

From the Chairman



Our health centre is a very busy place. Even car parking is a challenge. When we extended our facilities with the Kaipara Medical Centre we ensured we complied with Council parking

requirements on site providing for 35 car parks. A number of these are designated for patients and Doctors of Kaipara Medical Centre and Waitemata Health staff. In the not too distant future we will need to designate some further car parks for midwives and expectant mothers by the Birthing Centre entrance and ramp which are an obvious priority. Please check the signs before you park and if you are able to use street side parking or parking behind the War Memorial Hall accessed from Porter Crescent please do. There is no short term solution for car parks on site or indeed in Helensville!

The Health Trust facilities on our strategic health site in Commercial Road are at capacity. We have been fully tenanted almost since our expansion in 2006. The Kaipara Medical Centre now employs six doctors and nine nurses and is the only medical practice in the Helensville rural district. Waitemata Health includes the Public and District Health Nurses, social workers, mental health and Maori health located in Te Puna O Te Ora. In addition, there are visiting clinicians – with regular clinics for Diabetes and Community Alcohol & Drugs (CADS) and appointments for paediatricians. LabTests also creates a lot of foot traffic ensuring we can have timely and convenient access for blood tests.

Over 50 midwives bring patients to Helensville Birthing Centre which has a staff of 15 rostered nurses. In addition, six midwives run their antenatal appointments from a specialist room. On average it is only closed two days per month. Staff are on call when there is nobody in the unit.

In the Alison McKenzie Community House our tenants include Mount Tabor Trust, Parent Aid, a Podiatrist and Chiropractor, Bay Audiology along with the Helensville Women & Family Centre. Parakai Health is going well and whilst it still has some capacity it is paying its way. The Health Trust of course has its own administration offices on site – this helps explain why we are so busy and car parking is at a premium.

This is an opportunity for me to acknowledge Eve Issott. You can't help but notice our lovely gardens as you stroll in. Eve has colour in our gardens throughout the year and she even takes the time to deliver lovely bunches of flowers (often scented) onto desks of some of our lucky staff each week. How good is that? On arriving at a Trust meeting this week she was still out there in the cool of the evening watering our gardens. Thank you Eve.

We have begun our next project – to design and build a suitable ramp to safely and comfortably transfer patients from the Kaipara Medical Centre to a waiting ambulance. Although the previous exit was signed off by St John's before construction, our timing coincided with the change of the ambulances and their much lower chassis rendering our original access useless. We hope to have this suitably addressed this year so that patients no longer have to be wheeled out through the waiting room which is not appropriate.



Eve Issott busy in the Birthing Centre garden.

We continue to work closely with many health service providers in our community. Some projects are starting to take shape and form towards building the well-being side of our health equation. For example, our application to be a participant in the Baby Friendly Community Initiative has been accepted. This programme will be funded by Waitemata Health and is an excellent fit with the Birthing Centre.

The localised rural health model we have in Helensville is increasingly being recognised for its success. This is because the bulk of our health funding available to our community is directed at local and convenient service delivery to people who need them. Our strategic health partnership and close working relationship with Waitemata Health has been and continues to be, an important part of our success.

Dianne Kidd



The new bath installed in the Birthing Centre.

Making a splash

In November during what we hoped would be a quiet month, the Birthing Centre closed down the delivery room for a week to install a new bath for water births.

The new bath is bigger and deeper than our original one and is insulated to ensure that the water remains warm for hours. Our old bath required topping up with extra hot water at regular intervals as it cooled down. Midwives report the water stays at the right temperature for up to two hours now.

The bath is used regularly for patients throughout labour and some choose to give birth in it. Already five babies have been born in the bath. Both midwives and mothers are delighted with this upgrade.