

Dear General Practitioners,
The change to one PHO and one Southern DHB is progressing. We have been asked to continue our "usual patterns of referral" in the meantime, ie refer to specialists at Southland hospital.

I was concerned when we were told the funding for diabetic annual reviews was to be stopped but have been assured by Planning and Funding that the intention is not to stop these.

Waiting times for ultrasounds and mammograms have come down as a result of extra sessions. Other parts of NZ also have trouble with these waiting times and in some areas strict guidelines have been developed.

Newborn Hearing and Early Intervention Programme Each year, between 135 and 170 babies are born in NZ with mild to profound permanent congenital hearing loss. Historically the age of identification in NZ has been around 45 months of age which is late by international standards. Every DHB in the country is now being asked to develop a programme for the screening of newborns for severe hearing loss. Over the next few months, the Southern DHB will be setting up its screening pathway. Screeners are to be based in Invercargill, Dunedin and Central Otago with the objective of offering testing to all newborns.

HIV screening for pregnant women is also about to be "introduced" which is not the right word as some do this already.

Farewell from Jill McCoil

After 10 years in Elective Services (and approx. 38 at Southland Hospital!) I am finally retiring and handing over to Brenda Robson. I would like to thank all the GPs (some of whom I have known since they were House Surgeons/Registrars), particularly those on the focus groups at the start of the Elective Services project and Hugh Tapper and Caroline Corkill, in their role as GP Liaison, for all their help and co-operation. We haven't always agreed but in the end our mutual patients have usually benefited from our discussions! Special thanks to the Practice Receptionists and Practice Nurses who have fielded my many phone calls and requests for information. Brenda will be as strong an advocate for our patients as I have been and as I am staying on the casual staff for a short time I may well come back to haunt you.

Jill McCoil

Anybody who has worked closely with Jill over the years is invited (with partner) to join her

and John for a meal at the White Heron on Sat July 17th. For more information and RSVPs contact maree.jackson@southerndhb.govt.nz.

Before School Check (B4SC). This is performed by the Well Child Service (WCS) from Southern DHB - Public Health Nurses (PHNs) and Vision Hearing Technicians (VHTs). The B4SC attempts to reach all children in Southland around their 4 year old birthday. The check includes, vision, hearing, BMI, immunisation status, dental grade, physical developmental milestones, and social and behavioural development. The previous 3, 4 and 5yr screening (vision, tympanometry, hearing and health check) has been condensed into this 4yr old check. Referrals/followups for tympanometry or hearing outside this can be requested directly with the VHTs as in the past.

Presently B4SC outcomes are only reported to GPs if a problem is identified, this may be as a direct referral or the copy of referral to another agency/service.

Since July 2009, 815 children have had the check completed with another 254 in progress. This is about 75 % of the Southland cohort. The vast majority of these children are noted to be happy, healthy four year olds. Around 17% of children have required some form of assistance for health or welfare issues. The majority of referrals to GPs are for over/under weight issues, wetting & soiling problems, respiratory illness management, or further management of an identified health problem.

If you have queries regarding the B4 School Check programme, Gillian Sim, B4SC Coordinator can be contacted at 03 214 5773. or general information can be found at www.southerndhb.govt.nz

Respiratory update: Southland hospital does 300+ GP requested spirometries a year. At the moment these are not "reported" compared with ECGs which are. There would be benefits and risks reporting them all (more info v. delay) but Roland Meyer, respiratory physician, has offered to comment on any you may have questions about. If you want "Full Lung Function Tests" (as opposed to spirometry) these will need to be ordered via a specialist. You can contact Dr Meyer at roland.meyer@southerndhb.govt.nz Please include your Medical Council number when you order spirometry so the Medical technicians are covered to give salbutamol.

There will be no newsletter next month as I am away for a few weeks.

