

Welcome to Better Times, the first newsletter for Creating a Better Future.

We hope to bring you new issues regularly and would welcome your suggestions for future stories. In this issue, there's information about the Creating a Better Future strategy, the story behind our distinctive new logo, the latest research on obesity and cancer risk, and even an Apple Pudding recipe to warm your winter! There is also the opportunity to get a group together for the annual Feetbeat team walking event. Finally, don't forget to check out our website at www.betterfuture.co.nz - there'll be lots of new pages appearing online over the coming weeks.

Don't want to miss out on a free issue of Better Times? Email Katie Wylie at katie.wylie@middlemore.co.nz to be added to our distribution list.

'The greatest wealth is health.'

~Virgil

Creating a Better Future Kicks Off!

Participants at a recent meeting had a gathering with a difference on July 1 as they paused to acknowledge the official 'first day' of Creating a Better Future.

July 1 was day one of Creating a Better Future, kicking off the first year of the strategy's five year vision.

Those at the meeting, which included Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB) staff and others from partner organisations, shared some fresh fruit and acknowledged the excitement generated by the new initiative. It was an opportunity to realise the potential we have to make positive and lasting change in Counties Manukau by supporting and enabling the communities around us to lead healthier lives.

Creating a Better Future is the new, long-term health strategy from the CMDHB and community partners. It is aimed at addressing the significant burden of disease caused through smoking, poor nutrition, lack of physical activity and the misuse of alcohol. In doing so, it aims to prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases and many cancers which share these four risk factors. It is also about improving the lives of those people who already have these conditions and supporting them to better manage their health.

It has been developed alongside primary health care and a range of intersectoral partners from Let's Beat Diabetes, drawing on that five-year initiative while broadening its reach. It will involve collaboration with partner organisations and the community to bring together several existing strategies and work already underway.

Examples of Creating a Better Future in action will include:

- The development and promotion of healthier food choices at community events
- Collaboration with the food industry to reduce fat, sugar and salt consumption
- Increased support for primary health to deliver brief interventions
- A greater emphasis on clinical governance
- Work through schools, workplaces and faith-based settings to reduce risk factors
- Support for the development of more health-promoting practises

What's on?



Want to go to Bluff and back? It's not too late to enter Feetbeat – the fun and free team-walking event organised by the Auckland Regional Public Health Service.

Starting on September 13, Feetbeat encourages teams of four to eight people to 'journey' their way to a New Zealand destination by going for regular walks over an eight week period. Teams choose a name and set themselves a challenge, then grab their shoes and head out the door to pound the pavements. Their progress is recorded on a provided map, allowing members to see how many kilometres they are walking over time and how far that could have taken them in real terms. Maybe you want to get a group together and take a virtual journey around New Zealand?

Great prizes are up for grabs throughout the event, which runs until November 7.

So what better way to celebrate the return of spring in September? Register for free today by checking out www.arphs.govt.nz/feetbeat, emailing Pritika Sharma on pritikas@adhb.govt.nz or phoning 623 4600 ext. 27752. Applications close on September 10.

An active person is a healthy person.
Happy walking!





Distinctive design: Howick College student Maddi Duthie with her winning design which is the new logo for Creating a Better Future.

LOCAL LOGO FOR CREATING A BETTER FUTURE

One glimpse at the new Creating a Better Future logo and you'd never guess the young girl behind it has only just started learning about digital design.

Howick College year 12 student Maddi Duthie won a school competition run by the Counties Manukau District Health Board

(CMDHB) to design a logo for Creating a Better Future. The logo will be used on all material linked to the strategy, including letterheads, project reports, powerpoint presentations, promotional material and the website.

Maddi's winning logo, for which she received an iPod Nano, was one of a field of entries, all of which were of a very high standard. Her work incorporates a blue heart with koru and green leaves – symbols she says represent health, growth, creation and New Zealand identity. It took about three hours in the classroom to create, starting by drawing a page of rough sketches and then using three specialist design programmes on a school computer to transform these into workable graphics.

"We are so impressed with the way in which Maddi's design represents the various elements of our new project. It will be great to use a logo created by a local young person as part of Creating a Better Future for years to come," says Tracey Barron of the CMDHB.

Maddi's work is particularly impressive because the 16-year-old Howick girl only started studying digital design earlier this year. Now it is one of her favourite subjects which she hopes to turn into a career by studying a Bachelor of Graphic Design at the Auckland University of Technology.

"I want to be a graphic designer when I leave school. This competition was a good opportunity which came through."

So what are her tips for a winning design?

