

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: FAST – the 4 signs of a stroke you need to know, report back from a World of Rural Health in Cairns, last chance to register for the 2017 Rural Connectivity Symposium, 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](#)

KNOW THE SIGNS OF STROKE. THINK FAST

FACE (Face drooping), ARM (Arm weakness), SPEECH (Speech difficulty), TIME (Time to call 111)

STROKE FOUNDATION, health promotion agency, MINISTRY OF HEALTH

strokewise.org.nz

We thank our partners.



STROKE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

KNOW THE SIGNS OF STROKE. THINK FAST

Green light for repeat of successful stroke awareness camp.

The Minister of Health has approved a national awareness campaign for stroke based around the stroke FAST check.

The campaign will begin on Sunday 4th June and run for approximately three months. It follows the extremely successful national campaign last year.

Once again the FAST mnemonic will be promoted. (Face drooping, Arm weakness, Speech slurred, Time to call 111). Promotion will be across a number of channels, including television, radio and online.

Although the primary audience is all New Zealanders, there is a special focus on Māori, Pacific Island and Indo-Asian communities.

Of particular relevance to rural communities is the need to reinforce the importance of calling 111, even for people living in isolated areas.

Effective thrombolysis treatment depends on getting the stroke patient to hospital within a four-hour window.

The message is one of urgent action. Any stroke is a medical emergency and people should call 111 rather than their doctor, family and friends, or waiting for it to pass.

Calling 111 is the best means of achieving a positive outcome. If a stroke is identified by the caller to 111, then an ambulance or helicopter can be dispatched to the location to uplift the stroke patient, and give them the best chance of receiving thrombolysis in hospital.

In one case last year a helicopter was dispatched to a rural location, after the resident diagnosed their own stroke from the FAST campaign and rang 111.

People should be encouraged to call 111 and wait for emergency services whenever possible, rather than try to get to hospital under their own power.

The Ministry of Health, Stroke Foundation of New Zealand and Health Promotion Agency are partnering to deliver the campaign and appreciate your support with the campaign and these important messages.

For further information on the campaign or to register your interest to support please contact Julia Rout on julia.rout@stroke.org.nz.

A list of materials available to support regional FAST promotion will be circulated to interested stakeholders once confirmed.

RURAL CONNECTIVITY SYMPOSIUM



Register now, it's not too late

REGISTER NOW

Westpac Stadium, Wellington
Tuesday 23rd May, 9am-5pm followed by an After 5 event (5pm-7pm)

This event combined with an election year gives you the perfect opportunity to help shape the future of rural connectivity

Some of the Keynote speakers:

The Hon Simon Bridges, Minister for Communications.
The Minister will give the opening speech on the day outlining the Government's commitment to the current RBI programme.

Political Panel
Following the Minister's speech, MPs from three parties (National, Labour and Greens) will discuss their views on the issues and policies around rural connectivity.

Ian Proudfoot, Global head of AgriBusiness, KPMG
Ian is a sought out speaker on the future of agribusiness and the steps New Zealand needs to make to ensure our ongoing competitiveness.

Dr Chris Henry, Kaikoura Health Te Ha o Te Ora
Chris is the recipient of a NZ Bravery award for the efforts he undertook on the 22nd Feb in Christchurch in the aftermath of the earthquake there, and was on duty in Kaikoura at the time of last year's large quake. He will share his insights as to the impact of the quakes on his work as a GP and the importance of communications in major rural events.

Other presentations include:

- **Stewart Sherrif**, CEO 2degrees mobile, representing the Rural Connectivity Group (2degrees, Spark and Vodafone).
- **Murray Pearson**, LightwireNZ, representing the Wireless ISPs.
- **Phil Cross**, IPStar on the advantage of high throughput satellites.
- **Chelsea Millar** from Grassroots Media and NZ Young Farmers board member on the future of rural leadership.
- **Martin Lovell** from LIC on the use of data on farms and the need for connectivity.
- **Dr Ruth Large**, Waikato DHB on how technology is changing health care in rural communities.
- **Brian O'Connell**, Homecare Medical on how national telehealth services are improving access to health services for rural communities.
- **Julia Jones**, KPMG is sharing in the evening networking drinks with a message for townies and ruralites on how you thrive as a leader in this increasingly digitally disruptive environment. See below for more information on the session.

[The full programme is available on our website here.](#)

Registration:
Your registration includes arrival tea/coffee, morning and afternoon tea and lunch as well as the evening networking drinks event (5-7pm).

