke to staff. Mr Ryall was keen to hear their thoughts about working at the hospital. He also took time to talk with patients. To view the full gallery of photos visit the TDHB website: [www.tdhb.org.nz](http://www.tdhb.org.nz).

## Volunteers' Afternoon Tea



Sue and Dave Gardner were among the volunteers who were thanked by Taranaki DHB at a special afternoon tea in November. The volunteers were from a range of organisations such as Meals on Wheels, Red Cross and Chaplaincy helpers.

The DHB appreciates all the hard work and many hours the volunteers devote to helping others in the hospital and the community.

# In Brief

## Café Furniture

The Patients and Staff Amenities Trust has granted further funds towards outdoor furniture for the cafe deck at Taranaki Base Hospital. Last year, the trust bought 10 chairs and two benches. This year, seven chairs, a table and an umbrella were purchased. The new outdoor furniture is in constant use by staff and visitors, and will be more durable than the current canvas chairs.

## Are You Publishing?

The hospital library is creating an online register of publications by people working at Taranaki DHB. If you have published a journal article or presented a paper at a conference then library staff want to know. They would also like posters to display in the library. Please send the library a copy of your work, citation, or a link and it will add it to the register. It must have been created while working at the DHB, not prior. Work by staff no longer working here, but created during their time at TDHB, would also be appreciated.

# Glittering Going Away



- Surgical Registrar Estella Johns was greeted on her last day of work in the Surgical Day Ward with a glittering going away surprise. Staff on the ward dressed up in shiny green wigs to bid her farewell, knowing it was her favourite colour.

# Farewell After 23 Years



- ED Receptionist Jan Dyer is farewelled after working at Hawera Hospital for 23 years. She was taken out for a surprise morning tea by Joy Farley, Wendy Langlands and Gillian Campbell. An afternoon tea was also held for her on her last day. The staff presented her with a patio table and chairs, flowers, gardening gloves, hand cream and watering can.

The ED nurses gave her a necklace and a past employee, Freny Adenwalla, who now lives in Auckland sent her a gift as well. Jan plans to spend more time with her husband, in the garden and catching up with family who are spread throughout the country.