"Bright colours," she says. "And keep it simple because it's a logo and it's got to be easily distinguished from other logos."

Thanks Maddi – feedback so far has all been positive and suggests your logo is definitely distinctive for Creating a Better Future.

MAAORI OBESITY INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

Many Maaori communities in Counties Manukau are hard at work after \$800,000 of funding was allocated under the Maaori Obesity Community Action Plan (MOCAP).

MOCAP has been run by the Counties Manukau District Health Board since 2007 and is funded through HEHA. Funding is intended for community groups who demonstrate leadership around improving nutrition, increasing physical activity and reducing obesity levels amongst Maaori. The aim is to empower Maaori within their own communities to take ownership of their health and tackle obesity in a way that is relevant and sustainable.

Proposals for initiatives were sought in 2009 and generated substantial interest from 20 providers. Eleven met the criteria and

have now received funding totalling about \$800,000. Their projects are busy getting underway in five localities across Counties Manukau – Otara, Mangere, Manurewa, Papakura and Franklin.

They range from community gardens to swimming sessions, workshops, traditional Maaori games, weight loss challenges and dance programmes. There's even a garden which is going organic! Hundreds of families throughout Counties Manukau are benefiting from this funding and taking ownership of their health and the health of those around them.

Watch this space in the coming months to read more about what's happening and some of the success stories from communities that are addressing this important issue.

ADDRESSING PACIFIC OBESITY

Pacific communities are also benefiting with the funding of nearly 20 community-led initiatives under the Pacific Obesity Community Implementation Plan.

Last year for the first time, the Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB), supported through HEHA funding, made available community grants for Pacific community groups, churches and ethnic-specific groups. The aim of the funding was to empower Pacific families to have more control over their own health and wellbeing.

Nine community groups have already received funding from the 2009 grants process to develop community-based vegetable gardens, with a significant number of Pacific community groups expressing interest in grant funding this year. Of these applicants, the CMDHB intends to fund nine initiatives to develop and deliver community-led nutrition and physical activity initiatives.

This means people are hard at work organising and delivering aerobics and Zumba classes, cooking demonstrations, gardening projects, healthy lifestyles programmes for adults and physical activity programmes for youth throughout the community.

The total funding distributed under the grants process over the last twelve months is close to \$210,000 in five localities – Mangere, Otara, Papakura, Manurewa and Franklin. Funded groups include some churches from the CMDHB's Lotu Moui church programme. Further funding is supporting scholarships for nutrition and dietician students.

The community groups which have received funding are also gaining skills through participation at train-the-trainer programmes. Some groups have nominated a person to complete either a Certificate of Pacific Nutrition with the National Heart Foundation or a Community Coach Physical Activity Programme through Counties

Manukau Active – gaining skills which they are then able to share with others throughout the community. Optional Zumba training is also being offered to enable people to teach others about this popular new exercise to music craze.



Get Smart, Get Active:

The benefits of physical activity are well recognised. However, undertaking activity that isn't suitable for you may result in injury which can put you out of action. ActiveSmart is a website which allows you to develop free online training programmes for walking, running and cycling. These are tailored to meet your needs and will help you get the most out of your physical activity at a level that is right for you. Sign up now to receive a plan designed specifically for your needs. It's personalised for you by experts and it's FREE! www.activesmart.co.nz. The smart way to get active.

MUSIC THE MOTIVATION FOR MOVEMENT

A former DJ's mix tapes are helping motivate Pacific people to move more in Counties Manukau.

Otara-born Vivienne Tonga is a Pacific Physical Activity Leader with the Counties Manukau Active programme. But it's her skills as a DJ which have been helping motivate Pacific people over the past few months.

Tonga, who loves music and also plays the drums, has some experience as a nightclub DJ. She would be thrown into the spotlight by good friend and DJ Fast Eddie, to be groomed and build her confidence.

Now the 30-year-old is putting her musical skills to use by mixing tracks to play in her physical activity classes. She chooses popular beats and uses a mixing programme at home to deliver sounds which will appeal to participants.

"The majority of my music is Pacific – it will have a Pacific feel, Pacific beats, songs that they recognise... Everyone's looking for an excuse not to exercise so you try and accommodate them, to make sure they don't have an excuse not to come," she says.

"You have to connect with your audience. If I'm going to exercise to something, I want to exercise to something I like. It suggests that there are psychological barriers and that you can overcome them."

And the results are paying off. An external case study of Tonga's work, undertaken by Synergia, noted that participants loved the music because it was "in tune" with their cultural backgrounds.

