

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: Useful online resources for our rural clinicians and rural people, registrations go live for NRHC 2018, National Travel Assistance Scheme Survey released, 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](#)



GP Dr Buzz Burrell introduces the [www.depression.org.nz](#) website and resources to rural clinicians

### We thank our strategic partner and supporters.



### LEAD STORIES

#### Depression.org.nz campaign promotes small steps to wellbeing

The National Depression Initiative (NDI) campaign, promoting small steps that New Zealanders can take to manage depression and anxiety, commenced in August and includes television and digital advertisements directing people to the website [depression.org.nz](#).

The small steps shown in the advertisements are examples of activities that people may be finding difficult or might have stopped while experiencing depression or anxiety. For example opening up to a friend, planting some vegetables, reading a book to the kids or going for a walk.

The initiative has evolved since it launched in 2006, with depression.org.nz updated in 2016 to take a wider view of mental health issues to include anxiety as well as depression, and upgraded to allow access by mobile devices. The expanded site is also responsive to the needs of specific groups, including rural people, men, Māori, Pasifika, deaf people and LGBTI people.

It includes steps for getting well, information about staying well, places to go for help, advice for people who are supporting others, and new videos of people sharing their stories to inspire others, as well as the website's self-help tool – The Journal. The Journal is based on a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) model and the evidence basis that underpins that has been endorsed by a New Zealand clinical advisory group. The website is supported by a free and confidential 24/7 helpline 0800 111 757 and free text service 4202 provided by the National Telehealth Service.

To promote small steps to wellbeing and encourage help-seeking behaviour in your community, please direct people to the NDI website [depression.org.nz](#). Resources are also available to order free of charge from [order.hpa.org.nz](#).

If you have any questions about the campaign, please contact [enquires@hpa.org.nz](mailto:enquires@hpa.org.nz) or to view the television advertisements visit [www.hpa.org.nz/what-we-do/mental-health/depression-org-nz-campaign](#).

#### New depression.org.nz training video for rural health professionals

The Health Promotion Agency in partnership with Mobile Health and RHĀNZ have produced a new training video for rural health professionals. The purpose of the video is to raise awareness about the information, self-help tools, and resources that are available on [depression.org.nz](#) and to provide information on how health professionals can use this website to support patients who present to them with signs of depression and/or anxiety.

The video is narrated by Dr Buzz Burrell, a rural GP based just outside of Blenheim, and is available free for use as a training tool for health professionals. It's only 5 minutes long and can be incorporated in to existing training programmes, symposia, and conferences. You can access the video by clicking on the following link:

[Depression.org.nz training video.](#)

#### Skin Cancer – Spot it, Stop it, Live on, November 2017

The Health Promotion Agency (HPA) in partnership with Melanoma NZ continue to work together to raise awareness about the importance of regularly self-checking your own skin for different looking moles or freckles. Early detection can increase your chance of successful treatment.

Skin cancer is by far the most common cancer affecting New Zealanders. New Zealand has the highest rate of melanoma (the most serious type of skin cancer) in the world. Each year over 2200 New Zealanders are diagnosed with melanoma and over 300 die from it. Although most melanomas occur in people over 50 years of age, it can occur at any age. Rural people can be at increased risk of skin cancer because of the time they spend outdoors.

HPA and Melanoma NZ have three key messages for the rural sector to help reduce your risk of skin cancer. These are:

- Be alert to an 'ugly duckling' spot, freckle or mole on your skin. If it looks different get a full body skin check by your GP.
- Be **SunSmart** when UV levels are 3 or higher
- Know the daily UV level in your area using the:
  - free [sun protection alert](#)
  - free [uv2Day](#) smartphone app
  - free NIWA [UV forecasts](#)

Use the five SunSmart steps when UV levels are 3 or higher:

- **Slip** on a shirt/top with long sleeves and a collar and Slip into the shade
- **Slop** on sunscreen that is at least SPF 30, broad spectrum and water resistant. Apply 20 minutes before going outside and reapply every 2 hours
- **Slap** on a broad-brimmed hat that shades your face, head, neck and ears
- **Wrap** on close fitting sunglasses.

For more information visit [sunsmart.org.nz](#) and [Melanoma NZ](#).

#### NEW ZEALAND TRAVEL ASSISTANCE SCHEME – SURVEY – IMPORTANT PLEASE COMPLETE

At long last, the Ministry of Health is reviewing the policy underpinning the National Travel Assistance Scheme. Marie Daly, our Programme Manager, will be representing us on the expert leadership group overseeing this work. This is a really important scheme for rural people and their families and we have been advocating for some time now for it to be reviewed to make sure it actually works for rural people, especially those dealing with mental distress.

