

## Health Minister's visit a real success



CEO David Meates, Hon. Pete Hodgson and new DHB Chairman Bob Francis

This week the Minister of Health, Hon. Pete Hodgson, visited the DHB as part of his commitment to visit all DHBs this year. He was particularly interested in programmes and services that showcase innovative approaches and solutions developed to meet the needs of the Wairarapa population. To that end he met with DHB and PHO Board members and staff, Regional Public Health and local mayors and managers. They shared success stories, addressed challenges for 2007 and identified issues and priorities.

*Minister of Health Pete Hodgson enjoyed talking to the children during his visit to Cameron House, where a nurse-led clinic for Pacific people is available every Monday from 1pm-4pm.*

*About 50 people from Cook Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Fiji and Samoa all came together to celebrate the work of the Cameron House and the health clinic.*



CEO David Meates would like to thank everyone for making the Minister of Health's visit to the Wairarapa a positive and rewarding experience for him.

"His summary at the end of the day was glowing of the Wairarapa," says Mr Meates. "In particular he was impressed with how well the new Wairarapa Hospital is working. He felt that the hospital is an area that many other DHBs can learn from. He also commented on the continued progress that the DHB has made regarding Mental Health Services, the new lab contract, the focus of the DHB on Public Health, the linkages with the Territorial Local Authorities, the relationship with Mana Whenua, the progress that the PHO is making in regards to access and the process being worked through to find a solution for primary care service delivery in the South Wairarapa."

Other highlights were the visit to the Cameron Community Centre to see the quality work being done through there, ESPI compliance being achieved, and the level of collaboration and linkages that exist with other providers including DHBs.

"He was also full of praise for the initiatives in the Health of Older people, and the development of FOCUS into a "one stop shop" point of access," says Mr Meates. "Lastly, he commended us on having a well functioning Board."

The Minister also left with a good understanding of the challenges that the DHB continues to face including wage pressures, workforce issues, the impact and exposure to Inter-District Flows, the impact of new technologies, the impact of an increasing aging population, primary health workforce issues and Aged Care sustainability. He also had a good understanding of the need for the DHB to continue to innovate if it is to stay ahead of the game.

"Of note was the Minister's impression -from everyone that he met and spoke with - that things are happening in the Wairarapa," says Mr Meates. "He left with the impression that the Wairarapa District Health Board is now one of the best performing DHBs in the country. This is something that you should all feel very proud of. Well done."

### Medlab Central confirmed as Lab provider

Wairarapa DHB today announced the Medlab will be the provider for Wairarapa lab services from March 1st. All hospital staff will be offered the same jobs with the same terms and conditions. There should be no job losses through this process.

Pathologist Dr Bruce van den Heever will take up residence in Masterton and will be based full time in Wairarapa Hospital. He currently works for Medlab Central in Hawkes Bay.

# 77 years service between them



Anthea Lister's work mates helped her celebrate a significant birthday recently.

"I have loved working in health and have had a very interesting career. I've had excellent opportunities here despite the fact I had only two years in secondary school," says Anthea Lister who has been working here for nearly 45 years. After such amazing service in various administrative positions Anthea is weaning herself off full-time work to part-time for 32 hours a fortnight. She is now a project co-ordinator focusing on data integrity and clinical coding.

Anthea knows as much as anyone about the hospital, its history and the people who have walked the corridors. She arrived in 1960, working as medical typist on a clunky old typewriter which produced carbon copies. She also relieved as telephonist on the manual switchboard. At that time she says the orderly was also the ambulance driver and whenever the ambulance was needed for an emergency the siren on the roof sounded and the orderly took off to drive the ambulance. Anthea was here in 1963 when the new three storey ward block was built and when bulky new computers with MS Dos systems were installed to transform record keeping. In 1977 Masterton Hospital was the first in New Zealand to implement the admission/discharge system linked to a national health services computer which aimed to improve patient care through more complete, accurate and timely information on patients. That was the year Anthea returned to work after having had four babies and she was the typist for the nursing school which trained enrolled and general nurses on-site. Later she was Ward Clerk in Ward 7 (medical ward) where she was responsible for charts, menus, discharge summaries and helping the Charge Nurse. In the mid eighties Anthea was telephonist in Patient Information Services (people who worked there were fondly regarded as PIS(S) Offs). They recorded all calls on bulky tape recorders –this was before the computerized telephone and paging system. Later as Manager of PIS she wrote the first Procedure Manual which she keeps as a quaint record of the past – it's a hardback book in longhand which outlines appropriate methods and systems.

"I loved spreadsheets and managing workloads." she says. "I had to know how every department worked and I implemented systems and processes to ensure data integrity. I tried to lead by example and show my team the importance of attention to detail and being thorough. The important thing is to support your team and encourage and value them."

Affectionately known as "The Dragon", Anthea has been a strong influence in the organization and has a reputation of working with great tenacity to improve or simplify bureaucratic systems. With the move to the new hospital patient information services have become decentralized and Anthea has taken on a part-time role with a change of focus. She remains an organizational gem with knowledge, wisdom and analytical skills. "I have always lived for work and I am happy I can now wean myself off by moving to part-time employment. I have always done my best and I feel rewarded for the effort I've put in." In her part-time retirement she plans to spend more time with her four children and 10 grandchildren.

## Farewell to Janet



Janet Elers started on the night shift 32 years ago, nurse aiding in Wards 5,7 and 9. "For 12 years I was everybody's dogsbody, but I loved it," she says. From there she went to a day job in Theatre and Sterile Services where she

says "it took nearly 10 years to get used to sleeping at night after having done night duty for so long."

The preparation and sterilisation of instruments proved to be a movable feast with a move downstairs in 1998 and in 2006 CSS moved into the new hospital, in the Periop Unit. Through that time Janet completed her Sterilising Technician's course, a taxing programme of study which she began at 60. "It was a lot of hard work," she says, "and very hands-on with tests every six weeks. I was thrilled when I was certificated."

Colleagues, Victoria Wilkinson and Lance Lenihan, say Janet has been a mentor, always supportive and encouraging, especially during exam times.

Janet says she will miss the whole team in Theatre, but as she is coming up 67 feels it is time for more gardening or hopping in the car with no strict timetable and no particular plans.