"Everyone can relate to the music," one participant said. "It's not just Samoan, it's Tokelauan. Everyone can relate to the beat."

Tonga is currently putting together a 30 minute track incorporating different tempos on request from a power walking group, her Mum is moving to the music at home and feedback at classes has been amazing. She has already compiled two CDs and is currently working on a third.

"They love it and they want more. I can't keep up. The key thing is that they want to exercise themselves and that's the best thing – that they feel empowered."

Tonga, who is soon to become a certified fitness instructor and personal trainer through Netfit, runs Body Fuse and Box Circuit classes. Body Fuse incorporates dancing and boxing with Zumba while Box Circuit concentrates on strength and cardio training. The free classes, held every week in Otara and Papatoetoe, can attract up to 60 people aged from four to 84.

• **To attend Tonga's classes, check out www.cmsport.co.nz/active-communities**

Top tip: "You have to get active," says Pacific Physical Activity Leader Vivienne Tonga. "You can't live life sitting down."



Hot Tips for Cool Gardening

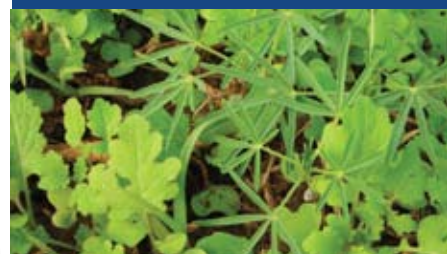
What grows in the ground over winter? Read on for five top tips about gardening in winter and how to prepare your patch for spring.

Plan your planting

Draw up a list of what you'd like to grow from seed and from plants this coming spring. Consider planting annual flowers such as calendula for pollination and angelica to host helpful creepy crawlies.

Be soil-savvy

Sow lupin and mustard seeds to build up soil minerals and condition the soil for spring. When the plants are 20-30cm tall and have not yet flowered, cut them by 50% with a weedeater or hedge clippers.



Mustard seeds and lupin

Out of time?

Try planting some fast-growing crops such as leaf-picking lettuce, radish, mustard, spinach, mesclun, endives, coriander and chives, which will all be ready to eat in about six weeks. Spring onions, broccoli, cabbage, silverbeet, cauliflower and rocket will take more time. Be bold and try planting mibuna, purple pak choi, Maori spinach or strawberry spinach this month.

Let it snow

Plant snow peas and broad beans for a spring harvest. The bean flowers are an important source of pollen for hungry bees in winter.



Young broad bean seedlings

Eat Up

Pinch the tip growth of the broad bean plant once it is over 60cm tall. Eat raw as a sweet snack, use in salads or coleslaws, fry in the wok or add to a sushi dish.

Source: *Gardens4Health, Diabetes Project Trust*

Research Round-Up

New international research featuring Kiwi participants shows a strong link between obesity in Asia-Pacific people and an increased risk of dying from cancer.

The study, which has recently been published in the Lancet Oncology journal, included 10,400 New Zealanders among the 424,519 participants from the Asia-Pacific region.

It found that overweight people from Asia or the Pacific were 6% more likely to die from cancer than people of a healthy weight, while those who were obese were 21% more likely.

This is particularly concerning because of the steady increase in the number of Asian and Pacific people who are becoming overweight and obese.

In Counties Manukau, we know that 24 % of Pacific people are overweight while 78% are obese. For Asian people, 29% are overweight and 14% obese.

The authors of the research suggest strategies to stop people from becoming overweight and obese are necessary to reduce the onslaught of cancer that can be expected if the obesity epidemic continues at its current rate.

Eating a balanced diet which includes a variety of fruit and vegetables, watching how much you eat and doing some physical activity for at least 30 minutes every day are among the tips suggested to help maintain a healthy weight.

'Life begins the day you start a garden'
- Chinese Proverb

SPOTLIGHT ON SMOKING

Smoking has been in the spotlight recently, with wide-reaching changes encouraging more New Zealanders to become smokefree. They include:

