

From the Chairman



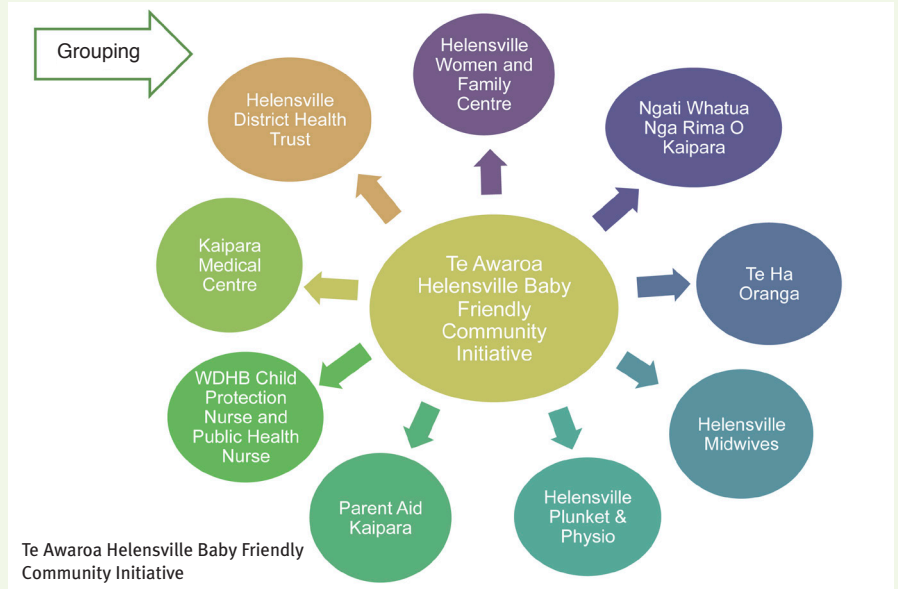
In my last newsletter I reported that our application to be a participant in the Baby Friendly Community Initiative had been accepted by Waitemata Health.

This is excellent news.

The vision of the Baby Friendly Community Initiative for Aotearoa New Zealand is 'the restoration of breast feeding as a cultural norm'. Our high success rate in helping young mothers to confidently leave the Birthing Centre exclusively breast feeding is one of the primary reasons we have been chosen to participate. This is testament to the outstanding specialist expertise our midwives have now developed.

This initiative will bring together a number of local health professionals and community groups who will attend workshops and in service sessions to increase their knowledge on breast feeding. This includes information about how to assist mothers to maintain breast feeding once they have left the hospital or Birthing Centre. As you can see in the graphic on the right, we have an impressive number of Helensville's Health team who have agreed to participate.

It is well documented that increasing the number of mothers in a community who breast feed for six months or more can have a positive effect on the health



of the breast fed children. These include: improved resistance against illness such as asthma, diarrhoea, respiratory tract infections and urinary tract infections; lower mortality rates in the first year of life; improved mental development and lower rates of cardiovascular disease in later life

The Trust is working towards further integrating health services in the area to meet its vision of Helensville being 'the healthiest rural community in New Zealand'.

It is anticipated that this will be the first of future health initiatives which will encourage groups of health professionals in Helensville to work together towards common goals for community health.

Do you know about the Community to Hospital Shuttle Service?

Waitemata runs a community to hospital shuttle service for Waitemata Health residents who are attending appointments at North Shore, Waitakere and Auckland Hospitals and the Greenlane Clinical Centre. There are charges made for this service, but children under five are free. Other passengers pay standard fares. For more information about fares and bookings phone 0800 809 342 OR 09 426 0918 Monday to Friday between 9.30am – 4pm. Bookings are essential and must be made two working days in advance.

Dianne Kidd



Barbara Ross

'Delicious and nutritious'

Barbara Ross delivers daily to the Birthing Centre so that patients can enjoy fresh healthy food for lunch. She also supplies us with a great variety of freshly prepared frozen meals for other times of the day. These include vegetarian and vegan meals to suit all tastes.

Here are some typical comments from our Birthing Centre patients about her meals: 'Delicious, nutritious', 'yummy amazing salads', 'nice home cooked meals', 'surprised at how much we got it was great', 'great selection and good quality, very healthy.'

Barbara also caters for our evening Trust board meeting so that Trustees who arrive straight after work and a busy day

can share a meal and a chat before we roll up our sleeves to address the agenda. We even get desserts!

Barbara caters for a myriad of functions at the health centre – for example she bakes fresh muffins for in-service training sessions for Birthing Centre staff. Our mother and baby support group meetings are also provided with yummy snacks. Hardly a day goes by when she is not dropping in some of her delicious food. Her sticky date pudding recipe should be added to the Trust's constitution!

We all know the importance of fresh and healthy food. Barbara makes a wonderful contribution to our health centre and community. Thank you Barb.