

# Child Health Special Issue

March 2015



## Collaborating for Better Child Health Outcomes in 2015



As health professionals and families across the country take a closer look at child health and wellbeing this month as a part of Well Child Week and Children's Day, the Child Health Group for the South Island Alliance is reporting good progress in a series of projects which together are hoping to lift the overall standard of child and maternal health in the South.

The group have been collaborating since 2012 to identify and realise opportunities for improving the quality, efficiency and sustainability of child health services delivered by health service providers in the South Island. This special issue captures some of the recent developments within the Child Health group's (CHSLA) workstream to ensure that stakeholders and those working in child and maternal health are kept up to date with the latest happenings from the group.

## Safe Sleep Policy Audit Underway

Each year in New Zealand 40 to 50 babies on average die from Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI). Following the introduction of a Safe Sleep Policy in 2013 for South Island Providers, the Child Health Group is now implementing an audit of the policy, starting with Canterbury DHB, to help monitor the application of the policy within DHB settings.

The Safe Sleep Policy was developed to ensure that South Island DHB health professionals had the necessary skills and resources to model safe sleeping arrangements and advice for infants, families and whanau. The audit will initially focus on individualised care, whilst a second audit tool is being finalised that will assess the systems in place to support effective delivery of the policy.



Nelson Marlborough Community Paediatrician and CHSLA member Dr Nick Baker says that the audit is an important opportunity to protect more children from SUDI: *"The policy was the first step in helping us to support all South Island DHBs to implement safe sleep practices. By doing this audit we can identify yet more ways in which we can help parents to achieve safe sleep for their babies."* Photo: Left, Nick Baker.

## Meet Incoming Chair David Barker



This month we welcome David Barker - the Southern DHB Clinical leader for Children's Health - into his new role of Chair of the CHSLA. David has been a member of the Group since its formation in 2012 and David replaces Nicola Austin as outgoing Chair. David is

tasked with leading the group forward for the next two years, supported by Deputy Chair Paediatrician Clare Doocey from Canterbury DHB.

Speaking about his appointment David said, "It's a privilege to take on this role. I look forward to progressing the work plan with assistance from members of the CHSLA, and would like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of all health professionals working with children and adolescents throughout the South Island."

## New Child Health Pathways Planned

Since its formation the CHSLA has been working on creating integrated, effective child health pathways to support South Island clinicians to deliver effective, integrated quality care through the health care system for patients and their families.

Recent additions to the HealthPathways web-based information portal include a child eczema/dermatitis pathway, a child/young person's sexual abuse pathway, recurrent staph infections and MRSA pathways. During 2015 the group is supporting the development of South Island specific pathways in the following areas:

- A transition pathway for children moving from child into adult primary care and secondary care services.
- Children with type 1 or type 2 diabetes (through the Diabetes Working Group)
- Diagnosis and treatment of developmental disorders in under 5 year olds

The pathways are an increasingly valuable tool for clinicians says GP and CHSLA member Viv Patton, who is leading the project for the CHSLA, "There are between 25 and 30 child health specific health pathways established now to support South Island health practitioners and we know that they are hugely important for GPs."

"The pathways provide a detailed 'care map', which support all members of a health care team - whether they work in a hospital or the community - to be on the 'same page' when it comes to looking after a patient. Ultimately it means we can provide an integrated service, which is best for patient and best for system."

The South Island Regional Health Service Pathways accessible via the South Island Alliance ([www.sialliance.health.nz](http://www.sialliance.health.nz)) website or via <http://si.healthpathways.org.nz/>

## SI E-Growth Charts Project Update

CHSLA members have been working since 2012 to establish a model for a South Island Electronic Growth Chart that would provide a comprehensive, effective way of capturing and charting patient-specific data regarding growth from birth to adulthood, that would work within primary, secondary and community settings.

Members are working alongside the South Island Information Services SLA and the national steering group to progress this project. Two models are currently being reviewed, with recommendations for a preferred model underway. It is envisaged that the selected approach will work alongside the national solution for recording growth from birth. Dr Nicola Austin, Clinical Director, Neonatal at CDHB is leading the project; "Our aim is to capture vital information about each patient at each point of interaction, that will help create a meaningful picture of overall health, so we can more easily identify issues and monitor health conditions in all provider settings."