- In April, the Government increased the tax on tobacco, with a further two increases to be made in January 2011 and January 2012. April's increase hiked the retail price of a pack of 20 cigarettes by 10% or about \$1. Loose tobacco, used by pipe smokers and in roll-your-own cigarettes, was hiked by 14% to bring the price into line with that for cigarettes. Since the April increase, Quitline has reported a substantial rise in the number of New Zealanders seeking advice about becoming smokefree.
- Prisoners will be smokefree from July next year. The move, announced by the Government in late June, is aimed at making prisons healthier and safer environments for inmates and staff. Prisoners looking to quit will be offered information, education and Nicotine Replacement Therapy in the 12 months leading up to the change.
- District Health Boards are working to meet the Ministry of Health's six health targets, which include offering better support for people who smoke to quit. By July 2010, 80% of hospitalised smokers were to be provided with advice and help to quit smoking. This increases to 90% by July next year and 95% in July 2012. The Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB) Smokefree team has reported a good uptake by staff across Middlemore Hospital offering smokefree support. Preliminary results for June show that 64% of people who smoke and were hospitalised received support to quit, up from 58% in May.
- Middlemore Hospital now has a concierge whose responsibilities include enforcing the site's smokefree status. As part of the role, the concierge monitors patients and hospital visitors who typically gather outside the hospital entrance to smoke and reminds them that no smoking is permitted on the site.
- GPs and practice nurses are having their own targets put in place to support smokefree best practise in primary care. The targets, which came into effect at the beginning of July, encourage doctors and nurses to record whether the patient is currently smoking and then offer them support to quit if appropriate. A number of new resources are being developed to support the primary care workforce.

Ingrid Minett, CMDHB Smokefree Programme Manager, said large numbers of healthcare workers were getting behind being smokefree and really enjoying helping others to overcome their nicotine addictions.

Approximately 82,000 people smoke in Counties Manukau and about 5000 New Zealanders die each year as a result of tobacco.



Diabetes statistics a concern for South Asian people

Diabetes is now as problematic for South Asian people in Counties Manukau as it is for Pacific people according to new information from the Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB).

The growth in the condition is part of a global trend which United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon has labelled "a public health emergency in slow motion".

A recent analysis of information by the CMDHB reveals that 31,500 adults in Counties Manukau had diabetes at the end of last year. About 4000 of these were from the South Asian community, which in Counties Manukau primarily comprises those of Indian descent.

This means between 12% and 15% of the South Asian adult population in Counties Manukau has diabetes. This percentage is comparable to that of the district's Pacific population who has been known to have particularly high rates of diabetes in the past.

One of the reasons for the increase is thought to be the proactive work by primary health organisations and primary care providers in identifying more people with the disease. At the same time, these figures do not account for people who may have undiagnosed diabetes meaning that the scale of the "emergency" is likely to be greater than currently estimated.

The factors which contribute to these high rates of diabetes in South Asian communities are linked to physical activity, nutrition and subsequent obesity. Asian people, especially women, are known to have the lowest rates of regular physical activity in New Zealand. Deep frying and a tendency to eat high-energy foods (for example putting lots of sugar into tea or coffee), coupled with a lower intake of fruit and vegetables, are also more common in South Asian diets. These factors have led to high rates of obesity in South Asian populations – a problem which is known to get worse the longer an individual lives in New Zealand.

CMDHB Chief Executive Officer Geraint Martin says that, along with smoking, the factors which lead to diabetes are "the biggest health issues facing the Counties Manukau community".

For South Asian communities, this is because diabetes greatly increases the risk of coronary heart disease for which a large number of South Asian people already receive hospitalisation and treatment. Diabetes can also lead to kidney failure, blindness and limb amputations.

It is thought that the number of people with diabetes in Counties Manukau will double by 2027 but that two-thirds of this group could avoid the condition through lifestyle changes.

"If we can't help our population to change their ways of eating and their physical activity habits, our diabetes services will be overwhelmed," says Dr Brandon Orr-Walker, Clinical Head of Diabetes Services at the CMDHB.

He is now urging people who are at-risk to take up this challenge by increasing their physical activity, reducing energy intake and losing weight. He also recommends that those who are concerned about their risk of diabetes visit their doctor or family nurse to see if they need to be tested and to talk about diabetes prevention.

- **The CMDHB has recently released an educational DVD about diabetes for South Asian people. Contact Katie Wylie at katie.wylie@middlemore.co.nz for a free copy.**

Questions or suggestions? Please contact:

Katie Wylie, Communications Specialist on (09) 262 9563 or katie.wylie@middlemore.co.nz

Apple and Rice Pudding

Ingredients

- 1 cup short grain rice
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup vanilla yoghurt
- 1 cup apple sauce or tinned fruit (eg peaches or pears)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Boil water in large pot. Add washed rice and stir constantly until boiling. Cook slowly until rice is cooked. Mix rice and apple sauce or tinned fruit together in a bowl. If you are using tinned fruit, mash it with a fork first. Add cinnamon and yoghurt and stir well. Spoon into dishes and serve.

Recipe from the Auckland Regional Public Health Service



A winter warmer: Dust your Apple and Rice Pudding with cinnamon before serving.