

Health Of Older People

CONSUMER REFERENCE GROUP NEWSLETTER

May 2017



Advance Care Planning Let's get Taranaki talking!!!

Advance Care Planning (ACP) is going to be the hot topic of 2017!! So what is it?

Advance care planning gives everyone a chance to say what is important to them. It helps people understand what the future might hold and to say what treatment they would and would not want.

It helps people, their families/whanau and their healthcare teams plan for future and end of life care. This makes it much easier for families and healthcare providers to know what the person would want - particularly if they can no longer speak for themselves. The process of advance care planning may result in the individual wishing to complete an advance care plan. Completing an advance care plan is a voluntary process which involves the person, their family/whanau and healthcare professionals who together on a nationally recognised document write down their treatment and care wishes and preferences. This document can be lodged with your local GP and hospital for use at a later stage. Most importantly the document belongs to the individual so it is utmost important they keep a copy and notify family/whanau and friends where to locate a copy in an emergency.

For 2017 the aim in Taranaki is to promote ACP and encourage health professionals to engage in these conversations with patients, but equally for patients to request these conversations also. To help get Taranaki talking about advance care planning the hospital has employed an advance care planning facilitator who is assisting staff with the process and education. Claudia Matthews has been doing the job since November 2016 and is passionate about advance care planning. As an intensive care nurse for many years, Claudia found it an all too common situation where patients lay incapacitated in Intensive Care, unable to voice their treatment preferences, with family spread geographically far and wide, often making decisions about end of life care without prior discussions. These experiences have driven Claudia to get Taranaki talking!

There is a national website which has so much great information about advance care planning; you can even complete your own! Have a look today at www.advancecareplanning.org.nz

Or for local queries and issues you can email ACP.Admin@tdhb.org.nz

ACP already in action and giving patients what they want!

"...Together Ian and I completed his ACP; he was a patient of mine who I had been following up with for some time so he felt comfortable discussing and documenting end of life issues with me. He had recently moved into a rest home and was very clear about what he wanted for end of life cares, where he wanted to be, and his funeral arrangements.*

His family were supportive of his wishes and assisted with the ACP. He was adamant he never wanted to go to hospital again. He was focused on quality of life, and felt the rest home provided this. He had made friends and enjoyed the meals.

On Saturday, Ian's sister came to visit, and he gave her a copy of his completed ACP; they enjoyed the morning together. On Sunday, he suffered a neurological event and became unresponsive. Rest home staff consulted the family who referred to the ACP. Ian was commenced on a palliative pathway, rather than being sent to hospital. He was kept comfortable with a syringe driver, and passed away peacefully on Monday morning, in the rest home, with family at his bed side... just as he had wanted. Family and staff were very pleased he had done his ACP as it provided a guide to treatment, reduced anxiety and fear amongst the family as they knew they had done the right thing by Ian and prevented an unnecessary hospital visit."

Taranaki DHB Social Worker

*pseudonym used

Healthy Ageing Strategy

In December 2016, Ministry of Health published the Healthy Ageing Strategy which replaces the Health of Older People Strategy 2002, and aligns with the New Zealand Health Strategy 2016.

The document is a much needed updated framework for DHBs, ACC, PHOs, NGOs and other agencies to all work collaboratively to improve health outcomes for older people.

The Healthy Ageing Strategy vision is that "older people live well, age well, and have a respectful end of life in age-friendly communities". It takes a life-course approach that seeks to maximise health and wellbeing for all older people.

The Strategy sets out a framework whereby policies, funding, planning and service delivery:

- prioritise healthy ageing and resilience into and throughout people's older years
- enable high quality acute and restorative care, for effective rehabilitation, recovery and restoration after acute events
- ensure people can live well with long-term conditions
- better support people with high and complex needs
- provide respectful end-of-life care that caters to physical, cultural and spiritual needs.

The Strategy is the result of an extensive engagement and consultation process. The Ministry is currently consulting with DHBs and other agencies around the implementation plan including the actions which require implementation in the first two years. This strategy can be found at www.health.govt.nz/publication/healthy-ageing-strategy

PAY EQUITY

The Government recently announced the Care and Support Worker (Pay Equity) settlement for 55,000 care and support workers across aged and disability residential care and home and community support services. From July 1 the workforce will receive a pay rise between 15 and 50 per cent depending on their qualifications and/or experience. The settlement means over the next five years, the workforce will see their wages increase on a range between \$19 and \$27 per hour. On July 1, workers currently on the minimum wage of \$15.75 per hour will move to at least \$19 per hour – a 21 per cent pay rise. This will result in increases to their take home pay of at least \$100 a week, or more than \$5,000 a year. This is a great outcome for support workers and will ensure employers can attract and retain a sustainable workforce for years to come.

INFLUENZA – Free vaccine for over 65s and pregnant mums

Around one in four New Zealanders are infected with influenza or 'flu' each year. Many won't feel sick at all, but can still pass it on to others. Getting an influenza vaccination before winter offers you and others the best protection.

Older people and those with certain medical conditions are more likely to have medical complications from influenza. A FREE influenza vaccination reduces these risks!

Influenza is a serious illness that can put anyone in hospital or even kill them, including young and

healthy people. Influenza vaccination is safe, effective and cannot give you "the flu".

This year the following pharmacies are providing vaccinations free of charge to those over 65 years of age, along with pregnant mothers.

- Mackay's Pharmacy - Stratford
- Moss, Rocard and Smith Chemist - Stratford
- Eltham Pharmacy
- Robertson's Pharmacies - Hawera
- The Valley Pharmacy - Waiwhakaiho
- Life Pharmacy Centre City - New Plymouth

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