

Welcome to the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network e-zine for 29 July 2010.

In this issue • Amanda's Southland's newest Nurse Practitioner • SDHB nominations open • DHB leads the way with IT network and much more...

Amanda's Southland's newest Nurse Practitioner

Tuatapere-based nurse and New Zealand Rural General Practice member Amanda McCracken is the latest in a growing number of her profession to attain Nurse Practitioner status.

After five years' study Amanda gained approval from the New Zealand Nursing Council as a Nurse Practitioner with full prescribing rights.

The 42-year-old mother has worked as a nurse in western Southland for about 18 years, initially graduating as a Comprehensive Nurse in 1989 after studying at Southland Polytechnic (now the Southland Institute of Technology).

After a stint travelling overseas she returned to Southland and worked at Otautau for about eight years and returned to Tuatapere last year.

"In 2005 I decided that with big issues here with recruitment and retention of GPs, becoming a Nurse Practitioner was probably the best way I could provide my nursing services."

She started studying to become a Nurse Practitioner in 2005, which included gaining a Masters qualification.

"There's an awful lot of work that goes into it, about 2500 hours of study. But it has been absolutely worth it. I am delighted."
"I knew where I wanted to be and what I wanted to do, so I worked hard to gain the Nurse Practitioner qualification."

Originally from Nelson, Amanda and her family moved to Southland when she was four years old. The family initially lived in Tokanui in eastern Southland. Amanda relocated to western Southland shortly after graduating.

If you have a story relating to events, achievements or issues in rural general practice, give Rob Olsen a call on 04 495 5887, 021 82 2468 or email: rob@rgpn.org.nz

SDHB nominations open

Nominations for the first election of the Southern District Health Board (DHB) are now open. (Scoop)

Elections for seven members of the Board (three from the Southland Constituency and four from the Otago Constituency) will take place as part of the local authority elections.

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DHB leads the way with IT network

Waikato District Health Board is leading the way in developing a regional data network that could eventually connect up the entire national health system, but those behind it say patient information will be kept safe. (Waikato Times)

The Midland Connected Health proposal was outlined by DHB chief information officer Alan Grainer at a recent DHB meeting held at Te Kuiti Hospital, where board members signed off on further investment in the project.

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Overnight nursing won't be a victim

MidCentral Health's decision to retain a 24-hour district nursing service is unique in New Zealand and could be a blueprint for others, says district health board hospital advisory committee chairman Jack Drummond. (Manawatu Standard)

The committee recently voted unanimously to adopt changes within the service that could save up to \$400,000 a year, and to keep the 11pm to 7am shift that was initially a likely victim of the search for savings.

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Euthanasia already happening, says dying GP

A doctor who is dying of cancer says many of his colleagues already practice euthanasia and it should be legalised. (Stuff)

Auckland GP Dr John Pollock, 61, who has metastatic melanoma, said he personally knows many doctors who have taken steps to hasten a death.

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Let us know your thoughts on the issue. Email rob@rgpn.org.nz
Any feedback will not be re-published.

TDHB to subcontract ambulance

The Taranaki District Health Board has been given permission to tender out its ambulance service. (Taranaki Daily News)

Chief executive Tony Foulkes said a request to look for an alternative ambulance provider had been approved by the Ministry of Health and it was hoped a new provider would be operating within 12 months. In the meantime, the board will continue to provide ambulance services around the region.

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Progress on single PHO slower than hoped

Establishing the new Southern Primary Health Organisation is still slower than hoped, with none of the existing nine PHOs yet completing the assignment of assets and programmes to the new body. (ODT)

The Southern District Health Board recently issued six-month exit notices to all the PHOs, something PHOs had been warned would happen if the assignment process was not completed by the end of June.

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Appointments

New College Board member

David Moore, managing director of LECG Asia Pacific, has been appointed to the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners Board. He has extensive connections and networks in health, and policy experience of the sector. (Scoop)

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New NZHHA CEO appointed

Julie Haggie has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of the New Zealand Home Health Association (NZHHA). The NZHHA is the association for organisations providing home health care services. She replaces Jane Cumming, who left at the end of June. (Scoop)

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NZNO welcomes new chief nurse

The New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) has welcomed the appointment of one of its former presidents, Jane O'Malley, as chief nurse. The Ministry of Health's Deputy Director-General of Sector Capability and Innovation, Margie Apa, announced the appointment and Ms O'Malley, currently director of nursing and midwifery at West Coast District Health Board, will take up the position in late September.

Current NZNO president Nano Tunnicliff said Ms O'Malley would bring a range of strengths to the position, at a crucial time for nursing and the health sector.

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Not a member? Join the Network!

The Network is the only nationwide membership-based organisation in New Zealand representing the interests of rural general practice.

Visit our [website](#) for additional information and an online application form or contact Rob Olsen on 04 495 5887.

PHOs merge after Ryall's directive

A drive towards more efficient community-based care will see Taranaki's primary health organisations absorbed into larger groups by the end of the year. (Taranaki Daily News)

Health Minister Tony Ryall has criticised the high number of PHOs, saying they are unnecessarily bureaucratic, and called for mergers to cut management and administrative costs.

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Rural babies tested

Country babies are now having their hearing screened in rural hospitals. (The Press)

The Canterbury District Health Board's newborn hearing screening programme has been extended to the Rangiora, Ashburton and Lincoln areas, with plans to include Kaikoura.

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Aussie offering NZ doctors \$6000 for a weekend

Young New Zealand doctors are flitting away to Australia for short-term stints, earning as much as \$6000 in a weekend. (NZ Herald)

Many of these "weekend warriors" fit in two-day shifts across the Tasman on top of their weekly work in New Zealand, lured by pay packets three times the size of a senior doctor.

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Chief executive shares message in rural Waikato

Waikato District Health Board chief executive Craig Climo will present the rural health service delivery picture in Waikato communities during the next fortnight. (Scoop)

Rural health is one of six Waikato DHB priorities, with more than 200,000 Waikato residents living outside Hamilton city.

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Maternity beds cater to demand

Fears are proving unfounded that the rebuilt maternity ward at Wairau Hospital might struggle to cope with the number of Marlborough women having babies. (Marlborough Express)

In November, maternity moves from a 12-bed to an eight-bed ward with four overflow beds in the rebuilt Wairau Hospital.

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Women cut surgical careers for family

Balancing the demands of being a surgeon with having children means women out of the profession, female doctors say. (Stuff)

A Royal Australasian College of Surgeons workforce report shows 7.5 per cent of New Zealand's surgical fellows are women, up from 6 per cent in 2005.

In Australia, 7.7 per cent of surgeons are women. Christchurch surgeon Jane MacDonald was the second woman in New Zealand to qualify as a urological surgeon in 2001.

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Patients open to big data plan

Patients largely accept the role of technology in managing their health information, but are worried about their privacy, how they fix things that are wrong, and who can share sensitive information with others. (Manawatu Standard)

That was some of the feedback about proposals to develop electronic patient records provided by about 60 people who attended a National Health IT forum.

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