

Taranaki DHB's Disability Action Group would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Main entrance drop off/pick up car parks

The Disability Action Group has supported the introduction of the three drop off/pick up carparks just outside the Base Hospital main entrance.

Drivers can leave their car in these parks for a short time, while escorting patients to and from the hospital waiting area or the wards.

For those arriving at the hospital, once the patient has been escorted, the drivers can then move their car to a half-an-hour, two hour or all day carpark. This ensures the drop off/pick up carpark spaces are kept free for those who need them.



For more information on car parking at Base Hospital see the map on our website: www.tdhb.org.nz/patients_visitors/documents/car_parking_map.pdf

Disability Action Group

The Taranaki DHB's Disability Action Group meets every two months. The group has effective representation including; people with disabilities, Disabled People Organisations and Taranaki DHB staff. The group assist and advise Taranaki DHB in implementing the NZ and Taranaki Disability Strategies through the Taranaki DHB Disability Action Plan. For more information contact Keryn Roderick, Portfolio Manager on ext 8798.

Video Remote Sign Language Interpreting – It is free for Deaf people!

Taranaki DHB has introduced the use of Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) for NZ sign language. You can communicate face-to-face fully in NZSL with your health professional. All meetings are confidential and no records of conversations are ever kept by the VRI centre. It is a Government funded initiative and currently there is no charge.

How to book VRI in 2 easy steps

- Staff and consumers can contact Helen Burley extension 8825 to book an interpreter with the VRI service. At least two days notice prior to the appointment is needed.
- Arrive 15 minutes before your appointment to allow enough time to ensure the meeting room is arranged to suit your communication needs.

Go to www.vri.govt.nz for more information

Taranaki DHB gets involved in disability responsiveness training

Earlier this year several Taranaki DHB board members, staff and volunteers took part in disability responsiveness training workshops. The training involved simulation exercises to increase awareness of what it is like to live with a disability, as well as how to approach and offer assistance to people with disabilities.

Before beginning the simulation exercises the participants paired up. Each partner then took turns having a 'disability'. The disabilities were simulated in various ways:

- Being blind-folded to simulate vision impairment
- Wearing earmuffs to simulate hearing impairment
- Being in a wheelchair or on crutches to simulate difficulty walking; and
- Ankle and wrist weights to simulate a stroke.

The groups visited various points in and around Base Hospital during the exercise including the disabled toilets, sets of stairs, the cafeteria and the disabled car parks.

Well-known local man, Lance Girling-Butcher, who is also

blind and deaf in one ear presented at each of the workshops. He made the points that it's ok to approach disabled people - as many people can be reluctant to do so. He added that it's always good to ask them if they would like help, rather than just providing it. He told the story of someone escorting him across the road, when he wanted to stay on the side he was already on!

The workshops were evaluated by the participants, with many saying it provided them with increased confidence to interact with people with disabilities. They also commented on the real value in getting to see/feel what it was like to have a disability and the barriers this presents.

The sessions were jointly run by the Taranaki Disabilities Information Centre Trust and Taranaki DHB. Participants receive a National Certificate in Disability Responsiveness after completing the sessions.

Further disability responsiveness training workshops will be held in 2015 – keep an eye out for registration information.

Comments from workshop participants:

"The process of becoming reliant on another person when taking part in the workshop brought the issues surrounding accessibility for those with a disability into sharp relief. The time it takes to get around, to make sure you are not left alone and to have a supporting person explain all the hazards was a real eye opener."

**Taranaki DHB Board member,
Dr Flora Gilkison***

"It was certainly a very enlightening experience, and made us all think very carefully about the daily challenges faced by those with disabilities in Taranaki."

**Taranaki DHB General Manager,
Planning Funding & Population
Health, Becky Jenkins**

* Dr Gilkison is also the Chair of the Community and Public Health Advisory Committee and Disability Support Advisory Committee (CPHAC/DSAC)



■ Workshop participants taking part in a simulation exercise around Base Hospital



■ Ngawai Henare experiencing wheelchair transport