**Community Health Council**

**Highlights from meeting 6th June 2024**

**Chair Lyneta Russell**

**1. Southland Hospital Update-Simon Donlevy**

Covid, the junior doctor strike and the blood service strike has been particularly challenging for Southland recently. Some beds have had to be closed due to Covid. Good news though is that approval has been obtained to open four new beds for orthopaedic patients. It is a short-term initiative but hopefully it will be extended beyond the end of June. The internal medicine teams and the physiotherapy services are another two services under pressure. The increase in orthopaedic beds having an onflow effect on the demand for physiotherapy services and nursing staff are being upskilled to provide some physiotherapy support.

**2. Restorative Practice**

James Goodwin and Kim Caffell provided the Council with an overview of Restorative Practice, required under the Ngā Paewera Health and Disability Standards to be implemented within five years of 1 July 2023. A Restorative Practice Steering Group will be established, 1/3 of which will be consumers. The aim of restorative Practice is to learn when things go wrong. When harm occurs restorative approaches provide a framework for restoring wellbeing, relationships and trust through respectful dialogue, collaboration and consensus. James and Kim confirmed that this process will not necessarily only apply to adverse events, and that staff also need to be included in restorative practice processes as it will also be healing for them. This process should also be an option in the management of complaints.

**3. Transition to Regional Consumer Councils**

I updated the Council on the move to Regional Consumer Councils and the impact that is having throughout New Zealand. Health NZ advised that Regional Coumncils would be in place by 1st July 2024 and Expressions of Interest in being a Council member have been called for. I, like most Council Chairs from around NZ, have been concerned at the process, mainly the lack of consumer input into the process and the Terms of Reference, which is a requirement of the Code of Expectations. Another concern is how local consumer input will feed into the Regional Councils. There is also a focus on hospitals rather than extending it to include primary health services as is happening here in the south. Both Te Whatu Ora Southern and WellSouth have expressed their support for the Southern CHC continuing as usual until directions otherwise.

**4. Clinical Council Update**

Rebecca Brushwood also expressed concern about the potential loss of consumer input with the transition to Regional Councils and will be inviting the Director of Consumer Engagement and Whānau Voice to talk to Clinical Council. Another concern for Clinical Council at present is the length of time taken to resolve Health and Disability complaints and the stress this places on patients and staff involved.

**5. CHC Roundtable**

Southland members outlined a new initiative for an internship for individuals with intellectual disability or autism and are looking for opportunities for internships, and that the organisations of Covid vaccinations locally have been challenging as only one site it available in Invercargill. Other sharing included the Gore community is feeling the impact of the Doctor strike, the changes coming as Health NZ takes on the contract for Waitaki Hospital and that crisis respite systems are now in place in the Waitaki area.

**6. Te Whatu Ora Update**

Hywel Lloyd reinforced the earlier discussion re the need for continued consumer engagement locally. He also provided an update on the impact of the junior doctor and blood service strikes, both of which had a significant impact on services.

Hywel provided information on the commissioning of Waitaki Hospital and informed Council that extensive community engagement in the redesign of the hospital services is planned. He also informed the Council that a lot of work is going on to address the after-hours situation in Wanaka and the overall pressures that health services in Central Otago were experiencing.

**7. Next Meeting** Will be online on 4th July.

23rd June 2024