

Service Review Update

Note from the President



At the Governing Body meeting at the end of March we made the difficult but necessary decision to radically change the way we deliver services around the country. From the end of May 2011, Arthritis New Zealand will operate from three main centres; Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. This decision was made as it was the option that provided the best financial

savings for the organisation and meets the information, advice and support needs of people with arthritis.

This was a challenging decision and not taken lightly. We recognise that changing our service model was always going to be difficult and controversial and that many people will be surprised at the extent of the change. The survival of the organisation to honour those who set up Arthritis New Zealand and support those yet to come remains our primary goal. To improve the quality of life for people with arthritis remains our mission – it's how we do this that will be different.

As we went out to consultation Christchurch was struck by a large earthquake. This coupled with the events in Japan, and the unrest in the Middle East with the resulting impact on the price of fuel and cost of living has influenced the decision. The impact of these disasters on national fundraising across the sector is as yet unknown, but considered to be significant.

Feedback from the consultation process has been significant and meaningful in determining the way forward for Arthritis New Zealand at a time when our costs have exceeded our income. The findings from the Service Review indicate a refocus on our priorities and how we provide our services needs to change.

The revised structure is based on a revised set of organisational priorities for services being:

- A need to decrease our cost structures
- An increase in public awareness of arthritis
- An increase in advocacy for people with arthritis
- Continuing to support and disseminate research on arthritis
- Providing support through information and advice through more phone-based and group events and less reliance on individual consultations.

We have committed to a review of our fundraising strategy against best practice. This review will provide us with an evaluation of our performance and the future direction for fundraising but is unlikely to provide us with any immediate stream of income. Fundraising currently contributes more than 80% of our income – and is needed for us to survive. The realities of living in New Zealand at this time, is that there are a large number of organisations reliant on the charitable dollar – there are not enough dollars to go around.

Members and volunteers will play a pivotal role in the structure of the organisation in maintaining a local presence and how we work with people living with arthritis at all levels. We have been a volunteer-based organisation for more than 40 years and that commitment to volunteering remains.

Do talk to any of the Governing Body members if you want to discuss this further – their contact details are included in this edition of *The Juice*.

Kathie Smith
President

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Why Is There A Need For Change?

The changes are necessary to enable us to meet the current needs of people with arthritis within our available resources. The new structure is built from the findings of the service review held in 2010.

There was a strong call from the review for a public awareness programme – and we are developing a campaign to launch this year.

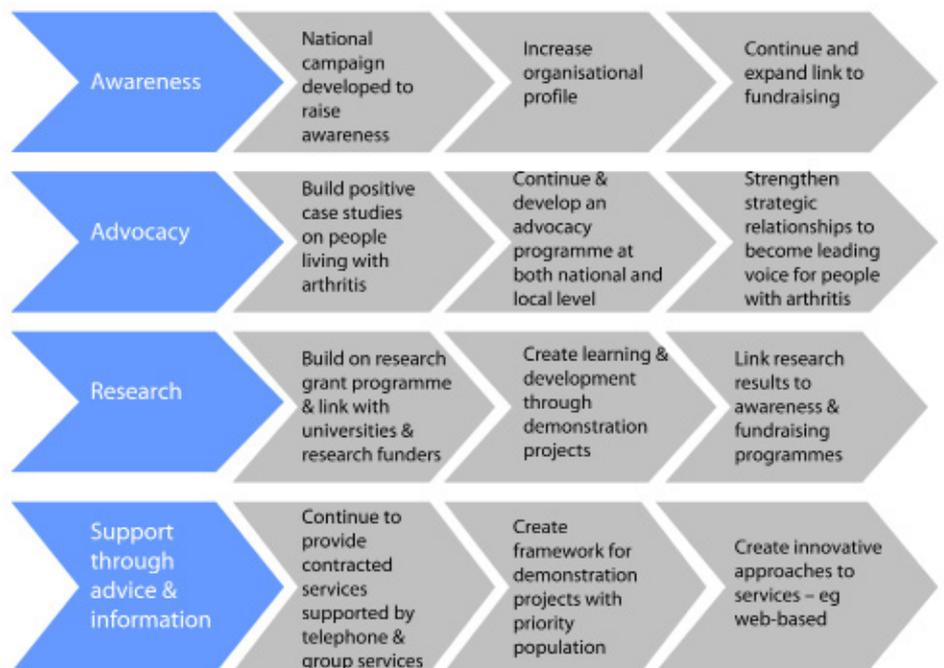
Our current service model was developed several years ago with the expectation that clinics and seminar services would be funded through health contracts – this is not a feasible option. Health funders are cutting contracts and a number of our existing contracts are under review.

