

Pegasus 2025

Kia atawhai ki te tangata



NEW LIFE AND TIME FOR REFLECTION

KIA ORA WHĀNAU

Waitaha (Canterbury) is bursting with new life – spring lambs, daffodils and blossom. It is certainly a boost for our mood and a good time to have a look at how we have all been doing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Challenging times are not unusual for health workers. Compassion fatigue, patient anxieties and feelings of isolation during COVID-19 can take a toll on our doctors, nurses, practice managers, receptionists and administration staff and this can flow into personal lives. This is also evident in many of the community teams that we support.

Pegasus has a well-being programme for our staff and a pastoral care programme for our members. Over the next few weeks we will be checking in with our people to see how they are doing and how we can help.

I encourage you, wherever you are, to check in on your work colleagues.

I always invite our staff at Pegasus Health to take some time and visit the Hagley Park trees in blossom in Harper Ave at this time of year, so that invitation is for all of you.



Spring is a time of new life and a time to appreciate who we are.

Tukua atu ki te kōanga (Get out and enjoy the spring weather).

Kia kaha

VINCE BARRY, CEO / MANUKURA PEGASUS HEALTH

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PUT YOURSELF FORWARD FOR MEDICINE

Josie Nicholas is a fifth year medical student with whānau who are doctors, and whose GP was an amazing role model for her. This upbringing along with a desire to research holistic health care, especially for Māori health, led Josie at 15 to choose medicine for her career.

Josie is one of 23 medical students to receive a Pegasus Health Workforce Development Scholarship this year.

“My grandfather was a doctor and I have an Uncle and Aunt who are GPs in Australia,” she said.

“I believe we need to look at a person’s body as a whole when we look at their health. I’d like to apply a holistic approach to the health care I provide and examine options which include Māori medicine to get the best possible outcomes for my patients,” says Josie.

Once she completes her medical training Josie would like to become a GP in a Māori community.

Josie says she has been particularly inspired by Dr Tamara Birchall, who runs outreach clinics in the Far North. She advises anyone interested in medicine to put themselves forward and has previously mentored students via Healthline.

“There’s lots of anxiety about getting into medicine as a career. Health offers ever changing opportunities and the hard study is all worth it,” says Josie.



Medical student Josie Nicholas would like to become a general practitioner in a Māori community.



NURSES BENEFIT FROM URGENT CARE TRAINING GROUND

2020 is a big year for nurses. Not only is it the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife, nurses are part of the front facing health care workers dealing with COVID-19.

The extra training opportunities now offered at Pegasus Health's 24 Hour Surgery (24HS) have come at the right time. Nurses wanting to further their skills to become Registered Nurse (RN), designated prescribers and possibly onto Nurse Practitioners can do this in the urgent care facility.

A Nurse Practitioner (NP) is essentially 'an expert' nurse who has completed Masters level education and is registered in a higher level or scope of practice. A NP can order and review diagnostic tests, develop treatment plans and prescribe medications for people without having to work directly with a doctor.

This qualification recognizes the added skill of the nurse and they can work alongside their medical colleagues to meet the needs of their community.

As part of the final year of the NP training programme, the trainee NPs (known as NP interns) work in general practices as a second training site on a fully funded basis, to help with practice caseloads for up to a day per week, for 10 months.

A GP or NP will supervise the NP intern's learning, and with time and support the intern will be seeing patients on their own, sharing the workload of the general practitioner.

24HS Operations Manager, Claire McQuilken says the 24HS is the perfect place to offer training in an urgent care setting. The added advantage is the exposure general practitioners will get to a Nurse Practitioner model as they work alongside the NP in the urgent care facility.

"We see all types of cases here. Wounds, sudden illness and broken limbs can all come through our doors at any time," says Claire.

Once trained our NPs are available for general practices on a fully funded basis, to help with practice caseloads for up to six months. At first the practice will provide supervision and then the NPs will see patients on their own, sharing the workload of the general practitioner.

"Pegasus Health has been paving the way for NP training for some time. We are now ready to provide practical training to NPs and RN designated prescribers and then support their development into the community - working with general practice.

It benefits the nurse, the general practice and the patient who may be seen in a shorter time-frame," says Lead Nurse Practitioner, Amelia Howard-Hill.

It also supports us to provide equitable access and equitable outcomes for our vulnerable populations, particularly Māori.



Nurse Practitioner Amelia Howard-Hill says NP training benefits all parties

PROMPT AND COHESIVE SERVICE APPRECIATED

A brisk walk and a fall in the grounds of Queen Elizabeth II Park in Christchurch this June led to a broken bone and bruising for Richard Heazlewood.

He returned home to Diamond Harbour with his wife Gloria but continued pain and swelling resulted in a visit to Pegasus Health's 24 Hour Surgery (24HS) in Christchurch.

Richard says a piece of damaged asphalt was to blame for the fall.

"I tripped and ended up on all fours. I didn't realise at the time I'd broken my wrist and damaged my knee badly. When the pain didn't go away and swelling and bruising appeared I knew I needed medical attention," says Richard.

