#### Pegasus 2025

Kia atawhai ki te tangata



#### A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Tēnā koutou katoa - Greetings to you all

With unprecedented demand on our primary health care sector over the past two weeks, I want to acknowledge the effort being done by our GPs, nurses, pharmacies and 24 Hour Surgery.

Beyond the physical and community impacts of COVID-19, are the impacts on our mental health and wellbeing. It's timely to remember that one of the key messages from the past two years has been "be kind". Be kind to our testing staff, primary health care teams, teachers, retail staff and all those keeping our country moving. But also, be kind to ourselves. Look after yourself, first and foremost, so that you have the strength when you need to call upon it.

This issue, we've focused on looking after yourself and answering some of your COVID-19 questions.

We're also celebrating the achievements of some of our GPs, nurses and pharmacies. We welcome our NetP nurses for 2022 and we congratulate Pegasus Health GP, Clare Healy, following her recent recognition in the New Years Honours 2022. We also celebrate the work being done in Hornby as Life Pharmacy collaborates with local Maori and Pasifika organisations in the vaccination effort.

He aroha whakato, he aroha puta mai.

If kindness is sown, then kindness you shall receive.

MARK LIDDLE
MANUKURA /
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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### EXPANSION OF COMMUNITY TESTING SITES ACROSS CANTERBURY

More than a thousand rapid antigen tests (RATs) a day are being distributed through two recently-opened COVID-19 testing stations supported by Pegasus Health. The new stations are at Wigram and Rangiora – and further sites are planned in coming weeks as demand for testing continues to grow.

Pegasus Health Practice Relationships Team Leader, Craig Watson, said the organisation supported the establishment of the sites in Wigram (opened late February) and Rangiora (opened early March) to give people requiring a COVID-19 test more options; supplementing ones already operating on Orchard and Pages Roads.

He says the stations are now predominantly performing RAT tests, although the Wigram site does limited numbers of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests.

"Working with the DHB ECC Workforce Redeployment Team we are looking to open more sites in coming weeks as demand continues to grow day-on-day. Already we are distributing several thousand RAT tests a day across the four stations in Christchurch and North Canterbury (Wigram, Rangiora, Orchard Rd and Pages Rd)."

Ashburton's long-running COVID-19 testing station recently moved from the hospital to a larger site in the former ACL Building on South Street.



#### MUM TESTED TO PROTECT WHĀNAU

Beauty technician, Te Ao Marama Roberts, was one of thousands of Cantabrians tested for COVID-19 on opening day at the new Pegasus Healthled Wigram testing station.

Te Ao Marama came to the testing station with her partner Shane Weko and baby Te Puwairua Weko to get a PCR test after having cold symptoms for several days.

"I just felt like I had a cold, had a tickly throat... woke up, still wasn't feeling any better; was getting worse today so thought I'd come down and get a test."

Te Ao Marama says it was crucial she got tested to avoid spreading the virus in the community and particularly to protect vulnerable whānau such as her infant daughter.

"I don't want my baby to get sick."

She says it was an easy process and not as scary as she had anticipated.

"It was actually easier than I thought it would. I was really nervous, but it was really quick."



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# CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR PASIFIKA

Samoan community worker, Vailia Afoa-Fui, has put her part-time study on hold to work more hours at a Hornby-based COVID-19 vaccination clinic and help protect Canterbury's Pasifika community.

Vailia has worked on reception at the Maui Clinic in the

Hornby mall since it opened in July last year. She usually works for the Tangata Atumotu Trust as a community support worker, helping clients navigate the health system. Vailia was also studying part-time towards a social work degree but has put

that aside to be part of the fight against COVID-19.

"It is exciting! We are here to help our community. For us, if we can help in any way we can to get everybody vaccinated, it's going really well."

The vaccination site is a collaboration between the mall's Life Pharmacy, Pasifika non-government-organisation Tangata Atumotu Trust and Māori health provider Te Puawaitanga ki Ōtautahi and now offers adult and paediatric vaccinations.

Vialia says it has been valuable for Pasifika people coming to the clinic to interact with staff from their community and who speak their language.

"We (the staff at Maui Clinic) are all different in our approach but we just encourage them (clients) and if they love their families, I'm pretty sure they love their community as well and want to help protect them.

## HORNBY COMMUNITY SERVED THROUGH COLLABORATION

The Maui Clinic in Hornby is now offering COVID-19 paediatric vaccinations - allowing the pharmacy and Māori and Pasifika health organisations behind the initiative to provide an even better, welcoming environment for the whole whānau.

Pharmacist Lucy Shingleton is the clinical lead at the clinic, which opened in July 2021 as a partnership between Hornby Life Pharmacy, Pasifika organisation Tangata Atumotu Trust and Te Puawaitanga ki Ōtautahi Māori health provider.

