

Team effort creates therapeutic garden

A community effort means patients in the ATR rehabilitation ward at Wakari Hospital now have a safe therapeutic outdoor courtyard area to socialise, relax, reflect and engage in therapy sessions.

The project was the idea of Occupational Therapist Mason Anderson. "I realised what a great space the courtyard was and that we weren't using it to its full potential for patient rehabilitation.

"We had already been using raised flower beds to plant and grow food as part of patient treatment, but this was difficult because the area was overgrown and underutilised," says Mason.

With the help of patients, the area has been cleared, overhanging trees cut back, new plants put in, and new pavers laid to increase ground area. Otago Polytechnic Occupational Therapy students Kelsey

Alexander and Ruby Coers, approached Mitre 10 who kindly donated timber and materials for a wheelchair-friendly table as well as plants and an umbrella for shade.

Helen Murphy, Service Manager – Rehabilitation (Dunedin site) says the project has only happened thanks to team work and generous donations from the community.

"Funding for a new BBQ and Gazebo was donated from the Oamaru Stroke Support Group and the recent support from Mitre 10, together with the help of the Men's Shed who have made the table, has enabled us to create this enhanced therapeutic outside space for our patients."



A team effort – Otago Polytechnic students, Mitre 10, Oamaru Stroke Support Group, and Men's Shed helped staff and patients revamp the space



The multidisciplinary team ready to start a Friday clinic at Southland Hospital. Standing left to right: Jo Clark, Clinical Coordinator Outpatients, Rosemarie Pereira-Wright, Podiatrist, Rebecca Aburn, Vascular Nurse Practitioner, Charleen Waddell, Clinical Nurse Specialist Diabetes, Mandy Pagan, Clinical Nurse Specialist Wound. Seated left to right, Mrs Jo Krysa, Vascular Consultant, Zandri Redelinghuys, Clinical Orthotist

Diabetic Foot Clinic rolled out in Southland

People with diabetes in Southland, who are at high risk or have active foot disease, will benefit from a new service that brings patients together with a multidisciplinary team of specialists every Friday.

Southern DHB and WellSouth have been working together to design and implement a new system of care for diabetic patients with active foot disease and high risk feet.

The successful model that has been running in Otago is now being rolled out in Invercargill, at Southland Hospital, for the Southland region.

"The clinic brings together the expertise of an orthopaedic surgeon, a vascular surgeon, an endocrinologist, a wound care specialist, a diabetic nurse specialist, a podiatrist, a registered nurse, and the

orthotics team, enabling a comprehensive assessment and treatment plan to be sought for the benefit of the patient," says Southern DHB Portfolio Manager, Primary Care, David Murray.

"The team has a holistic approach to patient-centred care that includes optimal diabetes control, effective local wound care and infection control, pressure relieving techniques and ensuring adequate blood flow to the limb."

The benefits of this new system of care mean patients are referred to the appropriate service, Southland patients can access a multidisciplinary team and clinic, and the degree of urgency for each patient is better able to be determined.

Dean of Otago Medical School visits Southland Hospital

The Dean of Otago Medical School Professor Rathana Subramaniam met medical staff and students recently during his first visit to University's Invercargill Campus based at Southland Hospital.

He was in Southland to meet with staff and find out their aspirations for what Otago Medical School, particularly the Invercargill campus, will look like in the next 40 years.

"I want to hear what their vision is to grow the health component of Otago University over the next three decades," he says.

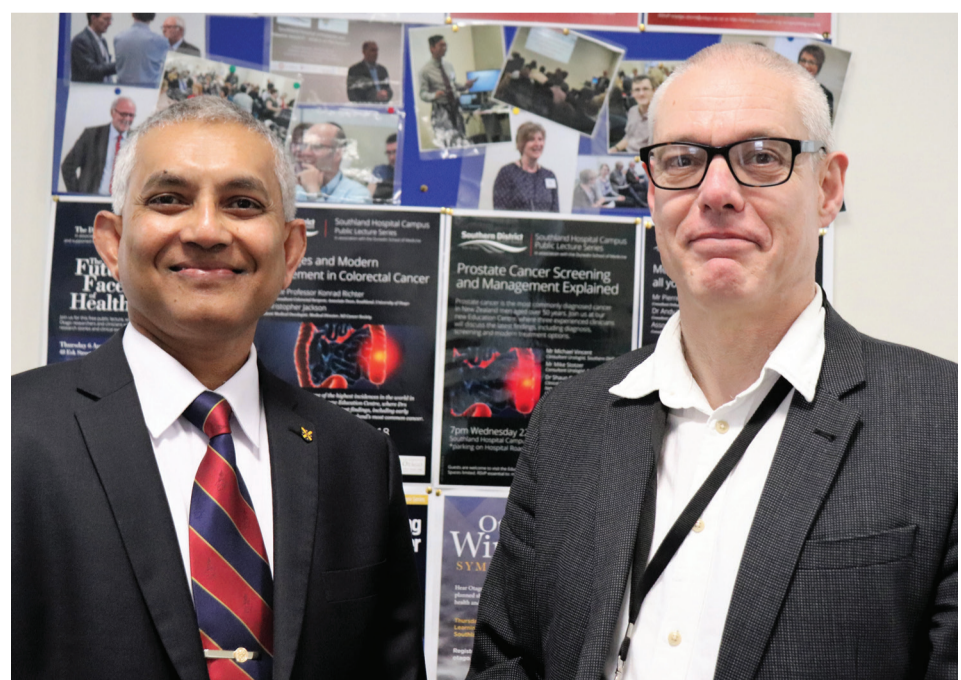
Professor Subramaniam, who trained in both Australia and New Zealand, worked at Auckland City and Waikato Hospitals before spending 15 years in the United States training in nuclear medicine. He

took up the position of Dean of Otago Medical School in January this year.

