



QMC Allergy Specialist Nurse Sandra Fleming and GPSI Allergy Dr Tonya Cruikshank

## Queenstown Allergy Clinic brings specialised care closer to home

A dedicated allergy clinic at Queenstown Medical Centre (QMC) is improving patient access to expert care, while reducing pressure on general practice teams and secondary health care services.

QMC's Dr Tonya Cruikshank and practice nurse Sandra Fleming hold allergy clinics, twice monthly, seeing patients with food and environmental allergies and associated conditions, such as eczema. The duo has additional training in allergy diagnoses, treatments and education and while they've been seeing patients with allergies for a number of years, growing demand has led to the specialist GP clinic – sometimes called a GPSI or GP with special interest clinic.

"The prevalence of allergies in the

population is on the rise," Dr Cruikshank explains. "Allergies are complex and usually require longer appointments, so a dedicated clinic with specialist staff makes sense."

Dr Cruikshank said the benefit for patients is the option of having specialised care, without having to wait for and travel to a hospital appointment in Dunedin or Invercargill.

"Our goal is to provide patients with more clarity and understanding, helping them better self-manage their own treatments with our support," Dr Cruikshank says.

For Queenstown mum Rebecca Roycroft, whose son Felix was seen at the clinic recently, the longer appointment and more in-depth discussion with the clinical team had immediate benefits in treating the four-year-old's eczema.



Elizabeth Hanan - the first stroke patient to receive thrombolysis treatment via telehealth technology at Lakes District Hospital

## Telestroke service a success in Queenstown

Elizabeth Hanan was having dinner on Christmas Eve with family in Arrowtown, when they noticed her face lopsided and speech slurred.

Concerned it was a stroke, Mrs Hanan was admitted to Lakes District Hospital. She became the hospital's first stroke patient to receive thrombolysis treatment via telehealth technology.

Lakes District Hospital implemented the South Island's new telestroke service in December, enabling neurologists and stroke specialists in Christchurch to provide advice and support via video link to doctors treating stroke patients.

The 82-year-old Dunedin resident was treated by Dr Jenny James in Frankton, who performed an examination via

video link with Christchurch neurologist Dr Teddy Wu. Mrs Hanan received 'clot-busting' thrombolysis treatment before being flown to Invercargill Hospital, and sent to the acute stroke unit at Dunedin Hospital. She has made a full recovery, with no residual symptoms.

The South Island telestroke service helps smaller communities access the same 24/7 neurological expertise and care as city patients. Ideally, it will also lead to more South Islanders receiving the life-saving clot retrieval procedure, currently available only at Christchurch Hospital.

Mrs Hanan is grateful for the service. "Once you get to my age, you really need to be close to health services. I'm extremely lucky – I feel like I dodged a bullet."



Looking Southbound at the Wilson's and Cadbury demolition sites

## New Dunedin Hospital project update

With demolition on the New Dunedin Hospital site set to kick off soon, we're excited to provide an update on what's happening, and what to expect.

Ceres New Zealand LLC have recently been awarded the site clearance and demolition works contract. They have decades worth of experience working on large demolition projects, including the Christchurch rebuild.

Demolition of the Cadbury distribution warehouse will start in early March. This will be followed by stripping out the inside of all the Cadbury buildings. Demolition works are then expected to start on the Ministry-owned buildings on the Wilson's site, followed by demolition of the Cadbury buildings, subject to resource and consents.

There will be minimal traffic disruption. The traffic management plan outlines that cycle lanes and two lanes on both north and southbound sections of State Highway 1 will remain open throughout demolition.

There may be occasions when there are short term disruptions, which we'll notify you about in advance.

In other project areas, agreement on the Wilson's parking site acquisition has now been reached.

The design team, led by architects Warren and Mahoney, are continuing to test new options as part of the design process. An important part of this is ensuring the building integrates well with the urban landscape of Dunedin's CBD.



Southland's Clinical Nurse Specialist Wound, Mandy Pagan holds 'The Australian Wound and Practice Research Journal'

## Southlanders pioneer wound care treatment

New Zealand pioneers in wound care, Southland's Clinical Nurse Specialist Wound, Mandy Pagan and her colleagues, continue to take Southern innovation to the fore with wound care professionals nationally, in Australia and around the globe.

The prestigious publication, The Australian Wound and Practice Research Journal, in December published the fourth paper Mandy has written on innovative wound care practices she and her colleagues have developed in Southland. Two of these papers have won Coloplast Biatain Australasian Literary Awards.

