

From the Chair

Alongside Local Body elections, nominations open for the District Health Board elections on Friday 19 July and close on 16 August. The elections are on Saturday October 12, with the first meeting of the new Board in December.

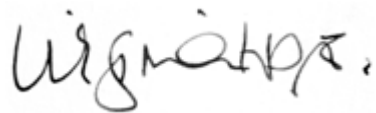
Hutt Valley DHB serves not just our local population of around 148,000, we also provide some regional services with a catchment of the lower North Island and upper South Island like maxillo-facial, plastics and burns; rheumatology; and some subregional services like public health, breast screening and school dental services.

Hutt Valley DHB plans, funds and in many cases provides publicly funded health services in the valley. We have a close relationship with Wairarapa and Capital and Coast DHBs as we work together to improve patient journeys, improve the health of our population and make best use of health resources.

I would encourage you to go to your District Council website for more details if you are interested in standing for the DHB, and to check out candidate profiles once nominations have closed.

As always, if you wish to comment on these or any other issues, you can write to me or email feedback@huttvalleydhb.org.nz.

Best wishes for a healthy winter.



Virginia Hope, Chair,

Hutt Valley and Capital & Coast DHBs

Help on hand



Director Allied Health Natalie Richardson, Hutt Valley Hand Therapist Theresa Vaughan, Mel Bryant, and Executive Director Allied Health Russell Simpson celebrate the new hand therapy service.

Threading a needle, writing a letter, peeling an apple - these are skills many take for granted. Wairarapa woman Mel Bryant still struggles with some everyday tasks since she had a chainsaw accident almost two years ago. She sliced her left hand severing 3 tendons and breaking two joints. At the time she had two preschoolers - a 2 month old baby and a 4 year old. After the accident and two lots of surgery she needed to go to Hutt Hospital for a half hour hand therapy appointment once a week. Mel couldn't drive and so for 15 months she had to find a driver to take her and her baby over the hill. In the hand therapy clinic she met others from Wairarapa who were doing the same thing each week - a large commitment of time and resources by the patient. That prompted Mel to write to Wairarapa DHB suggesting they set up a local service at Wairarapa Hospital.

"As we looked into this further, we found some patients with hand injuries who chose not to access

the therapy necessary for good recovery because of the difficult access," said Russell Simpson, Executive Director of Allied Health for Wairarapa and Hutt Valley DHBs. "As a result of Mel's plea we have set up a new service to provide Hand Therapy once a week to Wairarapa patients at Wairarapa Hospital, saving time, discomfort and ACC funding."

Theresa Vaughan, Hand Therapist from Hutt Valley DHB, now runs a weekly clinic at Wairarapa Hospital on Thursdays and sees up to 10 post trauma patients a day. "We see around 300 patients per year from Wairarapa," says Theresa. "I see people with crushed tendons, broken bones, torn ligaments, burns, scarring and they are usually referred to us through the plastic surgery clinic in the Hutt. Sometimes the injuries are complex and recovery takes many months. If they do not access hand therapy they are often left with un-useful hands that are stiff or weak and can't grip. I guide people through an exercise regime to keep their surgery intact and get movement back."

Theresa specialises in the assessment and rehabilitation of the elbow, forearm, wrist, hand, fingers or thumb. These conditions may be caused by an injury (most ACC claims), a disease (eg arthritis) or a disorder such as carpal tunnel syndrome. She also moulds special splints and bands to protect and support the injury site. "It's a very specialised field usually filled by a registered Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist who has done a post-graduate diploma."

Because it is so specialised hand therapy remains a difficult area to recruit. The three DHBs in the Wellington region are discussing the sharing of roles and joint positions in order to build the workforce and share specialist skills. Through collaboration and cooperation they can offer patients better, more convenient health services.

Hutt Hospital a great place to train doctors



Dr Sisira Jayathissa, Clinical Director of Medicine for Wairarapa and Hutt Valley District Health Boards, with Senior Medical Officer Dr Tom Thompson (who trained at Hutt Hospital) with and Registrar (Physician in training) Brendan Ng.

If you want to get superb training to be a physician, come to Hutt Hospital. According to a report from the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Hutt Hospital is an 'exemplar educational site in general internal medicine' and they have recommended the maximum period of 5 years before another accreditation visit is required.

"This level of accreditation is not easily achieved and marks us out as being very good at what we do," says Sisira Jayathissa, Clinical Director of Medicine. "I think it is a combination of well qualified staff who like to teach and management which listens to what is needed and works with us to make it happen. The result is a great balance between our educational and our service function."

The surveyors specifically commended Dr Jayathissa's leadership, saying 'there is so much to commend this site with regard to training of physicians'. They singled out the registrar-led meetings and innovations, and the ability to tailor clinic and ward experience appropriate to the level of training. "We must be doing something right, because several of our senior staff did their initial training here, then returned later in a senior capacity," says Dr Jayathissa. "We hope that's a trend that will continue in the years to come."

NOT AN EMERGENCY? Call your GP for advice. Even if they're closed you'll be put through to a helpline. Or call Healthline 0800 611 611



After Hours Medical Centre
5.30pm-11pm weekdays
8am-11pm Weekends & Public Holidays

Upper Hutt Health Centre after hours clinic
5pm-8am weekdays
Weekends 9am-1pm, 2pm-6pm

Anaesthetic accreditation

Hutt Valley DHB is delighted that the the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists have granted Hutt Hospital interim registration to continue to train anaesthetists from December 2013. Dr Leona Wilson, a well-respected anaesthetist and past President of the College, has agreed to a one-year secondment as Clinical Head of Department for Anaesthetics.