



WELLINGTON

He Kete Kōrero

University of Otago, Wellington Newsletter | Summer 2016/17

Dean's welcome

Tēnā koutou katoa

In our final newsletter for 2016 I would like to thank all the staff and students for an outstanding, productive and busy year. Like many in Wellington and around the country, we have been through a disrupted few weeks since the large Kaikoura earthquake and many aftershocks. I would like to commend and thank the UOW Incident Management Team and all staff for continuing with their work through the earthquakes and resultant disruption. We continue to monitor and review the situation, support as needed and update our management plans for these kinds of events and issues. Several events were rearranged or postponed including some final examinations, and the Pathology Open Day which will now take place next year.

In the meantime, this issue of He Kete Kōrero celebrates just some of the achievements and collaborations at UOW in the last few months. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all Season's Greetings and a relaxing break over the summer. I would also like to thank those UOW staff with clinical and other work commitments through the public holidays.

We look forward to working with you in 2017.

Ngā mihi nui, nā

Sunny Collings
Dean and Head of Campus
University of Otago, Wellington



University of Otago and Ngāti Toa Rangatira renew partnership

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira was signed at the University of Otago, Wellington by Te Taku Parai, chair of Te Rūnanga, Sir Matiu Rei, Te Rūnanga Executive Director, and John Ward, Chancellor of the University.



Ngati Toa Rangatira is well known for its strong track record in improving access to low cost primary health care for residents of Porirua and Wellington, and has contributed to the education of health professionals, including our dental and medical students. Ngāti Toa Rangatira has always been in the forefront of innovations in whānau ora, primary care and health promotion, developing health and social services that are Māori-led and benefit the whole community. Ora Toa, the health services of Ngāti Toa, employs five Māori GPs who mentor Māori students from UOW.



L to R: Toa Waaka, Donna Matahaere-Atariki, Tuari Potiki, Komene Cassidy, Bridget Robson, Hata Temo at MoU signing.



PACIFICNEWS

The University of Otago, Wellington has gained funding to establish a new programme specifically to support Pacific undergraduate students on campus.

“The new UOW Pacific Undergraduate Support Programme aims to provide high quality tailored support to undergraduate Pacific students enrolled through the Wellington campus,” says Nandika Currey, Associate Dean Pacific at UOW.

“We’re establishing the programme in response to growing Pacific undergraduate numbers in medicine, radiation therapy and other health science qualifications on offer through UOW.”

The programme will begin in early 2017, with the appointment of a Pacific Undergraduate Co-ordinator, and will follow a similar model to that already in place for the UOW Pacific Postgraduate Support Programme, which has been running successfully since its inception in 2015. The new undergraduate programme is made possible thanks to the 2017 Pacific Equity Funding. For further details, please contact Nandika.Currey@otago.ac.nz

School students learn about Pathology in Māori – Akoranga pūtaiao i roto i te reo Māori

In a day of science held primarily in te reo Māori, Year 9-11 students from Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngā Mokopuna returned to UOW for a third year. This time they dissected eyeballs and lit up the lab with fluorescence. Dr Sara Filoche who led the science teaching and experiments with Ruruhira Rameka supporting with te reo Māori, says they are keen to offer this opportunity to more kura in the Wellington region. “But we need to find a way to make this sustainable and ongoing, and involve others too,” says Dr Filoche.



All Blacks visit

Three NZ All Blacks paid a visit to UOW in August to meet Paediatrics Department researcher Associate Professor Lynette Sadleir and a group of children with epilepsy and their parents. Associate Professor Sadleir spoke about her epilepsy genetics research, funded by Curekids, and how it is directly translating to make a difference to the children and their families. The rugby players (Dane Coles, Damian McKenzie and Aaron Smith), and assembled media, sponsors, and funders learnt about epilepsy and how the research is making a difference.

2016 Student Awards Ceremony Hui Whakanui Taurira

The UOW Student Awards Ceremony was held on November 18. Dean Sunny Collings congratulated the students and talked about the importance of values. “You have knowledge and skills in your kete, but don’t forget to pack your values too,” she said. Student leader and head of Wellington Medical Students Association Mike Fleete gave the following advice to his fellow graduates and other students: “Talk to each other and share your experiences, call for help if you need it; focus on what you do know, focus on the things you can do really well”. For more information about the award winners and photos:

otago.ac.nz/wellington/otago627306.html



Connie Giffilan, winner of the PhD research prize in Basic Science, gives the Postgraduate student address at the Student Awards Ceremony.