The needs of people with arthritis have changed greatly and our services need to meet the current needs.

The current cost of services is higher than we can sustain – our financial deficit over the last three years reflects the costs of our operations. Most of our costs are in salaries and operating costs such as office rental, computer costs and mileage etc.

Arthritis New Zealand remains a strong and viable organisation – we have a 45 year history and see ourselves as in the prime of life.

What Are Our Priorities?



How Will The Changes Affect You...



Above: Testing uric acid levels

Arthritis New Zealand's mission is to enable a better quality of life for those with arthritis, this has not changed, nor will it.

What will be changing, is how we achieve this.

Arthritis New Zealand will be delivering services but not in the way they are currently being delivered. This was both a financial decision and a recognition that people now access our services differently.

Arthritis New Zealand greatly values its support from volunteers. We know from our volunteers that the key to volunteer recruitment is to have meaningful work and to ensure effective communication

with them. This is best practice and we will be endeavouring to continue with this. Volunteer recruitment and engagement for service delivery will be a key focus of the new Regional Coordinator role.

Many areas around New Zealand have groups meeting under the Arthritis New Zealand name. These include social groups, support groups, hydrotherapy, land and water-based exercise groups. We will be continuing to support existing groups – the point of contact for these groups will be either the new Regional Coordinator position and/or the Regional Manager.

We know how some other services we provide like taxi chits make life that little bit easier and we will continue to offer these in the regions they currently exist.

We will build larger teams in three main centres. From these bases, staff will link with members and volunteers in the region. Outreach visits to other centres will ensure that seminars and other services will support the move to phone and web-based advice.

We remain reliant on fundraising to maintain our services. Currently more than 80% of

our income comes from communities. Our September Arthritis Appeal will be still run and as always we will need your valuable help and support during that week.

If you are looking for information, please continue to call **0800 663 463** or your local number. We will be moving towards more telephone advice provided by our Arthritis Educators.

Please visit the Arthritis New Zealand website **arthritis.org.nz** as it's updated regularly with our latest news and has plenty of information and advice on managing your arthritis.

These changes are far reaching. As we make this change please tell us how this is working for you.

Our commitment is to providing services so that people with arthritis enjoy a better quality of life.

Nga mihi nui

**Sandra Kirby
Chief Executive**

Governing Body Contact Details

Following are contact details for the Governing Body, please contact them if you have a question about Arthritis New Zealand

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'Let's Keep Moving' Arthritis Children's Camp

Imagine watching your healthy baby or young child in pain almost daily. This is a challenge that has faced a group of parents who attended the Arthritis Children's Camp at Totara Christian Camp in Matamata, at the end of March. For the parents of 19 children, infants and teenagers, from all over New Zealand, this was their reality and then came the diagnosis: "Your child has arthritis".

Arthritis New Zealand staff and members of the National Paediatric Rheumatology team, provided an educational programme during the camp, which was balanced with fun physical activities.

The camp was made possible with grants from both AXA Hearts in Action and the Newman's Own Foundation.

The children, for whom the camp had been designed, were aged between 2 and 13 years old. Most of them were under 10 and had been diagnosed with arthritis in the past year.

Children got the chance to relax and mingle with others with arthritis while also learning more about their condition. Their parents had the opportunity to have all their questions answered by both the specialists and the Arthritis New Zealand team.

When one parent was asked what they liked about the camp they responded: "Being amongst others like us and being able to share experiences and see how positive and active the other children are. My daughter said it was so wonderful for her not to have to explain herself to anyone here, she felt accepted for who she is and what she and the others have to deal with."

