

Kidney Health

NEW ZEALAND

P r e v e n t i o n • S u p p o r t • R e s e a r c h

Winter 2011

You know you're from Christchurch when

“You prefer to sit under the table instead of at it”

Having reflected in the previous issue about our experiences in the February earthquake, and given the more recent seismic activity continuing to rattle us, I thought it would be a good time to try and include something a little lighter this time around. It has been said that humour is a great way to help get through difficult times, so I hope this helps.

This newsletter will be a little smaller than our usual ones, for obvious reasons, but we feel it is important to keep you informed. We have been overwhelmed by the messages of support and concern for our wellbeing, from all around the country, these are all very much appreciated and do help make these times a little easier.

By some small miracle our office remains standing, and still has its green sticker, so we feel very lucky. I know there are still some dialysis patients here in Christchurch who are unable to dialyse at home due to contaminated water, or lack of water, but the staff in the renal unit continue their tireless efforts to get the patients back home as soon as practicable.



Check us out on Facebook by typing in the search box **Kidney Health New Zealand.**

Current activities



Staff from Whangarei Renal Unit check the mayor of Whangarei, Morris Cutforth's, blood pressure and blood sugar.

World Kidney Day and Kidney Health Week

Plans are already underway for World Kidney Day on March 8th 2012, the theme for this big event is transplantation and donation, and already we have people wanting to share their stories and help raise awareness, so watch this space. Feel free to contact me on 0800 KIDNEY (543639) if you would like to be involved in this national event.

Kidney Information Forums

The successful format we have developed over the past two years to replace our annual conference will continue with forums in Wanganui, New Plymouth and Wellington. If your support group would like more information about these informal but educational forums please contact me. I will be in Auckland in July helping the occupational health nurse at Griffins to screen and provide education for staff about kidney disease. If you have a workplace or organisation that would like some education around kidney health contact me for further information, resources or to arrange a visit.

Ministry of Health Contract

The non clinical resource information we are working on for the Ministry of Health continues to progress, although due to a variety of circumstances we have had to move the completion date out, but watch this space for an update. The information resources for children and their parents are further ahead and we hope to have these available before the end of the year.

Free phone information line

The 0800 line seems to have been particularly busy recently with a variety of calls including people wanting information around donating a kidney, newly diagnosed kidney disease, low

salt diet for high blood pressure issues, travel for dialysis patients and students looking for information for school science projects around kidney disease.

On the Move

We are moving offices, earthquake dependent, just around the corner to larger premises which will also house Canterbury Medical Research Foundation, Christchurch Kidney Society and Kidney Health New Zealand. Our new address will be 230 Antigua St, Christchurch.

Collaboration between Kidney Health New Zealand and Diabetes New Zealand recognized by an award at the recent meeting of the International Federation of Kidney Foundation (IFKF).



The poster entitled *Kidney Health New Zealand and Diabetes New Zealand working together: Co-operation brings strength* won the best poster prize for Kidney Foundation Activities at the 12th IFKF International Meeting in Vancouver in early April. Our medical director Professor Kelvin Lynn is seen here explaining the poster

Recognition that both organisations have much in common and would have more impact working together has led to an agreement to work together in the area of diabetes and kidney disease. Working together has improved our ability to achieve our organisations' goals. Further information regarding the work of Diabetes New Zealand can be found at www.diabetes.org.nz

John Velvin Charitable Trust

This Trust has been formed by family and friends of the late John Velvin who suffered from long term chronic kidney disease. It is established to provide support to persons living with chronic kidney disease.

Purpose: To provide financial and personal support to individuals living with chronic kidney failure. Specifically the Trustees will provide support to those who they believe John Velvin would have most wanted to share his experience and advice, providing the individuals with opportunity and reassurance they otherwise would not have access to.

Funding support would typically enable recipients to continue with education, have access to appropriate renal advice, maintain contact with family and friends etc.

However the Trust's intentions are to provide personal support beyond money. This additional support would be in the form of access to many of our networks including professional colleagues, career development, counselling and the like.

As the Trust beneficiaries increase in number the Trustees will also seek opportunity for beneficiaries to support each other, both through sharing experiences in sessions where they get together and just being available for each other. Thus the purposes are not limited to providing money.

All renal parties contacted are supportive of the purpose of the Trust. Kidney Health NZ has provided a letter of endorsement.

The Trustees have raised sufficient money from family and friends to begin the process of inviting potential beneficiaries to apply for support from the Trust. Trustees will look for other opportunities to access money from parties associated with beneficiary applicants and from other interested sources.

For further information about this trust you can visit our website <http://www.kidneys.co.nz/John-Velvin-Trust/> or contact Trustee, David Irvine on 021 987 821 or Kidney Health New Zealand on 0800 543639

Obituary

Dr Peter J Little MB ChB, FRACP, FRCP 15/11/1930 to 19/5/2011

Peter Little, the founder of the Christchurch renal unit and a pioneer of home dialysis in New Zealand, died recently.

Peter Little was born and educated in Hawke's Bay and trained in medicine at the University of Otago. He met Professor Hugh de Wardener while working as a locum at Fulham Hospital, London and decided to become a nephrologist at a time when the subspecialty was just emerging following the establishment of the feasibility of long term dialysis.

In 1966 Dr Little was appointed as Canterbury's first nephrologist to set up a renal unit at Christchurch Hospital. He was Head of the Nephrology Department from 1976 to 1979. The principles of treatment for people with kidney disease that he established still influence the treatment of people with kidney failure today.

The first kidney patient started dialysis in Christchurch in 1969 and the first kidney transplant was done in 1972. His colleagues elected him as the President of the Australasian Society of Nephrology from 1976 to 1978.

Peter Little will be remembered as quite a character. Having a great intellect and being a clear analytical thinker, he did not always get on with the establishment but he was held in high esteem by patients and doctors in training and was always one to support the underdog. His flamboyant dress and trademark bowtie were as well known at Addington Raceway as at Christchurch Hospital.

Dr Little left Christchurch in 1980 to establish and head a renal unit in Saudi Arabia and subsequently worked in Baghdad where he developed a large, successful living donor kidney transplant programme. He returned to New Zealand to live in retirement but continued to travel, particularly to Ireland and Thailand.

The board and staff of Kidney Health New Zealand extend their sincere condolences to Dr Little's widow, Dolores, and his family.

We remember

Bev Withers 29th January 1941 – 3rd May 2011



Bev was one of New Zealand's longest surviving kidney transplant recipients, being the third person to be transplanted at Christchurch Hospital in September 1973. Bev was a wonderful supporter of the Christchurch Kidney Society, and worked as a volunteer there for several years. She was an advocate for transplantation and donation and was eternally grateful for the almost 39 "extra" years she was given.

Bev was always cheerful, generous with her time and certainly made the most of the gift she had been given. We will miss her smiling face in the Kidney Health New Zealand office too.

In some ways it feels like a relief to farewell the first half of 2011, given all that has happened, but we look forward to a less shaky second half as we start to regroup and rebuild.

'The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything they have.'