A self-confessed supporter of the regions, he is keen to foster joint appointments in Invercargill between the University and Southland Hospital, with an emphasis on niche, highly-focused research and clinical work.

After visiting Southland Hospital's Radiology Department, Professor Subramaniam has also offered to use his clinical skills as a nuclear medicine physician at Southland Hospital to treat Southland patients. He has already begun doing clinical work in Dunedin and is keen to do the same in Invercargill.

He intends to be back, both as Dean of the Medical School and a doctor caring for patients. "No doubt about that," he says.



From left: Dean of Otago Medical School Professor Rathana Subramaniam with Associate Professor Konrad Richter, Associate Dean Southland



Mates flags were raised on the site of the former Cadbury distribution warehouse last week, with kai served on site to give workers the opportunity to share the Mates in Construction message that it's okay to look after your mental health and wellbeing, and to talk to each other about it

New Dunedin Hospital project flying the flag for suicide prevention

‘Fly the Flag’ is an initiative that will see over 200 construction sites around the country flying the ‘Mates in Construction’ flag to show support and raise awareness of suicide prevention in the construction industry. It is a display to the broader community that the industry is actively involved in the prevention of suicide, and the New Dunedin Hospital project is getting right behind the initiative.

The project has a close connection with Mates in Construction NZ, the organisation dedicated to raising awareness around mental health and suicide prevention within the construction industry.

Earlier this year, the New Dunedin Hospital project hosted a Mates in Construction General Awareness Training session for local workers and project staff,

along with members of the community. This concept was introduced as an important early step made as part of the Workforce Central Dunedin Jobs and Skills Hub, set up to actively provide a number of skills, training and employment initiatives, along with wraparound support services for construction workers over the span of the New Dunedin Hospital project.

Mates in Construction NZ are seen as an important part of this support, with the relationship set to be strengthened for the flag raising initiative during the week of World Suicide Prevention Day.

Mates in Construction chief executive officer Victoria McArthur says the construction industry has the highest rate of suicide among workers of any commercial sector in New Zealand.

“Flying the Flag to recognise World Suicide Prevention Day shows our industry knows we all need to work collectively, to not only start the conversations about mental health and suicide prevention, but also to know what to do if a mate is struggling.”

New Dunedin Hospital Programme Director Mike Barns says the project is proud to be supporting this initiative.

“The New Dunedin Hospital is going to need a lot of construction workers over the course of the project. It makes good sense to do all we can to promote and support wellbeing within an industry that’s so integral to this project.”

Talented hands and big hearts

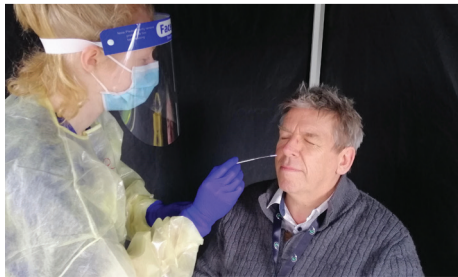
Another delivery of beautiful knitting from a group of Invercargill women with talented hands and big hearts was donated to the Children’s Ward at Southland Hospital recently.

Knitwitz are part of the Pay-It Forward action group at South Alive, and the group meets weekly at The Pod community rooms to connect through laughter and their love of knitting. Their talents benefit those in need in our community by knitting a range of slippers, blankets, beanies and singlets for new-born and at risk-babies. Almost every month, they generously take their latest creations to Southland Hospital where they are shared by Children’s Ward and the Maternity Unit.

Thank you to the wonderful ladies from Knitwitz!



Knitwitz representatives (left) Leila Stokes and (right) Marie Kelleher present Southland Hospital Children’s Ward Receptionist, Paulline Gillan (centre) with their latest donation of handknitting



Southern DHB’s Chief Medical Officer Dr Nigel Millar gets tested

Community gets behind surveillance testing

The Gore, Balclutha and Oamaru communities did their bit over the last couple of weeks by getting tested for COVID-19 at pop up testing centres.

Southern DHB Medical Officer of Health Dr Susan Jack has thanked the communities for getting a COVID-19 test.

“It helps us be sure there is not COVID-19 circulating in our region, and means that if we did find it, we’re in the best position to stamp it out quickly.”

Special thanks to WellSouth Community and the local authorities who co-hosted the events with Southern DHB, and everyone in the community who had a test.

Board Update



Dave Cull, Chair

Exciting news this month is undoubtedly the government’s approval in principle of the detailed business case for the New Dunedin Hospital.

This is an important milestone, providing a green light for our continued planning and development.

It has been a tremendous effort to reach this point, and I want to thank our teams of staff and community advisors who have worked through the many complexities involved in determining how best to use the 89,000 square metres to deliver the best health care for our district.

It is important to emphasise the significance of this, not just for Dunedin, but for the whole district.

The new hospital will be the main tertiary centre for health care for the 340,000 people living across the 62,000 square kilometres that make up the Southern district. It needs to enable excellent clinical practice, provide a calm and welcoming environment, make the best use of the digital technologies available, and be set up for the health needs of the future. Having experienced the sudden arrival of a pandemic, we are now more aware than ever that these needs can evolve quickly, and the importance of planning for a range of scenarios.

In determining what should go into the hospital, we also needed to have the conversations about what services need to be provided in a tertiary hospital and what services should be provided elsewhere – closer to our rural communities and people’s homes – and how this can be achieved through working differently and making use of technological advances.

This is a once in a generation opportunity to transform the health services in our district, and we are excited to now move into the next stages of this project. We appreciate everyone’s input into this, and look forward to continuing to keep you updated on the progress that’s being made.