He had visited the 24HS before. The onsite parking made it easy for Gloria to help him inside. Both were impressed with the speed with which Richard was seen and treated. It was great to have all the services in one place, he said.

"I was fairly promptly given an x-ray, then sent to have my wrist put in plaster. Each stage of his treatment was well explained and everyone was helpful," says Richard.

Richard needed two follow up visits to the Fracture Clinic and says both times he was treated by "...a wonderfully cohesive team" of staff.

"The way they all worked together spoke volumes to me. The doctor was training a nurse and the all spoke to each other with respect. That's not common," says Gloria.

Richard has recently had surgery for Prostate cancer and has had many lengthy hospital appointments which he says made him appreciate the prompt treatment he received at 24HS, all the more.

"I hardly got the chance to warm the seat," he said.



Photo right: Richard Heazlewood is back gardening after prompt service received at the 24 Hour Surgery

HEALTH PROMOTION STARTS EARLY

Pegasus Health's B4 School Check mobile Service (B4SC) brings reassurance to parents and caregivers readying their child for school.

It's an extension of the service available from general practices provided to whānau who can't travel to a medical centre or are particularly hard to reach.

The B4SC is a free health, wellbeing and development check available for all four year olds. A registered nurse checks basic health readings that cover vision, hearing, height and weight. There's discussion around nutrition, activity, speech, receptive language, sleep, toileting, behaviours, relationships, immunisation records and access to dental services.

Jenny Mason, registered nurse, practice nurse Jenny Mason says the free service works to highlight and address any health concerns that could affect a child's learning experience.

"Parents can be anxious about how their child is doing, so it's nice to offer reassurance they are on track and offer help with any concerns," says Jenny.

When things aren't going so well the B4SC service connects whānau with professional help. This can be health treatment for the child or parenting support for the parent/ caregiver.

Parents get immediate feedback on how their child is doing and there's plenty of time to ask and answer questions. Jenny says providing children with a positive health experience with a nurse is a significant benefit.

"It's a wonderful chance to touch base with parents and caregivers. Providing reassurance, health education and support for the child and whānau gets them off to a good start as they begin school," says Jenny.



Mobile B4SC nurse Jenny Mason says the checks offer reassurance to parents and caregivers

PEGASUS HEALTH B4 SCHOOL CHECKS

For the 2019/20 year

4,641 4 YEAR OLDS
RECEIVED THE
CHECK

83% OF PEGASUS
ENROLLED
CHILDREN

216 CHECKS COMPLETED
IN CHILD'S OWN
HOME

83% MĀORI TAMARIKI
AND

84% PASIFIKA TAMAITI
(PEGASUS ENROLLED)
RECEIVED THEIR
CHECK

HEALTH REFERRALS MADE

317 **284** **401**
DENTAL HEARING VISION
314
GROWTH/ WEIGHT CONCERNS



Note: No B4SCs were permitted during COVID-19 lockdown levels 3 and 4 and this has impacted numbers above.

Photo right: e-Small Group leaders are enjoying the ease of facilitating the new group format over Zoom.

PANDEMIC PROOF LEARNING

COVID-19 has led to new ways of working for people all over the world and Pegasus Health's Small Group Education programme has also adopted remote learning.

The programme is run by the Pegasus Clinical Quality and Education (CQE) team. It started in 1992, designed to meet the training needs of general practitioners, nurse practitioners, practice nurses and community pharmacists. The CQE and Pegasus Events teams have successfully managed around 700 people gathering at Pegasus House in groups of 12-15, five to six times per year.

Pegasus CQE Team Leader, Louise Kennedy says they had to quickly find a new way to run the programme when it was no longer safe for people to gather.

"We wanted to minimize the disruption to our programme, recognizing that there have been earthquakes and other events that led to short-term cancellations. With the pandemic we wanted a longer term solution. We'd been using Zoom technology for briefings for about two years prior and knew it would work. It became known as the e-Small Group Programme," says Louise.

Group leaders were trained in Zoom and participants invited to join in from the comfort of their own home or workplace.

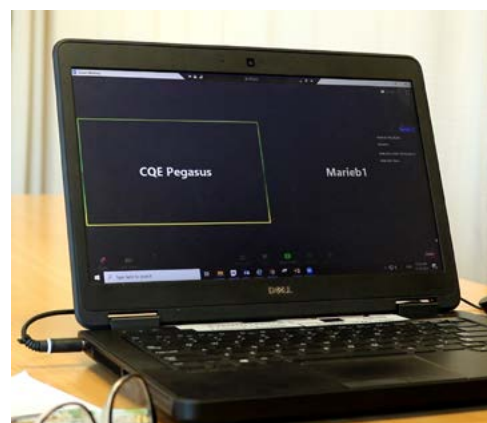
Small Group Leader, Joy Harding, says despite having initial reservations about the new way, she now enjoys the ease of facilitation.

"We've received great support from the CQE team. We have been provided with kits and self-directed resources so we could upskill to deliver the information in the new way," says Joy.

