The countdown is on – 25 days to go!

**In this issue:** Have you registered for conference 2019? • Conference to host Pat Farry Trust fundraiser film premier • RNZCGPs CME accreditation and much more...

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The Network's health promotion partner.

## Have you registered for conference 2019?

With just weeks to go, don't miss out on the opportunity to attend the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network's National Rural Health Conference in Blenheim from April 4-7. Come along and enjoy the CME, collegiality and Marlborough hospitality.

Keynote speakers include Dr Hine Elder, Dame Tariana Turia, Minister of Health Dr David Clark, Emeritus Professor Paul Worley (Australia's first National Rural Health Commissioner) and much more!

The conference will feature workshops, research presentations, concurrent sessions and eight keynote speakers across three days concluding with a Members' political and breakfast forum. A Gala Dinner and Awards Night, Welcome Function and several other dinners will again be features of the conference. To view the programme and register follow this LINK.

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2019
Healthy Rural Communities
Mauri Ora, Whānau Ora, Wai Ora
4 – 7 April 2019, Blenheim
REGISTER NOW!

A comprehensive trade and exhibition space will give delegates the opportunity to engage with industry representatives during the breaks.

WHAT: NZRGPN National Rural Health Conference
WHERE: Marlborough Convention Centre/ASB Theatre
WHEN: April 4 – 7, 2019

## Conference to host Pat Farry Trust fundraiser film premier

The Pat Farry Rural Health Education Trust is delighted to announce that it will host a film fundraiser as part of the National Rural Health Conference in Blenheim this year.

A private screening of 'She Shears' will take place at 7pm on the evening of April 5, 2019 at the ASB Theatre, immediately following the conference Welcome Function (between 5.15pm and 6.30pm).

Click here to book your ticket. You can also enjoy a "gourmet dinner box" (optional), $35 per person.

At the conclusion of 'She Shears' there will be a Q+A session with the film's director Jack Nicol, hosted by Dr Martin London.

## RNZCGPs CME accreditation

The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners Endorsed CPD Activity

The "NZRGPN National Rural Health Conference 2019, Blenheim" has been endorsed by the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP) and has been approved for up to 19.25 CME credits for the General Practice Educational Programme (GPEP) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) purposes. General Practitioners who complete the programme will need certificates that record this statement. These will be issued after participants have completed the programme, so medical practitioners participating in GPEP or CPD have the necessary documentation for submission to the college when this is requested.

## College of Nurses Aotearoa (NZ) Inc endorsement

ENDORSED BY COLLEGE OF NURSES AOTEAROA (NZ) INC

The College of Nurses Aotearoa (NZ) Inc is delighted to endorse the National Rural Health Conference being held from April 4– 7, 2019.

Nurses attending the conference can be allocated the appropriate Professional Development Hours for the actual hours they have attended over the duration of the conference.

## Rural gets a push in Minister's letter to DHBs

In a letter to Chairs of DHBs sent out in December setting out the Government's expectations for DHBs and their subsidiaries, Minister of Health David Clark states that "the Government expects DHBs with rural communities to consider their health needs and the factors affecting health outcomes for rural populations when making decisions regarding health services". Network Chief Executive Dalton Kelly says the reference to rural communities and their health needs amidst the five page letter is a pleasing sign that rural is definitely on the Minister's radar.

## News

### Government-funded study assessing iMOKO

An independent study funded by the Ministry of Health and ACC is evaluating the use of virtual health service iMOKO for efficiency and efficacy. (Scoop)

Developed by clinician Lance O'Sullivan, iMOKO enables trained teachers at participating kohanga, day-care centres and schools to securely send health information about students with common conditions such as head lice and strep throat to a digital health team working in Auckland.

Read more.

### Cough meds disappear from shelves, but still available

People wanting to buy certain cough medicines will have to talk to a pharmacist and give them their name and address or get a prescription from a doctor. (RNZ)

Medicines containing cough suppressant dextromethorphan were taken off supermarket and pharmacy shelves following concerns they could be abused.

Gee's Linctus is now only available after a trip to the doctors while Vicks, Strepsils and Panadol Cold and Flu Relief can only be bought after speaking with a pharmacist.

Read more.

### NZMA joins call for comprehensive dental service

The New Zealand Medical Association is joining the call for a comprehensive and affordable dental service to be made available to all New Zealanders. (Scoop)

"Dental decay remains the most prevalent chronic, yet irreversible, disease in New Zealand, and significant disparities exist in oral health in New Zealand. While children have access to free dental care this is an issue for all age groups including older New Zealanders and cost is a major barrier, says Dr Kate Baddock, Chair of the NZMA. "We know that Māori and Pasifika have worse oral health outcomes as well as those living in areas of higher socioeconomic deprivation - this is an equity issue that must be addressed."

Read more.