\$149 for TUANZ, RHĀNZ, and NZ Young Farmers members
\$349 for non-members

REGISTER HERE

After5 Wellington Series & FLINT Event

Tuesday 23rd May. How to be a rural leader and still thrive! A message for townies...

How do you ensure that you thrive as you develop as a leader in this increasingly disruptive digital economy? Julia Jones from KPMG will talk about her journey as a leader in their rural business. She will also share from KPMG's Future Leader findings which provide background to her thoughts on the future and the opportunities to be a real thought leader and not have to live in a major city! Julia's presentations are always thoughtful, entertaining but above all challenge listeners to think about what they can do to develop further as leaders.

This event is a collaboration between TUANZ/FLINT and the Wellington branch of NZ Young Farmers. **If you are attending the Rural Connectivity Symposium there is no need to register for this event as it is already included in your ticket.**

[Click here to register.](#)

Media Watch

New national body to represent Rural Support Trusts

Minister for Primary Industries Nathan Guy has welcomed the election of a national body to represent all 14 Rural Support Trusts across the country. "Rural Support Trusts do fantastic work supporting our rural communities in tough times, and this new central body will make them more efficient and effective," says Mr Guy.

"It will provide single point of contact for other national organisations and the Government, and help the different regions share resources and experience.

In the last two years the Government has provided extra funding to Rural Support Trusts to improve access to mental health support in the rural community. Coordinators have been trained to recognise and manage signs of depression or extreme stress, and are connected to rural health professionals. In its first meeting the National Council elected its first Chairperson, Waikato RST chair Neil Bateup, and Gavan Herlihy from Otago was appointed Vice Chairperson. The Rural Support National Council will be structured as a charitable trust responsible to the Trusts around the country.

[Read more](#)

Research & Resources Watch

Farm suicides in New Zealand, 2007-2015: A review of coroners' records. Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 1-9, 2017, April 1.

Here is the article published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry on our farm related suicide research, conducted by Dr Annette Beautrais and funded by AgResearch.

The study reviews characteristics of recent farm-related suicides in New Zealand and assesses the extent to which financial stresses contributed to the deaths. Key findings:

- Farm suicides were heterogeneous: six distinct risk profiles were identified. Overall, risk factors for farm suicides differed little from risk factors for suicide in the general population.
- Among farm suicides, young male farm labourers predominated, rather than farm owners or managers. For many young men, relationship losses, acute alcohol intoxication and ready access to a firearm formed a common constellation of risk factors.
- While coroners' records are variable and do not record specific information about financial stresses and weather events, it was clear that these issues made a negligible contribution to farm suicides.
- A range of rural suicide prevention initiatives are needed to address various farm suicide risk profiles.
- In particular, young male labourers often had no contact with health services prior to death, suggesting that rural suicide prevention efforts need to be positioned within community, farming and sports organisations, as well as health and social service providers.

This is a ground-breaking piece of research and we look forward to working with our members on implementing the recommendations. We also continue to seek funding for the next phase of our farm-related suicide research programme which is a detailed psychological autopsy study. This is the only way we will be able to properly understand the impact of specific factors such as the role of financial stresses, the impact of changing farm practices, sub-group differences in farmer risk and stresses on immigrant farm workers, which in turn will help inform targeted rural support and suicide prevention programmes.

[Read more](#)

The price of 'free'. Quantifying the costs incurred by rural residents attending publicly funded outpatients clinics in rural and base hospitals. Journal of Primary Care, 204-209, September 2016.

This study looks at the costs and time involved for rural Central Otago people attending rural and base hospital outpatient clinics. The study found:

- The average travel and lost time cost of attending a rural outpatient clinic was NZ\$182 and 61% of respondents reported this cost had a significant effect on their weekly budget.
- The average cost incurred by residents associated with a base hospital attendance in Dunedin was NZ\$732.

Conclusions: the full implications of the personal costs incurred by rural residents in accessing health services are largely unstudied and therefore remain unknown in New Zealand.

[Read more](#)

Knowing the 4 signs of a Stroke – FAST campaign



Next month the Stroke Foundation, Ministry of Health and the Health Promotion Agency begin a three-month Stroke Awareness Campaign, based on the simple and effective FAST mnemonic.

While the campaign is aimed at all New Zealanders, there is a special focus on Māori, Pacific Island and Indo-Asian communities. The need for rural communities to act quickly is also referenced.