Congratulations

- **SUSAN PULLON**, Department of Primary Healthcare and General Practice, promoted to Full Professor

Five people were promoted to Associate Professor:

- **LIZ DENNETT**, Department of Surgery and Anaesthesia
- **DIANE KENWRIGHT**, Department of Pathology and Molecular Medicine
- **WILLIAM LEVACK**, Department of Medicine
- **EILEEN MCKINLAY**, Department of Primary Health Care and General Practice
- **BRIDGET ROBSON**, Department of Public Health.

TANYA RISSMAN, Regional Disability Advisor at the Ministry of Social Development who has received a 2016 MSD Study Award to complete a Postgraduate Diploma in Rehabilitation at the University of Otago, Wellington.

ALANNAH FLOCKTON from Radiation Therapy received two national awards at recent conferences for research on patient education using the Virtual Environment Radiotherapy Training System.

Research funding successes



Dr Andrea Teng



Dr Gabrielle Jenkin



Dr Nevil Piers

DR ANDREA TENG, Department of Public Health, was awarded the Health Research Council's Clinical Research Training Fellowship. She was one of 14 Otago health researchers and students to receive funding through the HRC Career Development Awards for 2017. She will be investigating the 'Impact of sugar-sweetened beverage taxation in the Pacific'. Dr Teng says "Given the scale of the global obesity epidemic it is critical to understand if interventions to control obesity are effective. The primary aim of this study is to examine the impact of sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) tax on consumption in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). The Pacific region is an excellent site from which to examine this topic as 13 of 22 PICTs have introduced SSB taxes". The Fellowship will allow Dr Teng to develop skills in time-series and economic analysis, establish a career as an epidemiologist in non-communicable disease control and contribute to strengthened New Zealand-Pacific links.

DR GABRIELLE JENKIN, Suicide and Mental Health Research Group, was awarded a Fast Start award (designed to support outstanding early-career researchers) in the latest Marsden funding round to study 'Acute Mental Health Wards: Therapeutic Spaces or Stigmatising Places?' This multidisciplinary study will draw on perspectives from social science, psychiatry, nursing and architecture to understand the architectural design, therapeutic philosophy and social regime of the modern acute mental health unit in New Zealand.

DR NEVIL PIERSE, Department of Public Health, received an MBIE 2016 Endeavour award to study homelessness, in a project entitled "Ending Homelessness in New Zealand: Housing First." Based on robust international evidence, the Housing First Research Team and The People's Project together with the Universities of Otago and Waikato will develop a new model for ending homelessness through a 'Housing First' approach. This has been shown to provide the best environment for addressing the often complex needs of hard to reach groups.

Research briefs

Amazon humidity and Everest Base Camp altitude in Wellington

Researchers can now explore complex health questions in the Global Energetics and Environmental Simulation Suite (GENESIS) in the Centre for Translational Physiology (CTP). It's an airtight room designed to simulate some of the more inhospitable conditions found in the world. It will enable all kinds of research including how environmental conditions influence energy expenditure, an important underlying factor for diseases like obesity and diabetes. For further information, contact terry.odonnell@otago.ac.nz

BLITZ study: A youth vision for Porirua City

A new study led by Dr Ramona Tiatia in Public Health developed a survey app to discover the youth's vision for Porirua city. The BLITZ study, part of the wider Porirua Social Sector Trial, showed that better facilities and affordable activities for youth are urgently needed to achieve social sector change.

Cost-effectiveness of Herceptin® for early stage breast cancer varies by age and tumour type

A study found that the cost-effectiveness of the drug trastuzumab (known more commonly as Herceptin®) in treating early stage breast cancer was highly variable depending on the disease characteristics and age of the woman.

Large Otago study shows New Zealand maternity system needs improvement

Researchers released the findings of a major five-year study of New Zealand's maternity outcomes. The study, published in **PLOS Medicine**, compared birth outcomes for babies born to mothers registered with medical lead maternity carers, such as obstetricians or GPs, with those who had midwives as lead maternity carers.

Cycling and walking in NZ cities

Public health researchers undertook a major benchmarking study **Benchmarking cycling and walking in six New Zealand cities: Pilot study 2015** to make a baseline assessment of key inputs to cycling and walking in New Zealand cities. It also assessed outputs, such as who cycles and walks, how safe it is, and the health of populations of each city. Funded by the University of Otago and the Resilient Urban Futures programme in the New Zealand Centre for Sustainable Cities, the study is available to download from the Department of Public Health [website](#).

