Focus on Men’s Health in November

Each November men put down their razors and participate in Movember to raise awareness about men's health issues, and raise funds for prostate cancer and male mental health.

With moustaches sprouting up around the country, Movember aims to change the face of men’s health by putting a fun twist on a serious issue – that men need to pay more attention to their health.

Southern DHB Chief Medical Officer and Consultant Urologist David Tulloch said Movember was a really good way to raise awareness of an important issue. “We know men can be reluctant to take action about their health – men are less likely to schedule doctors’ appointments when they feel ill or for an annual physical, thereby denying themselves the chance of early detection and effective treatment of common diseases.”

“Movember is a great campaign to get people talking about prostate cancer and men’s health in a way that breaks down the traditional taboos on these topics.”


Sexual Awareness Workshop a Success

Did you know that New Zealand has one of the highest unintended pregnancy rates (second highest in developed countries)?

Increasing community awareness around this and other aspects of sexual health has been the focus of workshops coordinated by Public Health South this year.

Bridge Armour, Invercargill-based Health Promotion Advisor for Sexual Health, has been liaising with local and national agencies throughout Southland and Central Otago to provide needs-based current information to schools, workplaces, organisations and health workers. The resulting workshops provide opportunities to share, inform on and improve strategies covering local and national sexual health statistics, HPV immunisation, alcohol and risky behaviour, gay and lesbian issues, HIV/AIDS, as well as highlight the support there is for consumers and professionals.

The response from the community has been very positive, with a great turnout in Invercargill in July and Queenstown in early November.

For more information please contact: Bridget Armour, Health Promotion Advisor, Public Health South; 03 211 0900 Ext 728, or your local health organisation.

Southern Sexual Health Clinic (Invercargill & Gore)
03 214 4978
Gore Medical Centre
03 208 9222
Queenstown Medical Centre
03 441 0500
Southern PHO
03 214 6436

All Blacks Cheer Up the Children’s Ward

A visit from the All Blacks put a big smile on children’s faces at Dunedin Hospital recently. All Black players Piri Weepu, Ben Afeaki and Francis Saili visited the Children’s Ward ahead of their big match against the Wallabies. They received a warm welcome from a very excited bunch of children and parents. Children’s Ward Charge Nurse Manager Shirley Bell said that, “the visit was really appreciated and was a real highlight for the children, who were all very excited. It really cheered them up and made their day.”

Luke Crowl was among the many fans who couldn’t wait to see the players, especially Piri Weepu. Luke, a keen rugby player, also plays halfback like Piri and said he’d been really looking forward to the visit and it was awesome to meet them.

Take a look at the All Blacks visit on our Southern DHB You Tube Channel: http://www.youtube.com/southerndhb

Children’s Health Inpatient Project Nearing Completion

The relocation and redevelopment of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Children’s Ward and Paediatric Assessment Unit (PAU) at Dunedin Hospital is nearly finished. All electrical, plumbing, mechanical and gas services have been installed, with progression to commissioning. All walls have been completed and joinery units are in place. Final painting is being completed, with the main focus on the vinyl flooring as the handover date draws near. The new facility will mean that the tertiary NICU, Children’s Ward and the Children’s Ward/PAU will be located next to each other, which is unique in New Zealand.

This project is the single largest clinical development to occur at Dunedin Hospital in the past 15 years and the DHB is pleased to report that the new inpatient area is well on track to be completed in December 2013 both on time and on budget.

“The entire project has gone well and the team are now focusing on the home stretch. Commissioning and making sure everything is 100% is the challenge and the Building and Property team will be working hard to ensure we finish on time at the end of the month”, commented Southern DHB Facilities and Site Development Manager Warren Taylor.

The Children’s Health clinical team continue to progress with transition plans from 2 Dec 2013, with the patient transfer occurring on 10 Dec 2013. The formal celebration (opening) will take place in the new year.
Southern DHB is “Open for Better Care”

Southern District Health Board (DHB) recently hosted the Health Quality & Safety Commission’s Open for Better Care campaign booths at Dunedin and Southland Hospitals, to raise awareness of the national campaign, which promotes simple interventions to reduce harm to patients in our hospitals.

The campaign focuses on four key areas for improved patient safety and better health outcomes, reducing patient harm from hospital-acquired infections, falls, surgery, and medication errors. This provides support to the DHB to deliver its local aspirational “Zero Harm” campaign.

The DHB has pledged its commitment to the Open for Better Care campaign, which challenges healthcare workers to be open to acknowledging mistakes, and learning from them; open to working closely with patients and consumers; and open to change, improvement and innovation.

