



## **October 2021 Update: Osteoarthritis Summit event formally rescheduled until June/July 2022; analysis of Basecamp workshops to inform National Osteoarthritis Strategy progressing well**

Kia ora koutou,

We hope that you have all been keeping safe and well over the past couple of months. It has been a very challenging time for Aotearoa New Zealand, and we are also aware that everyone in our wider professional network has faced significant disruptions on multiple levels. Accordingly, it feels like an appropriate time to provide you with a brief update on our mahi following our extremely successful OA Basecamp in July.

First, we are aware that there has been some confusion pertaining to the date of our OA Summit event and wish to clarify the change in date. Originally, we had planned and also promoted that the Summit would be held in Wellington in November 2021. It became evident that holding an event of this magnitude only four months after the initial Basecamp was too soon. In addition to not providing an adequate window for undertaking a robust analysis and write up of the data and insights collected at the Basecamp workshops, our Committee felt that the once in a generation changes to the national health system would likely start impacting the key policymakers who we plan to invite to the Summit well before November.

Although not an initial consideration, the way that the latest COVID-19 outbreak has adversely affected the entire country would have also resulted in not being able to hold the Summit in person. We strongly believe that this event would overwhelmingly benefit from all delegates being able to attend in a face-to-face capacity. The Summit is now scheduled for June/July 2022 in Wellington at a venue which is still to be determined.

While the aforementioned workshops were a lot of fun, they also produced a significant amount of data about OA health delivery and research in Aotearoa New Zealand. In the OA health delivery workshop for example, participants described how a willingness to share information across some services, a new national approach and passionate clinicians and researchers are factors that are working well. Challenges such as the diversity of our patients' and health provider/service cultures, resources, education (for both patients and clinicians) and systems-based issues were however also cited. The groups in this session described opportunities for service enhancement across the continuum of care from injury prevention and weight loss programmes (i.e. pre-OA) through to pain and surgical management (i.e. secondary care). A critical theme that linked all the information that was shared on the day was the need to connect and collaborate more across services.

The OA research workshop on the other hand saw groups discuss the positive impact of the MOA trials, the benefit of the Joint Registry and a desire to see the MOH's Mobility Action Programme (MAP) evaluation report publicly released. Participants revealed challenges revolving around funding, time, a lack of Māori health researchers and the meaningful translation of research into practice. There is also a clear abundance of current research which ranges from basic science projects through to translational research. There was equally as much thought about ideas for new OA research priorities which included using AI or biomarkers for early disease detection to predictive modelling to inform patient selection for surgery.

The aforementioned data and insights have been processed and the Committee's research team will soon start their more detailed thematic analysis which will help to more clearly describe the OA landscape as it currently stands. The ongoing COVID situation in Aotearoa New Zealand has meant that this analysis will likely be completed early in the new year.

Lastly, the Committee is working to develop a website that will provide you, our OA community and professional network, with features that include a portal to engage with one another, a resources library and a centralised site to share key OA information which will help generate and inform our National Osteoarthritis Strategy. We are working to have this live by January 2022. We wish you all the very best for the remainder of 2021.

For further information on osteoarthritis and the OA Summit, please contact:

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