Lucy says the opportunity to up-skill and administer COVID-19 vaccines to children has been beneficial for the Maui Clinic team and built a greater trust of health professionals by the community.

"You have the whole whānau coming in because we are doing paediatric vaccines. It's heart-warming to see them as a group, to give that service to them all. Seeing how happy they are to be together and supporting each other."

"We wanted people to not be frightened when they come here. People are leaving feeling happy with their how their vaccination has gone, they recommend it to their friends and whānau."



### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT FOR PRIMARY CARE TEAMS

Pegasus Senior Clinical Leader and Mt Pleasant GP, Simon Wynn Thomas, has a singular message for clinical teams. "In order to provide quality care to patients, primary health teams need to be in the best shape possible."

"I think it's really important for GPs to walk the talk. We advise our patients on simple things to improve wellbeing, like ensuring they get enough sleep, get exercise, don't skip meals... we need to remember to do those things ourselves because they really can help."

Simonalso recommends using the supports that Pegasus has available for GPs and nurses. "We have a range of professional and mental health support packages for Pegasus members. I recommend that anyone who's finding things tough at the moment makes sure they're using the resources available."

"I think it's really important for GPs to walk the talk."

"Our primary care clinicians have been on the front line for over two years now and they're now facing another surge," he says. "If you're struggling to maintain balance and prioritise your wellbeing, there's no better time than now to do something about that."



#### NURSING TEAM

The Nursing Team have funding available for nurses to access counselling or professional supervision as needed. Applications for funding can be made through the Nursing Team.

#### SELF CARE PACKAGE FOR GPS

GPs can access three free, confidential counselling sessions from a range of counsellors, depending on their preference and need.

#### GP SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The GP Support Programme is available for GPs in need of support. GPs can refer themselves or a colleague to the Senior Clinical Leader who can offer individualised support and mentoring by a range of doctors in a pastoral care role.

#### PEER GROUPS

We host six-weekly peer group meetings for doctors, nurses and administration staff. These meetings offer an opportunity to collaborate with your peers on the issues you face in your practice.

Further information is available for Pegasus members on Pegasus World.

It's the staff,

### OVERCOMING A FEELING OF ISOLATION AMONG PHARMACISTS

Dr Aarti Patel, General Manager of the Canterbury Community Pharmacy Group (CCPG), wants to remind pharmacists and their staff, that they don't have to feel alone.

"This is a journey that pharmacy teams can't take on individually. There's a lot of benefit in peer support and community," she says.

"Pharmacy teams have borne a lot of the brunt of the COVID-19 public announcements in the past years. As soon as there's a change or an announcement, the public

dispensary and retail, and the pharmacist who are experiencing the abuse.

contact their pharmacist, whether that's for masks, vaccines or, in this past week, RAT tests.

"The biggest issue facing pharmacists is time. When the phone rings, it's the provider taking the call. When the door opens, there's no hiding from people who may be feeling upset or anxious. It's the staff, dispensary and retail, and the pharmacist who are experiencing the abuse.

"We're starting to see pharmacists leave the workforce because they're not feeling safe and supported.

"In the past we've funded peer support networks. We paid for kai and the groups came together to kotahitanga and connect and support each other. These have, unfortunately, fallen away as our pharmacy teams struggle under the burden of COVID-19.

"At CCPG, we're looking forward to supporting the reestablishment of these networks once the busyness of the Omicron wave has passed its peak," Aarti shares.

"We also encourage connecting with another pharmacy or pharmacist to help share the load. We know that Omicron has brought with it a lot of angst and worry that their pharmacies may need to close, either temporarily or longer. By finding a buddy, if the proverbial hits the fan, they can share the load, and ensure their business can continue and their community is still served."

Aarti's final piece of advice comes from seeing her husband, a Rangiora-based pharmacist, using his evenings to catch up on the emails and administration he misses during his busy days.

"Look after your own personal wellbeing. Once the sense of urgency surrounding COVID-19 has stopped, where will you be? What will you have left over? Make sure you're making the time to connect with your family and treasure those around you, now."

#### **SHARE YOUR STORY**

If you've got a Pegasus Health story you'd like to share, email communication@pegasus.org.nz



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#### PEGASUS HAUORA MĀORI TEAM ATTEND GPNZ MĀORI HEALTH LEADERS HUI

The GPNZ Māori Health Leaders rōpū is a collective of Māori Health leaders across the PHO network that was established two years ago and is currently chaired by Pegasus Health Director of Hauora Māori, Irihāpeti Mahuika.

The group were hosted by Western Bay of Plenty PHO in February to develop a workplan for the future.

"As the health system as a whole settles into a new way of working, the opportunity to grow something and stay connected is really important," says Irihāpeti. "For me, the opportunity to learn from one another and share ideas and resources is probably the biggest benefit."

