

## From the Chair

It was good to hear of the activities around the recent International Midwives Day and Nurses Day and to recognise the contribution they have made to the health and wellbeing of our population. Local nurses have shown their appetite for advanced learning, with 12 Hutt Valley Registered Nurses graduating with Masters degrees this year. Congratulations to you all.

I also enjoyed a recent visit with Prime Minister John Key to our Hutt Valley one-stop youth mental health service, VIBE. It was good to see and hear first hand about how the Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Fund is being applied to reach more young people in need of help, and to hear more about the good work that VIBE does in our community.



Angela Crawford, VIBE Chair, Gill Alcorn, VIBE clinical team leader and Virginia Hope, DHB Chair (right) with Prime Minister John Key outside the Daly Street offices of VIBE.

Wairarapa, Hutt Valley and Capital and Coast DHBs held a shared Board meeting this month at the Dowse. This gave us a chance to make sure that our individual DHB plans for the next year and beyond lined up with our neighbours, and discuss ways we can work together to create smoother journeys through our services for patients, while making best possible use of resources. We had an excellent presentation on the health needs of our older citizens from Hutt Valley geriatrician Dr Althea Lord and some robust discussion about the features of working across the two and three DHBs.

Later this month, alongside Wairarapa DHB Chair Bob Francis and some of our clinical leaders, I will be meeting with staff over the three local DHBs to highlight initiatives that demonstrate how our DHBs are striving to work together more effectively. For example, the Ear, Nose and Throat service across the three DHBs have pooled their part-time medical vacancies to create 3DHB positions at both senior and trainee levels. This has created a much more sustainable service, which is steadily increasing access to services for our population including to a newly established 'voice clinic' for the greater Wellington region.

Clinicians, management, and Boards will continue to work to identify ways in which we can improve and develop a wide range of our services while working within our means. We'll be providing updates on this regularly.

It's nearly winter again and I encourage you to consider having a 'flu' injection this year if you've not already had one. I have one every year and wouldn't miss it.

Wishing you the best of health

**Virginia Hope, Chair**

Hutt Valley and Capital & Coast DHBs



## Don't be an ostrich when it comes to your health care

Most people are very happy **thinking ahead and making plans** – for when they retire, or when the kids leave home or the house is sold. But when it comes to **planning ahead** for when our health declines, many people just want to **bury their head**.

Health professionals know only too well that the **"ostrich"** approach doesn't work and can cause people and their families much angst. They are now encouraging their patients to look at **"advance care planning"**.

Advance care planning is all about personal values and quality of life, and how you would like to be treated. A common starting point in these discussions is imagine you have suffered irreversible mental impairment and will never be able to participate in decisions regarding your future health care and treatment. How would you want to be cared for, what action would you want taken if you suffered a life-threatening medical situation, such as a heart attack. **Be prepared – think ahead.**

Another common starting point is ageing – what type of care would you want, and who would you want to provide it, if you started to lose your independence? **Be prepared – think ahead.**

By nature we don't want to imagine, let alone talk about, what would happen if we or someone we care about faces a terminal illness, or loss of body function. It can bring up feelings of sadness and fear. But those who have had to deal with making decisions about another person's health care know it is so much easier to do when you are aware of what they wanted. **Be prepared – think ahead.**

If you have a degenerative health condition such as Parkinson's disease, diabetes, or rheumatoid arthritis, chances are you will face some key decisions regarding your ongoing care. **Be prepared for these – think ahead.**

Ageing sometimes brings with it a deterioration in our health. Sometimes these rob us of our ability to make decisions – dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or a major stroke. This means someone else has to decide things for you – who would you want this to be and do they know what you would want done? If you don't make arrangements you may end up in a situation totally different to what you'd have chosen. Don't let this happen to you. **Be prepared – think ahead.**

[www.advancecareplanning.co.nz](http://www.advancecareplanning.co.nz)  
for more information about  
advance care planning,  
or talk to your health professional.

### Advance care planning checklist

-  Understand your health condition(s) and how these may progress.
-  Discuss these with your health care provider, including treatment options.
-  Share your wishes with family and whanau.
-  Nominate someone to speak for you when you can't.
-  Write a will with directions for legacies or gifts.
-  Keep a file of important papers and documents.
-  Leave funeral plans if you have a view about this (including pre-paying).

### New maternity website launched



Expecting a baby? Need to know what to expect, what the local services are and where to find information or help? Or are you working with pregnant women and their whanau?

Try [huttmaternity.org.nz](http://huttmaternity.org.nz)

This new website will tell you everything you need to know about having a baby in the Hutt Valley - or point you in the right direction for information available from government departments, agencies and other organisations who can support you.

The aim is to ensure that everyone in the Hutt Valley has a midwife (or obstetrician) arranged to guide and lead their maternity care, by the time they are 10 weeks pregnant.

### World Smokefree Day May 31



**It's all about whanau - support a friend or family member on their quit journey in 2013**

### Board & committee meetings

District Health Board  
9am Friday 7 June 2013  
Hutt Valley DHB Boardroom

Community & Public Health Advisory Cmte  
9am Monday 17 June 2013  
Hutt Valley DHB Boardroom

Hospital Advisory Committee  
9am Friday 21 June 2013  
Wairarapa DHB Boardroom

Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings. Meeting agendas are available on our website [www.huttvalleydhb.org.nz](http://www.huttvalleydhb.org.nz)