Louise says their first e-Small Group topic has been completed online with a slightly higher uptake than this time last year.

"The format seems to be working. There's always a period of adjustment but we're going well," she said.

The CQE team will carry out a formal review of the new model of delivery this month.



HELP WITH CREATING RESILIENT TEAMS

It's been five years since Pegasus Health's primary health recruitment service started.

General practices are not only places of care, they are also businesses. When Pegasus members asked for help in managing their teams, employment relations advice and technology services, SupportPlus was created.

SupportPlus offers a range of services, it is the fifth anniversary for the Human Resources (HR) section. A team of two experienced health sector HR professionals, Pegasus SupportPlus Manager, Fiona Fidow and HR Consultant Natasha Kessler are based at Pegasus House and consult to more than 90 per cent of Pegasus' member practices.

Fiona says although each practice is different, the team has a good understanding of the health sector, and challenges doctors and business managers are facing.

"They may only need a piece of employment advice or an entire recruitment campaign. They might be about to restructure their practice. The first hour of consultation is free which is appreciated by many of our practices," says Fiona.

Strong connections have been made over time and these enabled SupportPlus to continue with their support when COVID-19 arrived.

Natasha says that much of their work was already being conducted by phone, so they were relatively unaffected by the no-meeting restriction.



SupportPlus HR Consultant Natasha Kessler says strong connections with their clients have helped during COVID-19.

General Practitioner Dr Sharon Ashmore has worked with SupportPlus and says she values the services provided by Fiona and Natasha.

"Their skills and guidance has steered us through two employment processes to great outcomes," she said.

Recruitment rates in primary health have remained relatively unchanged during COVID-19. Border restrictions have, however, meant a change in recruitment methods. Extra stress and pressure on primary health staff are taking a toll too. Fiona and Natasha are proactive in offering training and coaching for practices on de-escalation training, conflict resolution and creating resilient teams.

Q&A with Support Plus Natasha Kessler Senior HR Consultant and Support Plus HR Manager, Fiona Fidow

Q. What is the most common request you receive from Pegasus practices?

Support with employment issues, anything from recruitment to dispute resolution.

Q. How is health different to other industries in terms of employment support?

Health has additional pressures that other industries may not face. Caring for patients makes the role health professionals perform, something special. Sometimes they need our support to put back in what they may give out. Teams are often so busy, caring for others, they need us to help them support each other.

We can help them with team resilience, communications, and conflict resolution. Other times we take care of business needs they don't have the capacity to do themselves, like recruiting a new employee.

Q. Has COVID-19 affected your services? How?

Some group training has been re-scheduled, we have provided good telephone support to our clients. Our relationships mean we have their trust to do some of the "tough stuff" over the phone.

Q. What one piece of advice would you offer to general practice in terms of staff support?

Call us if you have a "niggle" or a "need." The first hour is always free. It is better to call and ask than leave things too late or make the wrong decision.

HEALTHY CHOICE: THE EASY CHOICE

Pegasus is focused not only on the delivery of high quality primary health services, it also advocates for healthy public policy. Its 'Health in all Policies' approach – works across sectors, takes into account the health implications of decisions, seeks synergies, and avoids harmful health impacts, to improve population health and health equity.

Pegasus Population Health Programme Specialist, Katie Brown, says it's about making the healthy choice, the easy choice for our community.

"Pegasus has adopted a position on specific health areas and works in with the Canterbury DHB and Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP). Some of the areas we have produced position statements are healthy weight, equity of health care for Māori and drinking water fluoridation," says Katie.

Pegasus has taken a strong stand on tobacco control. Pegasus Health Promotion Coordinator, Lisa Hesp, is also the Chair of Smokefree Canterbury and has been advocating on two significant pieces of tobacco control legislation.

Lisa says it's great to finally see the 'Smokefree Cars' legislation come to fruition.

"We been advocating for many years for a child's right to be free from the harm of second-hand smoke in cars. The recently passed Vaping Bill will see long-awaited regulation on the advertising and sponsorship of vape products, flavours restricted to R18 specialist shops and product safety standards. We want vape products to be available to adults wanting to become smoke-free without a rise in youth vaping in New Zealand," says Lisa.

Photo right: New Zealand children living in areas without fluoridated water are more likely to be admitted to hospital needing dental care

Pegasus has recently released a position paper on the fluoridation of drinking water.

The paper is based on a recent study by Hobbs and colleagues at the University of Canterbury. The study found New Zealand children living in areas without fluoridated water are more likely to be admitted to hospital needing dental care than children living in areas with fluoridated water.

The link between non-fluoridated water and hospitalisation was even stronger for children from lower socio-economic areas.

Pegasus' position is that the authority to fluoridate the drinking water supply belongs centrally (at a national level), rather than regionally within individual DHBs, where there is a risk that individual Board members could be lobbied or fail to make evidence-informed decisions. This brings it in line with current national legislation over the use of seatbelts and smoke-free environments.

Although the timeframes are often long, when policy is changed, the effort is worth it. Step by step, the team believe they are making a significant difference to the health of the New Zealand population.