Four key areas for development were identified by the rōpū, including Māori

governance and partnership, recruitment of Māori into primary care, General Practice support tools to make Māori health planning intentional and authentic, and the development of tikanga within the GPNZ and PHO networks.

Pegasus Health Hauora Māori Manager, Melody Tuliau, also attended the hui. "It became very clear that some of the thinking we have and the way we're working are on par with other Māori health leaders across the country," says Melody. "We also have some of the same issues and being able to share our experiences and talk about what's been working in their spaces that we can bring back was really valuable."

"It was really nice to know that we're all experiencing the same things. The biggest takeaway is that were not alone in this," shared Irihāpeti. "He waka eke noa, we're all in this together."

#### **OUR WHENU**

Meet **Irihāpeti Mahuika**, Director of Hauora Māori and Equity. Irihāpeti introduces us to the work her team does and how Manaakitanga infuses all that they do.





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### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT **SAMUEL HIDRAY EQUBAZGI**

Former Eritrean refugee, Samuel Hidray Equbazgi, is in his third year of a Social Work degree at the University of Canterbury. Last year, he was a recipient of the Pegasus Health Workforce Development Scholarship.

In Eritrea, Samuel worked for the national television station. "I had a diploma in journalism so I went to work for the national television as a media editor. The situation in my country is an oppressive system. Journalism is a very, very risky job to do, so I was inclined to work as a media editor instead."

Samuel spent five years in Ethiopia as a refugee before being sent to New Zealand in 2019. Since arriving here, Samuel's been with the Red Cross as a Cross-Cultural Worker.

"Throughout my journey I've seen ups and downs. I've encountered problems I want to solve, and I want to have a role in making sure the systems that support refugees and migrants are working for them," says Samuel.

"I see similarities between social work and journalism. It's all about advocating for oppressed and marginalised people. They're both about searching for solutions and truths. I was quite passionate about being a journalist, but I never found the place where I could be the kind of journalist I wanted to be. Since being in New Zealand, I've been thinking about what kind of profession I wanted and what would suit my journey and characteristics. I didn't want to study journalism again, and so I settled on social work.

"The journey I have been on, challenged me. I feel social work gives me the answers to all those questions in my life."



"I feel social work gives me the answers to all those questions in my life."



We are delighted to invite students who identify as Māori, Pacific orfrom Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, studying medicine, nursing or allied health to apply for the Pegasus Health Workforce Development Scholarships 2022.

Pegasus Health has for many years recognised that developing our workforce is vital to improving the health status of the populations in the communities in which we serve. Since 2001 when these scholarships were first established, numerous aspiring recipients have been assisted, many of whom have gone on to outstanding careers in primary health care.

For more information on how to apply, click here.

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### GP CLARE HEALY HONOURED AS FORENSIC EDUCATOR

Christchurch GP, Clare Healy, was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) in the New Years Honours 2022 for her services to medical forensic education. The commendation came for her education and policy work for Medical Sexual Assault Clinicians Aotearoa.

Clare has spent over 25 years working with, and for, people affected by sexual assault, family violence and strangulation, including over 20 years teaching clinicians to assess and help victims of sexual assault.

It was a weekend training course in 1996 that opened Clare's eyes to the prevalence of sexual assault. Once Clare realised how many of her patients might have been sexually abused or assaulted, she couldn't look back and started on a journey which later saw her become a sexual assault forensic medical examiner.

Clare helped develop robust and internationally respected training programmes for clinicians in sexual and family violence and to train police sexual assault investigators. "That [education] became a very important part of my life, really," she says, "helping other people develop language and understanding on how to talk about sexual assault and family violence. And also form some skills in what is now called 'trauma informed care'."

She is now the clinical director of Christchurch's Cambridge Clinic and says it is the collegial support of the sexual assault clinicians' group that helps her keep working in a sad and difficult field.

She takes strength that, while clinicians can't change the bad experiences their assault patients have been through, they may be able to help lighten their load. "You treat them with respect, give them some choice, reassure them and possibly make them feel better going forwards."

Congratulations to Clare for her amazing achievement and her continuous work in the community.



MARCH 2022

#### **NURSING ENTRY TO PRACTICE (NETP) ORIENTATION WEEK**

Fifteen new graduate Registered Nurses (RNs) completed orientation during February at Pegasus House to commence their Nursing Entry to Practice (NetP) year, designed to support their first year of practice.

Di Bos, Nursing Workforce Development Co-ordinator, coordinates the Pegasus NetP Programme with the orientation week "aiming to provide nurses with all the training they need to work within the primary care sector."