### Summer swine flu outbreak: Concern as more Hawke's Bay orchard workers struck down

An outbreak of swine flu at a Hawke's Bay orchard has doctors concerned and is pushing an already stretched seasonal fruit picking workforce in Hawke's Bay closer to breaking point.

Hawke's Bay District Health Board's medical officer of health Nick Jones said as of Tuesday (March 5) just under 100 fruit pickers in the region had experienced flu-like illness.

Read more.

### John Tamihere: New Zealand's healthcare fit for museum, not hospital

**COMMENT (NZ Herald)**

When a conversation about health, welfare, education, justice or housing occurs in New Zealand, people's eyes can glaze over — and for good reason.

The question is always like eating an elephant. Where do you start, how do you start and why do you start. This requires an open and most importantly informed discussion on making things better.

Let's concentrate on health.

Read more.

### Euthanasia debate: Why are we forcing Kiwis to die horrible, painful deaths?

OPINION: I can't think of any new argument in favour of assisted dying. (Stuff)

The one that has been in place ever since New Zealanders first began making representations to Parliament to legalise voluntary euthanasia is still the one that best argues the case.

Read more.

### Select committee confirms inquiry into how health system treats Māori

Why Māori suffer worse health than other New Zealanders will be investigated by Parliament.

The Māori affairs select committee will hold an inquiry into Māori health inequalities, its chairman and Labour MP Rino Tirikatene confirmed.

The Herald understands the inquiry is likely to include a specific focus on the Government drug-buying agency Pharmac.

Read more.

### Worries over anti-vaxxers: DHBs say diseases like measles are being seen again as infant immunisation declines

District health boards have anti-vaxxers in their sights, saying diseases almost eradicated in New Zealand are being seen again. (NZ Herald)

Labour MP Louisa Wall asked DHB members appearing before the health select committee at Parliament today about an increase in the number of parents declining to have their children immunised against the usual range of diseases such as measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).

Read more.

## THAT'S INTERESTING

### Groundbreaking Tauranga prostate research could improve life quality for older men

Groundbreaking research under way in Tauranga could improve the quality of life for older men worldwide with a common condition. (NZ Herald)

Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) is a urinary outflow obstruction suffered by many men as they age. A 24-month study in Tauranga is testing ways to relieve it.

Read more.

## LINKS

Ministry of Health online bulletins, click here.
Learning on Fence Posts, Otago University rural research blog, click here.
Health Workforce New Zealand stakeholder bulletin, click here.
Mobile Health news, click here.
Medline (USA rural health) click here.
Death Documents Project (Ministry of Health), click here.

### Not a member? Join the Network!

The Network is the only nationwide membership-based organisation in New Zealand representing the interests of rural general practice.

Visit our website for additional information and an online application form or contact Rob Olsen on 021 472 556.

### Testimonial

***"NZLocums have been helpful and supportive from beginning to end. I would not have been confident about starting a locum post in New Zealand without their support."***

**Tony Pearson, GP, UK.**

### Syphilis is on the increase - know how to stay safe and when to be tested

An increase in the number of syphilis cases across New Zealand, including the Bay of Plenty, has prompted a sexual health expert to call for people to know what they can do to stay safe and when to be tested. (NZ Herald)

Bay of Plenty District Health Board sexual health physician Dr Massimo Giola said we were in the midst of a syphilis epidemic and the number of cases had increased dramatically in the last five years.

Read more.

### NZ Doctor stories (log-in required)

### New temp boss for college, as another exit creates change during recruitment

RNZCGP acting chief executive Terina Moke has resigned, saying she did not apply for the permanent position and believes the college needs "someone with fresh eyes".

Ms Moke also gives a large vote of confidence to newly elected president Sam Murton and the current board, saying it "cares about its people".

Read more.

### Murton gets to know the politicians, promises a 'bigger' voice

RNZCGP chair Sam Murton had a message for health minister David Clark at their first meeting earlier this month.

"I said to him, I'm not a 'banging the desk' person," Dr Murton says. "I'd rather be collaborative and make things work for both of us."

Read more.

### Dumped as GP services provider, trust asks minister to review DHB process

Whangaroa Health Services Trust has written to David Clark asking him to look again at how Northland DHB reached its decision to remove responsibility for primary care services from the Kaeo-based trust and seek a new provider.

"We are very concerned this is part of a larger plan to get us out of the health sector," trust chair Grant Lane says. "We were presented with a fait accompli by the [DHB] board. We want to make sure it's fair and above board."

Read more.

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### Open your New Zealand bank account

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## TELL US YOUR STORY

We are looking for health sector-related stories from around rural New Zealand. People, places, achievements and challenges. If you have a good yarn to tell contact Network communications manager Rob Olsen, email **rob@rgpn.org.nz** or **021 472 556**.