

AccessAction

February 2014

Introducing the Disability Action Group

Welcome to our first newsletter from the Taranaki DHB Disability Action Group. We are a group of people committed to improving access to hospital services for people with disabilities, and to providing opportunities for people with experience of disability to contribute to service planning and development. A number of people on our group have a disability, and we even have two canine members (a guide dog and a hearing dog!). Our group meets every quarter, and is responsible for overseeing the Taranaki Disability Action Plan (available on line at http://www.tdhb.org.nz/misc/documents/2012-06-28_TDHB_Disability_Action_Plan.pdf). Recent successful projects include the group's contribution to Project Maunga – ensuring that the new hospital building meets the needs of people with disabilities; the introduction of the Amigo (assistive hearing equipment for use by people with hearing impairment during hospital visits) and a MAY DAY disability awareness event attended by over 200 of our staff.

If you would like to know more about the Taranaki DHB Disability Action Group you can either contact our Chairperson, John Major, on 759 0019 or email info@taranakidic.org.nz. Hospital staff can also contact Channa Perry (*Portfolio Manager Older People*) on extension 8566. We always welcome new members, particularly those with a direct experience of disability.



Disability Parking at Base Hospital

Philip Olckers (*Taranaki DHB Facilities Manager*) presented to the Disability Action Group at our recent meeting in January to provide an update on disability parking around the new main entrance. The building work in this area is due to be finished by end of March, and in the meantime three to four temporary disability parking spaces will be provided in this area (marked off by cones). Once the new entrance is completed, there will be six permanent disability car parking spaces in this area. Disability parking spaces on the rest of the hospital site will NOT be reduced when this happens. Philip expressed his commitment to ensuring the new hospital building was fully accessible to people with disabilities, and has agreed to attend a workshop with the group in April which will review accessibility of the entire base hospital site.

Listen Up Amigo!

Taranaki DHB will be undertaking some promotional activities during February to promote the Amigo Hearing Devices we have available throughout Base and Hawera Hospital to assist patients with hearing impairments. The Amigo device utilises a radio transmitter that amplifies and transmits sound to a set of headphones worn by the person who has a hearing impairment. This equipment makes it easier for people with hearing impairments to hear and understand what is being said during a medical appointment, as well improving privacy because the health professional does not need to raise their voice when speaking to the patient. If you would like to know more, please contact **Channa Perry on 06 753 7777 extension 8566**.



Huffy the Hearing Dog with Renal patient Larissa using the Amigo Hearing Device