

17 April 2015

PRESS RELEASE

Local GP makes a great ‘Buddy’

A Raglan doctor has received an award for her special support of a patient with a bleeding disorder. Dr Fiona Bolden has been recognised with a special ‘Buddy Award’ from the Haemophilia Foundation of New Zealand Inc. (HFNZ) on 17 April 2015, World Haemophilia Day.

Bolden, a general practitioner at the West Coast Health Centre was nominated by her patient Linda Mellsop-Anderson of Kawhia for helping make living with her von Willebrand disorder (vWD) much easier. Linda suffers from a rare form of the bleeding disorder, Type 2B, which affects her body’s ability to form blood clots.

“She’s always been there for me with well-based advice. Her words have given me strength, understanding and patience,” said Mellsop-Anderson.

Launched in 2015 and supported by healthcare company Novo Nordisk, the Buddy Awards recognise the vital support provided by friends, families, and health professionals who have to cope with the everyday challenges that bleeding disorders can involve. A national initiative, other Buddy Award winners include nurses, physiotherapists, family and friends of people with a bleeding disorder.

HFNZ Chief Executive, Richard Chambers, said: "The lack of public awareness of bleeding disorders means that families and friends take on a great deal of responsibility for their loved ones. The Buddy Awards are a way for people with a bleeding disorder to give a very special thank you to their 'buddy', be they friends, family or committed healthcare professionals."

HFNZ provides education and support to people with bleeding disorders and their families. Over 1300 people in New Zealand have bleeding disorders, including haemophilia and vWD, a genetic condition that caused by a missing or defective protein. People with vWD experience frequent nosebleeds, easy bruising and excessive bleeding during and after invasive procedures, such as tooth extractions and surgery. Women in particular often experience heavy menstrual periods that last longer than average and haemorrhaging after childbirth.

World Haemophilia Day is observed around the world to increase awareness of haemophilia and other bleeding disorders, with an ultimate goal of ensuring better diagnosis and access to care for the millions who have a rare bleeding disorder yet remain without treatment.

ENDS

“To improve the lives and long-term outcomes for people with bleeding disorders, enabling active, independent and fulfilling lives.”

About haemophilia and other bleeding disorders

Genetic conditions such as haemophilia, von Willebrand disorder, inherited platelet disorders, and other factor deficiencies are lifelong bleeding disorders that prevent blood from clotting properly. People with bleeding disorders do not have enough of a particular clotting factor, a protein in blood that controls bleeding, or else it does not work properly. The severity of a person's bleeding disorder usually depends on the amount of clotting factor that is missing or not functioning. People with haemophilia can experience uncontrolled bleeding that can result from a seemingly minor injury. Bleeding into joints and muscles causes severe pain and disability while bleeding into major organs, such as the brain, can cause death.

About Haemophilia Foundation of New Zealand Inc. (HFNZ)

HFNZ is a charitable organisation dedicated to improving the lives of all people with haemophilia, von Willebrand disorder and related disorders and their families/whanau. Established in 1958, they provide support and education to people with bleeding disorders and their families in New Zealand and represent the haemophilia population to health services and the government. For more information on HFNZ and haemophilia visit www.haemophilia.org.nz

For more information please contact:

Linda Mellsop-Anderson
021 314 018

Chantal Lauzon
National Information Coordinator, HFNZ
chantal@haemophilia.org.nz
M: 027 299 5201
HFNZ Office: 03 371 7477

Richard Chambers
CEO, HFNZ
richard@haemophilia.org.nz
M: 027 282 8332
HFNZ Office: 03 371 7477