As preparatory work for the review the Ministry has set up a survey on its website to gather information on people's experience of the scheme, and how it can be improved.

Anyone can complete the survey. There is one for people who have used the NTA or have been a support person - and one for professionals and organisations who work with the NTA.

We urge you to complete the survey and/or pass it on to anyone you know it would be valuable to hear from. The Ministry is particularly keen to hear from patients and their families.

Here is the link to the surveys and further detail about when they close.

[Read more](#)

### Media Watch

#### Leptospirosis Update – Bay of Plenty Rural Support Trust

There has been an increase in leptospirosis bacteria in domestic animals and livestock in the Bay of Plenty. This is not uncommon in areas that have been flooded, and have damp soil or stagnant water.

Leptospirosis is easy to catch from an infected animal and where it lives. Leptospirosis is carried in animal urine and can cause kidney and liver disease in people with possible long lasting effects such as chronic fatigue.

Protect yourself, your family, and staff by vaccinating your animals, controlling rodents, practicing good personal hygiene (hand washing after touching animals, their feed, bedding, and pooled water, and cover any wounds you may have), using protective equipment (eyewear, gloves and boots), avoiding contact with stagnant water, and seek help from a GP early, especially if you have flu like symptoms.

Vaccination of your animals and any animal that visits your property (such as bulls servicing cows) is critical to breaking the cycle of infection. Pigs, dogs, alpacas, sheep, and cattle are a few of the common animals that can be vaccinated against leptospirosis. Call your vet for an appointment.

For further information on leptospirosis talk to your vet or [click here](#).

#### Invercargill medical students awarded Pat Farry Rural Health Education Trust Travelling Scholarship

Two Southland medical students have been awarded travelling scholarships that will allow them to build their medical experience outside New Zealand.

Mark Owen-Cooper and Tash Austin, both fifth year medical students at the University of Otago School of Medicine, have been awarded the Pat Farry Rural Health Education Trust Travelling Scholarship and will be spending 12 weeks of their trainee intern electives working overseas. (Southland Times)

[Read more](#)

#### It's time - new focus on safely managing hazardous substances

On 1 December the Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017 will come into force. The aim is to reduce both the immediate harm to people and longer-term illness caused by hazardous substances in the workplace.

It's no small matter. A hazardous substance is any product or chemical that has explosive, flammable, oxidising, toxic or corrosive properties – and they're everywhere. Around one in three New Zealand workplaces use, manufacture, handle or store them. This includes factories, farmers and growers, as well as printers, collision repairers, hairdressers and retailers. They are in commonly used products such as fuels and LPG, solvents, cleaning solutions and agrichemicals. (Worksafe)

[Read more](#)

#### Farming people the biggest concern

If you think milk price or weather are dairy farmers' biggest concerns, think again – it's people.

That is what a survey by Dairy Women's Network (DWN) has revealed. Chief executive Zelda de Villiers says the results were "quite surprising" and provided a clearer picture about what is important to dairy farmers. 'What is Important' was the theme of the recent DWN annual meeting where the survey results were presented. (Dairy News)

[Read more](#)

#### Local Focus: P affecting teens in rural community

A youth worker concerned about the number of young people using P says an increasing number of New Zealanders are "desperately looking to escape from third world level poverty and homelessness".

Roy Nathan, a youth worker at Te Runanga o Ngai Tamawharia, working with at-risk youth in the Katikati region, said he has helped 14 and 15-year-olds who had been given methamphetamine by family members. (NZ Herald)

[Read more](#)

#### Useful resources for rural clinicians and rural people



The Health Promotion Agency (HPA) has been busy of late producing some useful resources for both rural clinicians and rural people.

The first, is HPA's National Depression Initiative campaign [depression.org.nz](#), launched back in August, which promotes small steps New Zealanders can take to manage depression and anxiety. These are simple and effective steps such as talking to a friend, planting some vegetables or going for a walk. The campaign covers information for getting well and staying well, where to go for help, videos of people sharing their stories to inspire others as well as the website's self-help tool – The Journal.

The second, is HPA's online resource for rural health professionals <https://youtu.be/vDF7MhKN5QY> to use with their patients experiencing depression and anxiety. The video was filmed in partnership with Mobile Health and stars well known rural GP, Dr Buzz Burrell. Buzz is such a natural in front of the camera and his messaging is definitely worth a listen. The video will feature in our Safe Hands, Safe Plans workshops throughout 2018.