Estimated Waiting times for a First Specialist Assessment – May 2010

Speciality	Priority	Estimated Wait
Audiology	All referrals	2-6 months
Cardiology	Urgent	6-8 weeks
	Semi-urgent	8-12 weeks
	Routine	5-6 months
Dental	Adult routine	6 months
	Child Routine	2-3 months
Dermatology	Urgent	4-8 weeks
	S-urgent	3-4 months
	Routine	6-8 months
Diabetes	Urgent	1 month
	Routine	9 month
Endocrinology	Routine	6 months
	S-urgent	1-2 months
ENT	Urgent	2-4 weeks
	S-urgent	4 months
Gastroenterology Medical OP	Urgent	3-4 weeks
	Semi urgent	5-6 months
	Routine	6 months
Gastroscopy	A	3-4 weeks
	A/B	6-8 weeks
	B and C	6 and 9 months
Colonoscopy	A	3-4 weeks
	A/B	4-6 weeks
	B	3-4 months
	C	6 months
General Medicine		3-4 months
Gynaecology	urgent	6-8 weeks
	S-urgent	4-5 months
	Routine	6 months
Neurology	Urgent	1-2 weeks
	S-urgent	2-6 weeks
	Routine	4-6 months

Speciality	Priority	Estimated Wait
Maxillofacial surgery	All referrals	No waiting list
Neurosurgery	Urgent	Within 1 month
	S-urgent	Within 1 month
	Routine	6 months
Ophthalmology	Urgent	1-2 weeks
	Semi-urgent	2-6 months
	S-urgent cataract	1-3 months
	Routine cataract	3-4 months
Orthopaedics	Urgent	4 months
	S-urgent	6 months
Renal Medicine	Urgent	2-4 weeks
	S-urgent	2-3 months
	Routine	4-6 months
Paediatric surgery	Routine	4 months
Paediatrics Medical	Routine In'gill	5 months
	Gore	5 months
	Queenstown	5 months
Respiratory	Urgent	< 2 weeks
	Semi-urgent	2-8 weeks
	Routine	4-6 months
Rheumatology	Urgent	1-2 months
	Semi urgent	3-4 months
	Routine	4-6 months
Surgical Services	Urgent	Within 1 month
	S-urgent	1-2 months
	Routine	2-3 months
Urology	Urgent	1-3 weeks
	S-urgent	6-8 weeks
	Routine	3 months
Minor surgery	Urgent	4 weeks
	S-urgent	4-6 weeks
	Routine	4-6 months
AT and R	Urgent	< 4 weeks
	S-urgent	2-3 months
	Routine	< 6 months

Mental Health		
SMHET Invercargill Community Mental Health Team (ICMHT)		Triaged same day Within 2 weeks
Rhanna		Contact made same day
CAFS		Urgent < 24 hours Routine 1 month

Oncology		
Haematology	Urgent Semi-urgent	5 days 16 days
Oncology	Urgent Semi-urgent	3 days 18 days
Radiotherapy	Urgent Semi-urgent	1 days 16 days

Medical Imaging Waiting Times		
MRI	Urgent	Same day
	Semi-urgent	2-3 weeks
	ACC	12 days
	Private	12 days
	Routine	8 weeks
CT	Semi-urgent	1 -2 weeks
	ACC	Within 10 days
	Private patients	Within 10 days
	Routine OP	6 weeks
Ultrasound		8-9 months
Mammography	Recall patients	<1 weeks
	Urgent	1 week
Nuclear Medicine	Urgent	1 weeks
	Semi-urgent	2-3 weeks
	ACC	10 days
	Private	2 weeks
	Routine	2-3 weeks
	Cardiac scans	4.5 months
X-ray appointments	X-ray	3 months (2 for CXR or AXR)
	Urgent	please phone MRTs ext 8459
IVU		3 months
Ba. F Thru / Ba Enemas		3 months

Diagnostic testing		
ECGs, spirometry, arterial brachial indices, Ambulatory BPs	urgent	1 week
	semi urgent	2 weeks
	routine	4 weeks
Holters	urgent,	2-3 weeks
	semi-urgent	3-6 weeks
	routine	6-8 weeks
Echocardiograms		6-8 weeks
Sleep studies:		3 months (ref via Respiratory)
Nerve conduction studies	Refer to Peter Taylor at Windsor Specialist Centre and clearly mark whether private, public or ACC	