

Nau mai. Haere mai. Ki te pānui o RHĀNZ mō tēnei wiki (Te Reo for welcome to the RHĀNZ Newsletter for this week).

In this issue: Happy New year to all RHĀNZ members, profiling the National Rural Health Conference 2017, shearing – one of the most physically demanding occupations in the world today plus a selection of relevant media and research articles...

Who are RHĀNZ?

The Rural Health Alliance Aotearoa New Zealand represents a united voice from across multiple rural sector organisations. Our aim is to provide solutions and influence policy affecting the health and wellbeing of rural communities.

[Visit our website](#)



NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2017

**Healthy Rural Communities
Mauri Ora, Whānau Ora, Wai Ora**
March 30 - April 2
TSB Bank Arena-Shed 6, Wellington

We thank our partners.



Understanding the biomechanics and physical demands of one of the toughest rural industries - Shearing



Laura Hancock is an inspiring young woman, originally from the UK and currently living in Central Hawke's Bay, who has a real passion for biomechanics and movement, sport, fitness and wellbeing as an integrated system.

She is qualified in Specialist Biomechanics Coaching, Sports and Remedial Massage Therapy, Instrument Assisted Soft Tissue Management, Personal Training specialising in exercise referral and lower back pain, Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation, Studio Pilates and Explaining Pain.

As part of her work, Laura travels the country helping to keep our world champion shearers in tip top shape.

Laura has designed a fascinating presentation for this year's National Rural Health Conference titled "Understanding the biomechanics and physical demands of one of the toughest rural industries – shearing".

This presentation will take attendees through the process of shearing a sheep. Photographic and video footage will be used to break down the shearing process into individual blows so Laura can discuss the impact upon the body, both to the muscular and the neural system, of the varying positions and movements undertaken by shearers.

It is hoped that by understanding the movement patterns and physical demands upon the bodies of these workers our health care system will be able to provide better and more specific care for these shearers.


Here's a couple of interesting facts about sheep and shearing:

- NZ is the world's largest exporter of lambs.
- Around 220,000 tonnes of wool is shorn from our sheep each year.
- A learner shearer will shear an average of 200 sheep per day, with highly experienced shearers aiming for 400+ sheep per day.
- Shearing is one of the most physically demanding occupations in the world today with fluid loss being similar to that of elite marathon runners.
- The muscular endurance and stamina needed for an 8-hour day shearing in the woolshed is astounding...

A full outline of Laura's presentation is available [here](#).

Conference information and registration details are [available here](#) and don't forget early bird registration closes 16 February 2017.

National Rural Health Conference 2017



Happy New Year to all RHĀNZ members! We hope 2017 has started well for you and that your "To Do" list inspires and enthralls you. 2017 is certainly set to be busy on many fronts, especially gearing for the general election and planning for our main events.

We hope to advise dates for RuralFest 2017 and the Rural Connectivity Symposium within the next fortnight.

The first big calendar event for the rural health sector is the National Rural Health Conference, led by the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network. The theme for this year's conference is "Healthy Rural Communities" and is being held in Wellington over 4 days, 30 March to 2 April 2017. The conference proper is on 31 March and 1 April, with various workshops and seminars being held on the days either side. Hold these dates as there is a great line up of speakers, along with excellent opportunities for networking with kindred spirits.

The RHĀNZ concurrent stream is being held on Friday 31 March and we have an exciting line up planned which will appeal to clinicians and non-clinicians alike. We'll hear from:

- Three GP-farmers (Drs William Rolleston, Tim Malloy and Tanya Quin) about how they came to hold their twin careers and the lessons they have for how medicine has impacted their ability to farm and how farming has impacted their ability to practise medicine.
- Laura Hancock on understanding the biomechanics and physical demands of one of the toughest rural industries – shearing. See Lead Story for more information on this unique session.
- A range of speakers relating to rural mental health initiatives 2016-2017 and beyond. This event will be held over two back to back sessions in the afternoon and we will provide further information as soon as we are able.

Conference information and registration details are available through the following [link](#) and we encourage you to take advantage of the early bird registration which is open until 16 February 2017.

We'd love to see you there!

Cheers and best wishes,
Michelle

Media Watch

Northern Ontario medical school model thought to be right fit for Waikato

Waikato leaders must present a united front if a pitch for a Waikato medical school is to win Government backing, says a visiting academic. But already some Waikato leaders are voicing reservations about the region's bold bid.

The Waikato proposal aims to reverse a shortfall of primary care doctors, especially in provincial and rural areas. (Stuff)

[Read more.](#)

Fibre internet speeds on the cards for rural regions

Regional towns across New Zealand could have access to fibre internet speeds because of a unique Waimate initiative. The Community Wireless Trust uses existing fibre broadband connections in schools. But it creates a second connection to a port and expands the network beyond the school.

The trust secured \$15,000 from InternetNZ to go towards expanding fibre access to the Waimate district. (Timaru Herald)

[Read more](#)

'Ripper' season for southern contractors

Many South Island rural contractors have had what they are describing as "a season out of the box" with outstanding silage, hay and balage crops made so far this summer. It is a different story in the North Island where generally harvests have been later and patchier.

Rural Contractors New Zealand president Steve Levet, of Wellsford, told the NZ Farmer weather conditions during spring and early summer in the north had generally been colder, wetter and windier than usual. (NZ Farmer)

[Read more](#)

New regional rural doctor training for Whakatane

The first fifth year medical students in a new Regional-Rural Programme will soon be working at Whakatane Hospital and in local GP rooms. On Monday (23 January), the University of Auckland and the Bay of Plenty District Health Board will launch the programme with a joint powhiri/pohiri at the hospital.

In recent years, University of Auckland students have taken part in a six week rural health immersion programme based at Whakatane Hospital, but this is the first year of the new Regional-Rural Programme where Auckland students will spend nearly three months at Whakatane Hospital and the balance of the year at Tauranga Hospital's Bay of Plenty clinical school. (University of Auckland)

[Read more](#)

Events Watch

National Rural Health Conference

Wellington, 30 March to 2 April 2017.

[Find out more](#)

A World of Rural Health, International Conference

Cairns, Australia, 26 April – 2 May 2017.

[Find out more](#)

Member Column

Would you like to contribute an article for our newsletter? Tell a story about yourself or one of your members or something you're passionate about. Email your item to Michelle ce@rhaanz.org.nz

Subscribe

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Research & Resources Watch

Health information for farming, dairy and meat industry families

Meat industry and dairy workers have higher infection rates than the general public. Here's a useful health resource for farming, dairy and meat industry families produced by Communicable Diseases and Community & Public Health, a division of Canterbury DHB.

[Read more](#)

The Lancet Countdown: tracking progress on health and climate change

The Lancet Countdown: tracking progress on health and climate change is an international, multidisciplinary research collaboration between academic institutions and practitioners across the world. It follows on from the work of the 2015 Lancet Commission, which concluded that the response to climate change could be "the greatest global health opportunity of the 21st century". The Lancet Countdown aims to track the health impacts of climate hazards; health resilience and adaptation; health co-benefits of climate change mitigation; economics and finance; and political and broader engagement.

[Read more](#)

Rural health service planning: the need for a comprehensive approach to costing

Journal Rural & Remote Health

The closure of rural maternity services in industrialized countries is underscored by assumptions of efficiencies of scale leading to cost-effectiveness, with scant evidence to support this. To clearly understand the cost-effectiveness of rural services we must take the broadest societal perspective to include not only health system costs, but also those costs incurred at the family and community levels.

[Read more](#)