The third, is HPA's Skin Cancer Awareness Campaign – Spot it, Stop it, Live on <https://www.sunsmart.org.nz/be-sunsmart>. This campaign is being run in partnership with Melanoma NZ and has three key messages for rural people to help reduce our risk of skin cancer. There is also a neat NIWA map and phone app which tells you the hours each day you need to protect your skin. Today, here in the Hawke's Bay, it is recommended I cover up between 8:50am and 5:10pm. Quite a bit longer than I had thought.

More information and links to these HPA resources can be found in our Lead Stories this week. Please share them amongst your networks, especially via social media.

Finally, registrations for the National Rural Health Conference have gone live this week and if you register by Friday 16 February 2018 you will receive an early bird discount and go into the draw to win a fibbit. [Click here](#) to view the draft programme and to register.

#### Click here to register now

Conference 2018 is shaping up to be a top event and it would be great to see as many RHĀNZ members in Auckland as possible. Council will meet 5 April, 9am to noon. This meeting will incorporate our AGM and election of officers and will be followed by a lunch with our partners and invited guests. All RHĀNZ's Named Representatives are welcome to attend the April 2018 Council Meeting. Make a diary note now.

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](mailto:ce@rhaanz.org.nz)

### Media Watch

#### Immigration can revitalise struggling rural communities

The rural-urban divide is going to get worse before it gets better, Professor Paul Spoonley says. The Massey University pro-vice chancellor of the college of humanities and social sciences told delegates at the Rural Women New Zealand conference in Invercargill that they needed to be explaining why their communities were still important. (NZ Farmer)

[Read more](#)

#### Rural driver-licensing programme struggles for funding

A PROGRAMME that has helped drivers from more than 100 rural families become licensed over the past year will be axed unless it receives funding.

Tairāwhiti REAP's graduated driver licensing programme recently had a graduation for its latest intake but it is uncertain if another intake will go ahead.

REAP (Rural Education Activities Programme) executive director Ani Pahuru-Huriwai said it had the only driver licensing programme in the district that serviced rural areas, where the need was "massive". (Gisborne Herald)

[Read more](#)

#### Southland struggles to attract desperately needed rural doctors and health workers

Gore Health is lobbying the Ministry of Health to regulate physician assistant roles in New Zealand as rural communities struggle to sustain rural health workforces.

Gore Health chief executive Karl Metzler said that the rural communities were really struggling when it came to the provision of medical care.

"I spoke at the rural women's national conference recently, and there were all these horror stories about how these smaller towns and places are really struggling." (Southland Times)

[Read more](#)

#### More business courses for rural women planned

Business development programmes for women involved in sheep and beef farming are expanding to new locations next year.

The Agri-Women's Development Trust runs the programmes with funding from the Red Meat Profit Partnership with the aim of lifting the sector's performance and profitability.

Oamaru and Hātilie will be the first of 32 rural centres to host the programmes in early February. (The Country)

[Read more](#)

#### Fonterra is joining the efforts to raise awareness about family violence

The co-op has joined with Shine and Women's Refuge to launch to provide support services for any of its 12,000+ New Zealand employees who may need help.

A new family violence policy sets out how the cooperative will aim to create a safe and supportive environment at work, while also enabling team members impacted by family violence to take up to 10 days of additional paid leave per year to attend health appointments, legal proceedings or other activities relating to family violence.

Fonterra's managing director people and culture Joanne Fair says businesses have a huge role to play in tackling what is one of New Zealand's biggest social issues. (Dairy News)

[Read more](#)

### Resources & Research

#### HealthCentral.nz - a new resource from NZME Educational Media released this week.

HealthCentral.nz is the independent and impartial go-to source for New Zealand health professionals, and anyone with a vested interest in health and wellbeing. Published by NZME Educational Media, HealthCentral.nz provides:

- The latest news
- Thought-provoking feature content
- Policy updates
- Opinion pieces from sector thought leaders
- Teaching and learning resources
- Professional development initiatives
- Innovative practice
- Forum for discussion and debate.

[Read more](#)

### Events Watch

#### National Rural Health Conference, Pullman Hotel, Auckland, 5-8 April 2018.



The dates are Thursday, April 5 to Sunday, April 8, with the two main conference and exhibition days being Friday, April 6 and Saturday, April 7.

[Click here to register now](#)