



What we've been working on this year

As we wrap up 2014 we wanted to celebrate some of the achievements SIRTH has made in the last year

Allied Health Assistants taking up new qualification

Two Allied Health Assistants (AHAs) at Ashburton Hospital, Margaret Kelly and Megan Wellman, have just completed their studies towards the National Certificate for Health Assistants (Rehabilitation Strand) with the support of Veronica Ligteringen, Head of Therapy Services at Ashburton Hospital and Registered Careerforce Assessor (pictured right). Margaret and Megan are part of the first cohort of AHAs to come around the South Island to complete their National Certificate. Training towards a National Certificate was offered to all existing DHB based AHAs across the South Island, and a couple of AHAs working in primary health organisations regionally have also taken up the opportunity.

Prior to Margaret and Megan commencing their workplace training last October, Veronica trained as a Registered Assessor with Careerforce. Careerforce Assessors are qualified and industry experienced experts who work with trainees to ensure their skills, experience and hard work are recognized in line with NZQA requirements. Veronica, who has a clinical background as a Speech-Language Therapist, has also been the Assessor for three AHAs based at Timaru Hospital.

For Veronica, being offered the opportunity to support assistants to gain a NZQA qualification was something she could not pass up. "Being a Careerforce Assessor has allowed me to support my staff in a practical way. It is quite a responsi-

bility to be an Assessor for Careerforce as we check our trainees submitted assignments against NZQA standards. It is not a role to be taken lightly, but it is a shared celebration when trainees hand in their final papers."

The new National Certificate for Allied Health Assistants is one way to acknowledge and grow the skills assistants



bring to our teams. As Veronica explains, "Our assistants are invaluable to our team and this pilot project seemed to be a forward-thinking plan to develop their skills. For the assistants this means a new qualification can be added to their CVs, but for Ashburton and Rural Health it means our assistants have demonstrated knowledge and skills which gives professional staff and team leaders increased confidence in how we may deploy them. As Allied Health Assistants with this qualification, these skills are transferable across sectors and positions, which gives us more flexibility in what type of support they provide to a wider range of Allied Health Professionals.

Toolkit released to support specialty nursing development

Developed out of the successful Gerontology Acceleration Programme (GAP), a new toolkit has been developed to assist organisations wanting to implement a specialty specific nursing development programme targeted at mid-career nurses. The toolkit's content was developed by nursing leadership in Canterbury District Health Board and is now being shared across the South Island.

While GAP was specific to nurses working in aged care, senior nursing leaders recognised that the concept could fit other specialties of nursing and that the organisation and governance of such a programme would be similar irrespective of specialty. The resources in the toolkit have been developed through the experience of implementing the GAP and can be used and adapted to suit the needs of other programmes.

The nursing workforce accelerated programme focuses on enhancing the career development for Registered Nurses working within a specialty across the health care continuum by providing a different range of professional development opportunities. The programme has four components: Clinical experience through the rotations in two pre-selected specialty focussed clinical areas; Generic programme expectations with mentor support; Postgraduate nursing education as determined by the governance group; and Professional Development Recognition Programme (PDRP) participation.

For more information, or to view the toolkit, click [here](#).

We've made fantastic progress on a whole range of initiatives this year—here are a few of the highlights:

- 59 Allied Health Assistant trainees are undertaking Careerforce training, with some of this first cohort recently completing their qualification
- Increased the number of sonography trainees in the South Island for 2015
- Thanks to funding from HWNZ we have been able to allocate two extra Clinical Psychology internships
- Collaboration on a single eLearning platform across the South Island has continued with a business case expected to be presented to the Alliance Leadership Team in early 2015.
- We have completed an audit of clinical simulation resources
- The South Island saw the highest number of Level 1 Advance Care Planning courses completed in New Zealand during the July–September quarter; there have also been 8 Level 2 courses completed this year.
- A position statement on Sustainable Nursing was developed and has been approved by the South Island Directors of Nursing
- Established the Nursing Community of Practice to work collaboratively on developing the nursing workforce for the South Island
- A contract for Lippincott online procedures has been signed with a proposed go live date of 2nd March 2015.
- We have worked to raise the profile of nursing with several of our South Island nurses being profiled in publications.
- Implementation of the Midwifery Quality Leadership Programme across the South Island
- A pilot PGY 2 into General Practice programme has commenced in Canterbury DHB with two practices hosting these resident medical officers as part of implementing the new Medical Council prevocational curriculum
- Increased Anatomical Pathology trainees by 1 FTE
- Completion of the Mental Health & Addictions workforce stocktake to identify trends, opportunities and weaknesses in the South Island workforce
- Establishment of a Mental Health & Addiction core education group to share resources and work on developing regional learning packages.

Health Workforce Workshop plotting path for the future

In October, SIRTH brought together senior clinicians and managers from South Island DHBs along with colleagues from Health Workforce New Zealand to look at how to support and grow the workforce our health services will need in the future. The day was described as an incredibly useful opportunity to share ideas and identify actions that can be taken to ensure the sustainability of our workforce in the coming 5 to 10 years.

Leaders from extremely varied sectors such as technology, sporting and retail offered their insights into workforce development and organisational change in their fields, as well as Nelson College students. HWNZ Dr Graeme Benny presented on some of the challenges and opportunities facing

the health sector, especially emphasising the need for paradigm change in the way health services work together and the need to build a more flexible workforce.

Workshop participants were tasked with identifying what the main priorities were for the health sector and the workforce over the coming 12 months. The key underlying theme centred around fostering innovation, integration and connection across local health services as well as regionally; with specific areas that need to be focused on including the need to rethink how we make health an interesting career choice for young people; the need for a generalist model of care that is supported by specialists; and the importance of continuing to work collectively across the South Island.

To find out more about SIRTH and access useful resources including links to post graduate training opportunities and e-learning information, visit our [website](#). Or For more information contact:

Kate Rawlings, SIRTH Programme Director: kate.rawlings@siapo.health.nz Ph: (03) 378 6418 or 027 523 4243

Kath Goodyear, SIRTH Project Facilitator: kathryn.goodyear@siapo.health.nz Ph: (03) 378 6668 or 027 703 0614

Catherine Coups, Allied Health Project Lead: catherine.coups@siapo.health.nz Ph: (03) 378 6940

Valerie Williams, Mental Health & Addiction Workforce Planning Lead: valerie.williams@siapo.health.nz Ph: 027 2579 504

In agreeing a collaborative regional direction, the South Island DHBs have committed to a *best for people, best for system* alliance framework to negotiate a way into the future.