

STAFF PROFILE ■ MEET PHILLIPA MACDONALD

My name is Phillipa MacDonald. I have lived in Central and South Taranaki all my life.

My nursing training was completed at Taranaki Polytechnic where I gained a diploma in Nursing. I started my nursing journey working in 1990 in Hāwera Hospital in the Medical Ward. Prior to starting at The Practice, I had worked at three General Practices and spent some time (when my children were young) working at Trinity Rest Home.

I have three adult children, all living here in Taranaki. My husband owns a rural delivery business.

I chose nursing as a career with the aim of making a difference in people's lives. Nursing can be a very challenging role and has changed a lot during my nursing career. Practice nursing covers the whole lifespan, and no two days are ever the same.

Outside of work you will find me at the local Hubfit Gym training for bodybuilding competitions, a sport I have recently taken up and it adds balance to my working days. I also enjoy spending time gardening at home and family time.



■ CELEBRATING OUR TEAM

We'd like to introduce you to the main roles of our kaimahi (staff). Each and every person in the team is essential in helping The Practice run smoothly. We are proud to work together, each as specialists in our roles, and interconnected as a team.

Receptionists and Administrators

This team are the people who greet you on arrival. They work in a range of duties, such as taking care of appointments, processing payments, fielding phone calls and taking care of enrolment paperwork.

Practice Manager

Mostly behind the scenes, the practice manager helps take care of staff needs, policies and paperwork to enable smooth running of the practice.

Practice Nurses

The practice nurse role involves appointments such as vaccinations, cervical smears, blood pressure checks and giving patient education, to name just a few. They also provide phone triage, which is a brief phone conversation with people who have on-the-day needs, to help them get the care they require.

Nurse Practitioners

Nurse practitioners are highly skilled health practitioners with advanced education (a minimum of a master's degree), clinical training and experience. They assess, diagnose and treat health problems for common and complex health conditions, and (something many of our patients appreciate) have a holistic approach that addresses the wider context of health.

General Practitioners

General practitioners are able to see people for almost any concern. They are trained to listen and observe and are able to pick up symptoms that you may have missed, then work with you to improve matters. They are skilled in making a diagnosis, and also know when and where to refer you if you require further investigations or treatment.

Cervical screening

Cervical cancer is one of the easiest cancers to prevent – as long as we detect the cell changes that cause it, early. And guess what? New Zealand has one of the best cervical screening programmes in the world to help you.

From 12 September 2023, the standard test for cervical screening (a “smear” test) will change to a human papillomavirus (HPV) test, with the option of self-testing.

This new screening can be done as a simple vaginal swab. Once available, those eligible can do this as a self-test at their STRHGP appointment.

Questions? Visit www.time to screen.nz for more information.

■ TRANSPORT OPTIONS

Need transport? Here are some local options.

Taranaki Regional Council Buses

- **The Connector bus** runs Hawera to New Plymouth return four times a day on weekdays. If you are travelling for an hospital appointment, you can ride for free. Contact 06 2789929 for bookings if you have a hospital appointment. If you are travelling for non-health related reasons, there is a charge. Contact 0800 266328 or www.trc.govt.nz
- The Southlink bus run between Waverley, Patea and Hawera on Tuesdays and Thursdays. For charge and timetable, contact 0800 221120 or www.trc.govt.nz



St John's Waka Ora Health Shuttle is available for people who have difficulty getting to their medical appointments because of health or mobility problems. This is a koha (donation) based service. Contact 0800 785646 or www.stjohn.org.nz

STOPS is a door-to-door passenger service in Hāwera. A wheelchair accessible vehicle is available. For charges or to book, please ring 06 2783933 or visit www.stops.co.nz

Cancer Society Volunteer Drivers are available for people who have cancer and need assistance to get to their appointments for treatment. Ring 06 7573006 or visit www.cancer.org.nz

■ AUTOMATIC PAYMENT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE

Times are tough and it's not always easy to keep up financially. If you can relate to this, you may prefer to pay a small amount regularly to chip away at your invoice. We appreciate even little payments that go towards anything outstanding. If you set up an automatic payment, please let us know and we will take you off the invoice reminder list. If you have any questions regarding your account, please email us on strhgp@tdhb.org.nz



Top payment tip – If you pay online, please always put a reference such as your Name or your Chart Number. This helps us allocate the payment to your account.

■ GETTING IN TOUCH AFTERHOURS

Our standard phone hours are from **8–4pm, Monday to Friday**.

If you need health assistance outside of our working hours, please phone our usual number (**278 1383 or 0800 225571**).

You will be transferred to our afterhours service, **Whakarongorau Aotearoa/NZ Telehealth Services**, who will be able to help.

For non-urgent matters, you are also welcome to email strhgp@tdhb.org.nz or message our admin team on the MyIndici app.