To be a part of NetP, student nurses must apply through the Nursing Advanced Choice of Employment (ACE) system in their final year of study. A recruitment

process is followed, and successful applicants are able to

Pegasus Health partners with general practice, Māori and Pasifika providers and the Canterbury District Health Board to support NetP positions. This year has been the largest intake with twelve of the nurses directly employed by general practice teams and a further three nurses who are part of Pegasus initiatives, Korimako (Māori), Toloa (Pasifika) and CALD (Refugee Health). These initiatives provide employment opportunities, encompassing general practice and NGO providers in blended community positions.

Brooke Jay, RN, has joined the Toloa initiative and will be completing her first year with Tangata Atumotu Trust and Eastcare Health. Brooke said the orientation week was a "great opportunity to meet others in the same position" and that she felt more confident going into her first week



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### PROTECTING YOUR \*\*\*\* HEALTH DURING OMICRON

### Feeling unwell?



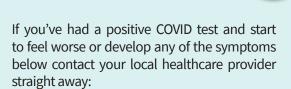
If you or your whānau aren't feeling well, give HealthLine a call on 0800 611 116 for free health advice 24/7 anywhere in NZ including interpreter services and NZ Relay Services.

If you have a medical emergency – CALL 111.

COVID-19 Omicron you can expect the following at 24 Hour Surgery:

- You will be seen outside by a nurse or a doctor, or both.
- You may be asked to wait in your car or in a portable cabin onsite
- You may be asked to return home to wait or to have a virtual appointment
- You will be asked to wear a surgical mask

## Are your COVID symptoms getting worse?



- Persistent shortness of breath
- Persistent fever and/or chills
- Persistent vomiting and/or diarrhoea

If you or a family member becomes very unwell or has difficulty breathing, immediately call an ambulance on 111. Let the person know you are at home with COVID-19.

Note: There is no charge for the ambulance service.

#### **PCR vs RAT**



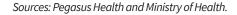
Two tests are now routinely being used in Aotearoa New Zealand to determine if someone has COVID-19:

#### PCR - Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR)

- Detects virus' genetic material in a sample taken from inside nose.
- Done by health worker then processed in laboratory; results generally received more than a day after test.
- Most accurate test for detecting SARS-CoV-2.

#### RAT – Rapid Antigen Rests, also known as lateral flow tests

- Detect specific pieces (antigens) on outside of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, such as the spike protein.
- Can be done at home with swab for inside nose and test kit. Results in less than 20 minutes.
- Not as accurate as PCR tests, primarily used for surveillance and detection of the virus in mildly or asymptomatic people.



MARCH 2022



THE PEGASUS HEALTH MENTAL HEALTH **LEADERSHIP TEAM EXPLAINS COVID FATIGUE** AND GIVE SOME TIPS FOR MANAGING IT

#### What is COVID fatigue?

The World Health Organisation describes COVID fatigue as being 'demotivated and exhausted by the demands of life during a pandemic. The pandemic has meant loss of regular activities, social connection, roles, identity, and required the need to constantly adapt to change. This can result in strong emotional responses such as sadness, frustration, anxiety, fear, anger, and boredom.

#### How can COVID fatigue affect our daily lives?

If you are feeling distressed this can impact your overall health and well-being. Symptoms of COVID fatigue can be:

**Physical** 

tiredness, headaches, and poor sleep

Cognitive

rumination, poor attention/ concentration, and confusion

**Emotional** 

irritability, anger, sadness, fear, and loss of control

Behavioural

isolation, increased substance use and social avoidance

**Spiritual** 

questioning beliefs and a lack of trust

#### **How to counter COVID fatigue**

It is natural to feel a range of emotions associated with COVID and its impacts. The main factor we can change, to protect our health and wellbeing, is our behavioural response to emotions and what we do with them. Dr Russ Harris uses the acronym FACE COVID. This has been published worldwide and advises the following:

Focus on what's in your control

Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings

Come back into your body

Engage in what you are doing

**C**ommitted action

Opening up

**V**alues

**Identify resources** 

Disinfect and distance

A key thing to consider is whether symptoms, such as tiredness, irritability, and increased substance abuse, are increasing and impacting your daily

functioning. If the answer is yes, we encourage you to seek support.

Building resilience - or the ability to recover and adjust from change – is crucial in today's rapidly changing environment. Through resilience we build greater psychological flexibility, which could reduce the likelihood of issues such as COVID fatigue, burnout and compassion fatigue. The Mental Health Foundation has great resources for building resilience and enhancing wellbeing. Some key things to try and practice are: self-care, maintaining balance, staying connected to others, and being compassionate to yourself and others.

Health professionals working through a pandemic are at high risk of not only COVID fatigue but burn out and significant mental health morbidity. It is important to remember it is ok not to feel ok.

Look out for each other. Check in with colleagues. Take the time and prioritise yourself, practice self-compassion, lean on your support network, take breaks, take a mental health day or consider an extended weekend to rest and recharge. Seek professional help when needed.