Recognising the signs of a stroke is something we can all learn and by acting quickly we can help save lives and improve people's chances of recovery.

The four signs of a stroke are:

- FACE drooping
- ARM weakness
- SPEECH difficulty
- TIME to call 111

The key message of the campaign is one of urgent action, especially for those living in rural and remote regions. Any stroke is a medical emergency and people should call 111 rather than their doctor, family and friends, or waiting for it to pass. Calling 111 is the best means of achieving a positive outcome.

This is a really important message as the stats are sobering.

There are around 9,000 strokes each year in New Zealand and while the incidence is reducing overall, some population groups are having more strokes e.g. Māori and Pacific peoples, and there is evidence emerging that strokes within Asian communities are on the increase. Strokes can strike at any age and are the third leading cause of deaths in NZ:

- About a third will make a full recovery;
- About a third will be left with a life changing disability; and
- About a third will die.

A quarter of stroke victims will be under 65 i.e. of working age.

Unfortunately – but not surprisingly - stroke data has been analysed by ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status but not by geographical location. Advocating for improved rural/urban health data across the sector continues to be one of our top priorities.

See Lead Article for more information. The Stroke Foundation is currently working on regional FAST promotional resources which we will circulate as soon as they are available.

14th National Rural Health Conference, 26-29 April 2017 and the 14th World Rural Health Conference, 29 April-2 May 2017

Last week Marie and I returned home after a week of being immersed in a "world of rural health" in Cairns, Australia. We were privileged to have been part of two excellent back to back conferences where we heard from a range of national and international speakers and engaged with kindred spirits on a global scale. It never ceases to amaze me as to the commonality of issues we share with other countries regarding the additional challenges rural communities face in accessing equitable health services.

I particularly value the networking opportunities these types of events provide. It was an honour to meet with the heads of the world's national rural health organisations. It's a small club as there are only three of us:

- National Rural Health Alliance Australia;
- National Rural Health Association of America; and the
- Rural Health Alliance Aotearoa.

There is a great deal of goodwill and desire for collaboration between our three organisations and we are working hard to bring some of this to fruition. More about this later.

Cheers and best wishes,
Michelle

Subscribe

Anyone interested in rural health is welcome to subscribe to this newsletter. Keep up to date with us by [subscribing now](#).

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

Listen

Steve Maharey's solution for water quality and the urban/rural divide

Former Labour Cabinet Minister and Vice Chancellor of Massey University Steve Maharey spoke to **The Country's** Jamie Mackay today about the impasse between rural and urban New Zealand when it comes to our waterways.

Maharey agrees that there is a growing urban/rural divide over water quality but he believes he has a solution.

Steve Maharey's idea is to "rebrand" New Zealand as a "food producing nation" rather than an agricultural one. He says that if New Zealand is going to have a clean, green image for consumers overseas then we had better back it up by having the environmental pedigree to prove it.

If both urban and rural sectors get behind this idea Steve Maharey believes the divide can be bridged.

[Read more](#)

Media Watch

The forgotten coastline: Ngati Porou's hidden health crisis

The East Coast north of Gisborne is one of the most isolated and economically deprived areas of the country, and its mostly Maori residents experience some of the worst health outcomes.

Iwi health provider and PHO Ngati Porou Hauora is trying to turn the tide of what it calls decades of official neglect. Cliff Taylor travelled to the coast to hear their story. (NZ Doctor)

[Read more](#)

Antibiotic advertising comes under scrutiny

Restrictions on advertising of antibiotics will not necessarily lead to a reduction in usage, claim academics.

University of Otago microbiologist professor Gregory Cook says the advertisements currently appear in magazines read by vets and health professionals. (Rural News)

[Read more](#)

Island Nurses

Adele Robertson and Leonie Howie have lived and worked on Great Barrier Island for over 30 years.

As nurses and midwives, they've been there for births, deaths and some remarkable dramas at the heart of the small remote community. They tell Kathryn Ryan about caring for the island's 950 people. (Radio NZ)

[Read more](#)

Events Watch

Rural Connectivity Symposium 23 May 2017, Westpac Stadium Wellington.

[Read more](#)

Emerging Tech in Health - 24 May 2017, Westpac Stadium Wellington.

[Read more](#)

RuralFestNZ - 25 May 2017, Federated Farmers, Wellington (for named representatives only).

Influencing Policy and Writing Submissions Symposium, Allied Health Aotearoa New Zealand (AHANZ), Wellington 31 May 2017

[Read more](#)