Most homeless people working or studying

Dr Kate Amore from the Health Research Council funded He Kainga Oranga/Housing and Health Research Programme used census and administrative data to analyse the 'severely housing deprived' population. Her research found that more than half of all homeless adults in New Zealand are working or studying.

Towards Smokefree 2025

Sweeping changes to the Smokefree Environments legislation have been proposed in an article in the New Zealand Medical Journal. Public Health researchers say these are necessary to achieve Smokefree 2025. Read more [Radical new law needed to ensure the Smokefree 2025 goal](#).

For more detail on these stories or other UOW news and research go to: otago.ac.nz/wellington/news/ and follow us on [Twitter @otagowellington](https://twitter.com/otagowellington)

Earthquake update

Events such as the November 14 earthquake can have an on-going effect on people in general – for our staff, for our patients, collaborators, study participants and students. As always personal and family safety are an absolute priority. It is important to be prepared and there is good information on how to do this at getthru.govt.nz

The key points are:

- Have a family plan
- Store emergency water
- Keep emergency supplies available (such as food, medications, lighting)
- Consider options for getting home (or to work) if transport systems are affected
- Have warm clothes and good walking shoes at work.

Civil Defence offers useful updates for earthquake and emergency preparedness on their website: civildefence.govt.nz/

Note: University updates on any significant emergency will be posted on the main page of the University of Otago website otago.ac.nz

Promoting Health in Aotearoa New Zealand

Promoting Health in Aotearoa New Zealand is now available as an e-book. It provides a rich scan of the health promotion landscape in New Zealand, and explores ways in which Māori, and other, perspectives have been melded with Western ideas to produce distinctly New Zealand approaches. Available here:

otago.ac.nz/press/books/otago122025.html



Shaken not Stirred – Psychological impact of the recent Kaikoura Quake

The recent large quake and continuing aftershocks are a significant event and it is normal for many to continue to feel anxious. It is important to think about coping through this time.

“Aftershocks and uncertainty about future events affect us in different ways, and people have different ways of coping. It’s important to acknowledge on-going feelings and it’s helpful to talk to family, friends and whanau. You may find it is taking longer than you expected to get the ‘balance’ back into your life,” says Professor of Primary Health Care and General Practice, Tony Dowell .

Professor Dowell suggests the following to help carry on:

- Be physically active
- Use relaxation techniques
- Focus on the positive things that are happening in your life
- Look out for others.

But if people are finding things hard, it’s important to seek professional help. “Your GP is your first port of call, and psychological counselling is provided through various schemes such as the EAP scheme,” he says. There is very useful information on the Mental Health Foundation website: mentalhealth.org.nz/earthquake-information/. In particular, this link provides [tips for coping after an earthquake](#) MHF (2016). A briefing paper summarising some of the psychological effects and consequences was released by the Office of the Prime Minister’s Chief Science Advisor on 2 December and can be found at pmcsa.org.nz

Coming up

Interested in management of, and research into safe, appropriate, equitable care and service provision for very large patients? Seminars being held across New Zealand early 2017.

For more information and to register FREE go to: otago.ac.nz/wellington/otago626909.PDF.pdf or check events on our website.

January 31 at UoW, Wellington.

Pathology Open Day

The Pathology Department had planned to hold a public open day in November to celebrate International Pathology Day but due to the earthquakes this has been postponed until next year.

Public Health Summer School – 30 courses in just three weeks!

The 2017 Public Health Summer School will be held at the Wellington campus in February for the 21st year. It’s the largest in the Southern Hemisphere and typically attracts 700-900 people looking for high quality, short-format courses on a wide variety of topics

This popular event offers great scope for professional development with 14 new topics ranging from emerging infectious diseases to children’s health, to art and public health. Popular core courses, such as Hauora Māori and Pacific Health, statistical methods and public health law, remain on the schedule.

Most courses are one or two days long so people can attend multiple topics of interest.

The courses are presented by international and national leaders in their field.

International guest presenters in 2017 include:

Professor Ichiro Kawachi (Harvard University) – *Behavioural Economics*

Professor David Heymann (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) – *Emerging Infectious Diseases*

Professor Tadj Oreszczyn (University College London) and **Professor Paul Cooper** (University of Wollongong) – *Insulation Plus!*

Marai Larasi, OBE (Imkaan, UK) *Pacific Health and Hauora Māori*

Professor Suzan Burton (Western Sydney University) *Changing the Tobacco Retail Landscape.*

[Find out more about the outstanding 2017 programme here.](#)

