

# Volunteer Newsletter

## MAY



**ARTHRITIS  
NEW ZEALAND**

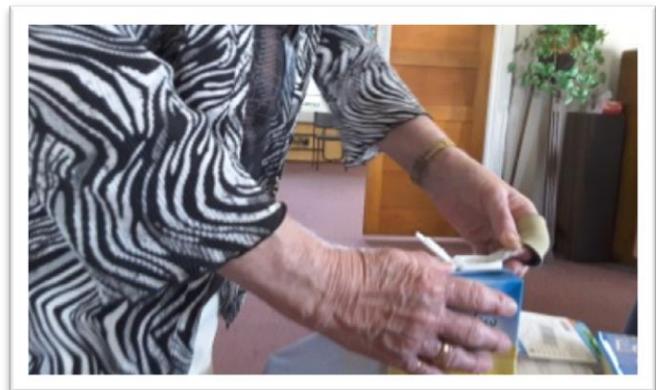
KAIPONAPONA AOTEAROA

Kia ora and welcome to my last newsletter. ☺ I anticipate that the future newsletter will come from the new coordinator of volunteers, which will be very exciting! ☺

I'm writing this while looking out the window at the arctic southerly blast that has hit the entire country. Auckland has a lot of people managing without power, and as I travelled in on the train I saw several uprooted trees. A gentle introduction to winter – I don't think!

It's nice to know that even with the changing seasons, there is still a range of things going on within the volunteer group for Arthritis New Zealand.

Francesca Holloway (Awareness and Advocacy Manager) attended the April meeting of the Whangarei 20+ support group. The discussion focused on advocacy issues, especially accessible packaging; group members experimented with opening a range of products and discussed their accessibility. Their input was invaluable.



This group also attended the workshops and seminars that Jane Messer (Arthritis Educator) ran last month in the region, providing great help and support for her. This was much appreciated.

Other arthritis educators have been out in the regions as well. Allan Desquitado is heading to Hokitika on Monday. The support group there, led by Winona Dowell, has been very helpful and will be attending his seminar. Claire Gaze and Lyn Carrodus assisted in promoting Dave Cox's visits to Nelson recently, as did Veronica Harris in Rotorua. Maureen Medley is doing the same for the upcoming events in Tauranga. Thank you to those volunteers for doing this.

If more people promote activities like this, we can reach a wider audience, which means more people living with arthritis have the opportunity to attend and find out valuable information.

If you are happy to promote regional activities in this way, please email Pam Hindmarsh [pam.hindmarsh@arthritis.org.nz](mailto:pam.hindmarsh@arthritis.org.nz) and she will be in touch and send out flyers when activities are taking place.

See the link to local events for upcoming events.



Philip Kearney (Chief Executive) had the opportunity to meet with Laurie Breadmore (Arthritis New Zealand Board member) and the peer support group in Rotorua. This provided a chance to discuss local activities and how Arthritis New Zealand can continue to support that region.

I had the pleasure of meeting with volunteers from the Te Awamutu support group recently. We had a productive meeting discussing ways to make the group sustainable in the long term. I was impressed with their positive and forward looking attitude. We then met with the support group members and presented some of the ideas discussed so that they could contribute to the direction the group may take.

We are working closely with Kids with Arthritis New Zealand (KWANZ) which supports children with arthritis and their families. As a follow up to the Children's Camp in February we will be providing webinars on specific topics for the families. This will be done in conjunction with KWANZ. We will also support them as they provide regional activities for the families. We have recently been able to refer a volunteer who approached Arthritis New Zealand to them. This person will be able to run an event in the Wellington region, where KWANZ has no representation currently.

A number of volunteers have been working in the Wellington office on specific projects to support the organisation. We would like to thank:

#### Rachael Anderson

During her time at Arthritis New Zealand before securing full time work, Rachel did some great work on researching gout for us. This will help us raise awareness of gout arthritis.



Rachael Anderson

#### Mok Lui

During his volunteer placement, Mok analysed Ministry of Health, District Health Board and Census data to help Arthritis New Zealand understand more about who has arthritis, what type of arthritis they have, and the location of water and land based exercises in their area. This information will help us advocate for support and raise awareness of need.

#### Hassan Mukhtar

During his placement with us, Hassan delivered a future-focused arthritis friendly marketing plan, including methods to monitor the effectiveness of social media. This work provides a valuable tool for Arthritis New Zealand in understanding how to market to different generations.



Hassan and Beatrice

Lalitha Rajaskar and Reni Donovan

These two have been diligently documenting all of the results of our Joint Support reader survey. We have had more than 200 written responses and appreciate the help in loading this data (not to mention managing to decipher the handwriting of survey respondents!)



Lalitha and Reni

To sum up my thoughts in one go, I had some very positive feedback from Pam, one of our office administrators here in the Wellington office. Her comment , *“I am always impressed by the volunteers that come into this office – by their commitment and their strong work ethic in serving Arthritis New Zealand.”* I think this is a great summary that reflects all the volunteer engagement around the country, in whatever capacity. Thank you for making it such a positive experience for me in this role, not to mention the support and advocacy you provide for those living with arthritis. I’m sure the new Coordinator will really enjoy working with you as well once they take over the reins.

Ngā mihi and best wishes.

Beatrice Fisher