Titled, 'Implementing a pilot skin and wound care programme in two residential aged care facilities', the December paper, co-authored by Registered Nurse

Phyl Harvey, reports the findings of a six month project where wound specialists worked with the staff and patients of two Southland rest homes to improve wound care; and outcomes for residents.

It is the latest achievement in nearly 20 years of championing simple and practical wound care innovation by a committed team of Southland nurses.

Another Southland innovation that has attracted attention and is in use around the globe, is "The Southland Snail", which was designed by the nurse-led wound clinic. It is an award-winning pressure device – a simple yet ingenious solution made by wrapping wound stocking into a 'snail' shape to help chronic venous leg ulcers.

Passionate, practical and driven, Mandy stresses the importance of sharing your knowledge with others.

With this in mind, the pilot skin and wound care programme conducted in Southland included development of resources and guides for rest home carers and nurses to encourage preventative skin care.

She continues to work with the rest homes and on hospital wards, providing "hot tips" resources and checking wound prevention equipment. She also has roles in teaching and leadership, including as current President of the New Zealand Wound Care Society.

Mandy credits Southland and the people she works with for making practical advances in wound care. "We can do a lot here in Southland – you don't have to be at the top of the world in a big metropolitan hospital to achieve things," she said.

## Inflatable bowel attracts interest



Tevita Nabura, Thomas Umaga-Jensen and Connor Garden-Bachop

Dunedinites were able to take a look inside the human body earlier this month, as the Southern DHB's giant inflatable bowel made public appearances at the University of Otago's Clocktower Picnic and the Dunedin Farmers' Market.

The bowel features interactive information panels to engage people of all ages and highlight the importance of bowel health and Southern DHB's National Bowel Screening Programme (NBSP).

As it approaches its second anniversary in April, the programme continues to make a positive difference to the lives of many local residents. To date, it has led to the diagnoses of 145 cancers and in excess of 1105 cases of polyps, which can turn into cancer over time.

The Southern participation rate is 73% overall, exceeding the national target of 60%.

## Novel Coronavirus – protect yourself and your family

While we are still learning about this new virus it's important that everyone should know how to protect themselves from it.

- Protect yourself from the virus, as you would for the flu:
- Regularly wash your hands (for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap and dry thoroughly)
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze
- Stay home if you're sick
- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms
- If you do feel unwell you should avoid public gatherings and events
- On current advice, hand and cough hygiene are more effective than masks for reducing the spread of novel Coronavirus.

### Where can I find more information?

- Ministry of Health website
- Call Healthline on 0800 358 5453 or your local doctor

## Board Update



Dave Cull, Chair

Kia ora koutou

It's great to greet you in my new role as chair of Southern DHB, and I look forward to keeping you updated through these pages and elsewhere about the work we're doing to make the Southern health system as good as it possibly can be.

We've now held our first official meeting as a newly elected/appointed board. Across the team we are enthusiastic and take seriously our responsibility to continue the efforts of the commissioner team in meeting the expectations of Minister Clark to optimise clinical services within a reduced deficit.

We are under no illusions that this is an easy task. We are very conscious of the health service needs of the whole Southern community including challenges in several areas in maternity care. Indeed I encourage those who are interested to take the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the future of primary maternity facilities in the Central Otago and Wanaka areas.

We also need to prepare both hospital based and primary and community services for delivery in and with the new Dunedin hospital.

Obviously the Board cannot single-handedly achieve what is needed. Delivering optimum health services involves all of the Southern DHB – the Board, management, clinicians, GPs and allied health workers – and many others across the health sector in a team effort that values everyone's contribution.

I look forward to working with our teams and the many health workers in the community to build a strong health system for the southern region.

## Where should we locate primary maternity facilities in Central Otago/ Wanaka?

Southern DHB and the Central Lakes Locality Network are now inviting feedback about the future of primary maternity facilities in the fast-growing Central Otago/ Wanaka area.

Determining the best configuration of facilities in this area is an action in the DHB's Integrated Primary Maternity System of Care.

"While we have a good understanding of the issues involved, we are very keen to listen to the community in a structured way and get this process right," says Executive Director Strategy, Primary and Community Lisa Gestro.

"We expect to propose some options by Easter and make decisions around the middle of the year. However, it is important we take the time that is needed to ensure the outcomes are the right ones for women and families."

Public feedback can be provided through a form on the website: <https://www.engage.southernhealth.nz/maternity>