The booths were run by Health Quality and Safety Commission staff and DHB staff, including patient safety champions, to raise awareness about the campaign and promote some of the initiatives already underway across the district to reduce patient harm.

“Southern DHB was pleased to be hold booths to profile our involvement in the national patient safety campaign,” says Carole Heatly, chief executive of Southern DHB. “Open for Better Care has allowed us to bring a focus to the great patient safety work already underway in our DHB, and provides us with an opportunity to build on that work. The South Island DHBs are working on a combined regional approach, which includes all the region’s DHBs, and we are fully committed to improving outcomes for patients and communities across the region.”

The DHB’s investment in patient safety is part of the larger Performance Excellence and Quality Improvement Strategy being delivered by Southern, and is fully aligned with the DHB’s commitment to achieving its Southern Way vision and four-fold aim.

The event follows the recent signing of a pledge of campaign support by the DHB’s Chairman, Joe Butterfield, and Chief Executive Officer, Carole Heatly. For more information on Open for Better Care visit www.open.hqsc.govt.nz.

3500 district children get B4 School Checks

Southern DHB staff have checked a further 800 Southern children over and above the nationally-set target as part of the B4 School Checks programme, a comprehensive health assessment for four-year-old children before they start school.

This takes the total of district-wide B4 School Checks during 2012/2013 to 3500, which is 15% above the target set by the Government.

This is significant because B4 School Checks – which identify any health, behavioural, social or developmental concerns that may affect a child’s wellbeing and ability to learn – have been instrumental in picking up significant health issues in young Southern children that affect a child’s wellbeing and ability to learn – have been instrumental in picking up significant health issues in young Southern children that may have otherwise gone undetected.

The target, set by the Government, is for both the general and high-needs groups of four-year-olds, and all four-year-olds are eligible regardless of their New Zealand residency status.

Sharyn Robson, Service Manager Primary Health Services Southern DHB, said the figures were good news for families and their children’s health and wellbeing.

“Public Health Nursing and Well Child Service teams work closely together and within the community towards achieving national outcomes.

“We’re pleased to see their efforts and the partnership with families resulting in an excellent level of positive health outcomes for children and service delivery for the district.”

She put the results down to hard work and the strong relationships between public health nurses and well child teams.

“The credit for the success of the programme sits with the great effort made by the many nurses, vision/hearing technicians and administrative staff at the front line and our two coordinators, Gillian Sim and Victoria Bryant,” she said.

Over 13,000 of these Checks have been carried out by Southern DHB staff since the programme was introduced in 2008.

In the 2013/2014 year this target will be 10% higher, aiming to reach 90% of children at the age of four. Southern DHB staff are confident about achieving this target, and at the same time are encouraging parents to actively ensure that their child is checked.

“We are urging all parents to see the B4 School Check as an opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have about their child’s development with a health professional. It’s a really important check for all children,” said Sharyn.

Parents who want to have their children checked should contact their local Public Health Nurse.

Southland Hospital oncology donation

Southland Hospital would like to thank Southlander Nicola Padget, who single-handedly raised more than $370 for the Southland Hospital Oncology Ward.

When Ms Padget planned a garage sale, neighbours and friends wanted to join in. This gave her the idea to set up a massive garage sale with 30 sellers to raise funds for a local charity through gold coin entrance donations and a sausage sizzle.

Wanting to ensure the money stayed in Invercargill, she got in touch with Southland Hospital. She contacted Trish Clark, Charge Nurse Manager Southland Oncology Department, who told Ms Padget about their desire to replace an existing oncology chair.

Ms Padget says she thought it was a great cause.

“Some of the charities I had approached asked me to send donations to Auckland. But I wanted to see it go directly to the community.”

Nicola Padget with her children Shakada & Jordis and husband Juan, who all helped on the day.

Nicola donated a cheque of $373.70 to the Oncology Trust towards the chair purchase. The funds will contribute to a model of chair being considered that costs $7,000.

She hopes to run another garage sale next year and raise more funds for the hospital.

We’d like to thank Nicola for her great community spirit.

Having a ball with new gear

Sport Southland has been thanked by staff and clients at Southland Hospital’s Mental Health Day Activity Centre, who are loving the raft of pre-loved equipment recently donated.

Activity Centre co-ordinator Jo Adams said clients were already having a ball.

“We’re privileged and excited to have received this donation. Keeping people active is a big part of what the centre does to help clients recover from mental health problems, and new gear always helps.

“We place a lot of value on the importance of meaningful activities and healthy eating, healthy action at the Day Activity Centres, so this donation is fantastic.”