

The PHOnetic

For anyone interested in primary health



Turanganui PHO's Fortnightly Newsletter, Issue 50, December 10, 2008.

Welcome to the second-to-last issue of The PHOnetic for 2008. The PHOnetic celebrates a milestone this week in reaching its 50th issue! It is therefore appropriate that the issue focus on another

Turanganui PHO milestone - the announcement that our final two general practices will now also offer HealthRight.

This issue will look at the journey taken by one HealthRight patient, and update readers on the programme.



Happy HealthRight patient Ed Tamatea
 Image [Clare Webber Photography](#).

Crawling Back to Health

By Hayley Redpath

Five hours.

Five hours to crawl along the hallway floor, get into the bath, have a wash, get out of the bath, and crawl back to bed. That's how long it took Ed Tamatea in July to perform this one task.

On elbows, belly, then knees, he was biting back the pain in his gout-ravaged feet, and berating himself for reaching this new low.

During the 300 minute ordeal Ed refused assistance. He wanted to be a man alone, despite others around who could help.

"Uncle was here. But nup. I'm stubborn. I was going to do it myself."

It was a terrible situation for any whanau to be in. Here was a good man, a father, a brother, a grandfather, down and out, mentally and physically.

After the episode, all acknowledged that unless help came soon, the big fella might be down and out for good.

Thank goodness then for the HealthRight programme, which has changed Ed Tamatea's life forever.

Fifty year old Ed Tamatea was referred to HealthRight through Turanga Health's Men's Programme, and for the past three months has enjoyed the social, physical and financial benefits HealthRight

offers.

HealthRight Social Worker Tina Holmes received the original referral.

"When I met him he was laid up in bed. He was unwell, in pain from gout in both feet, brassed off with the world, on a sickness benefit, and unable to pick up his pills from the chemist."

A pint-sized pocket rocket, Tina tackled Ed's issues one-by-one, but in double quick time.

"I could see he was interested in letting someone help, make a change, but we didn't know how long it would last so I moved fast."

By knowing the right things to apply for at Work and Income Tina was able to manage Ed's immediate financial difficulties, clearing the way for him to pick up medication from the chemist and visit Kaiti Medical Centre. She also saw him transferred from a short term Sickness Benefit onto the longer-term Invalid's Benefit, enabling him to stay on the right side of his most immediate debts.

"Without Tina's help I don't know where we would be," says Ed.

Tina booked Ed in for a health assessment (*bpac*) at Kaiti Medical Centre, then an extended consultation with general practitioner Fergus Aitchison.

Ed says Fergus was the second health staff member in one week to change his life.

"Tina has been good, but yeah, that doctor gave it to me straight. He looked me in the eye, didn't keep looking at his computer. He noticed I had just turned 50 and told me I wouldn't see 60."

Fergus makes no apologies for his direct approach with Ed. "He had multiple complex needs and was someone that, for one reason or another, we had not been winning with."

He said chronic illness can be "bewildering". A person's resources: physical, mental, and financial, often don't stretch to cover all the demands. Having something or someone to help them through the maze is what's needed.

"For some people it can be a simple pill equation, but for others, like Ed, it's about any debt, the inability to work, and more. This can all move the chronic illness up to another gear."

Fergus was the 12th doctor Ed says he had seen in three years. Normally flustered by more pill prescriptions and directives to lose weight, Ed says he was treated differently.

"It was the best that could have happened to me. It opened my vision up about the health system. Before I had felt the medical system had nothing to offer me. I felt they stereotyped me. I have always wanted people to give it to me straight, and he did. Us men need to be talked to like that."

The combined bpac assessment and GP consultation led to some changes. Ed's gout seems to be responding to newly prescribed medication, and a medico pack for his pills has simplified things. Turanga Health's men's programme continues to play a part. Health education matched with exercise like swimming is keeping Ed on track.

Ed's transformation has been bolstered by the support shown from little sister Aroha Tamatea who visits him most days. Three months ago she felt Ed was losing his will to live.

"He was in so much pain he told me to get the axe and he could just cut his legs off. I'm not joking. He was low."

Interestingly, Ed's age and ethnicity mean he had always been a candidate for HealthRight. He was sent a letter about the programme a few months ago but says he threw it away.

"I didn't know what it was. I looked up HealthRight in the phone book and couldn't see it."



Ed Tamatea and sister Aroha Tamatea
Image [Clare Webber Photography](#).

Ed's experience offers valuable feedback, and comes at a time when Turanganui PHO's HealthRight resources are due to be updated, says HealthRight Manager Diane Williams.

"Word of mouth and first hand experience will get others on it," says Ed, who was only too happy to help in that area.

Aroha and Ed (Ngati Porou and Tuhoë) both believe home visits are another way to engage people into the programme.

Over the next few weeks Ed will be visited by HealthRight Lifestyle Coach Shelley Mitchell who will work on things like nutrition, exercise and other elements of health and wellbeing.

Ed has a mountain bike stored on the veranda, and he is itching to get on it. He agrees that five hours a week exercising will be less arduous than the five hours spent one cold July day, struggling to take a bath.

"My goal weight is 110 kg. I used to play rugby, league, softball, used to cycle, but mainly I just want to see my moko [grandchild] turn 21".

"I'd say this is a damn good programme to get on. I am getting my life back."

The PHOnetic will catch up with Ed Tamatea next year to see how he is getting on.



HealthRight Manager Diane Williams
Image [Clare Webber Photography](#).

HealthRight Welcomes Last Two Practices on Board

By Hayley Redpath

HealthRight, the groundbreaking risk assessment and lifestyle case management programme funded by Turanganui Primary Health Organisation, will soon be offered to patients at all of its six medical centres.

Mangapapa Medical Centre and Desmond Road Medical Centre are the last general practices to join the programme since it was launched in September 2007. They will offer HealthRight from early 2009.

"We never expected to have the whole general practice family on board as soon as this," says HealthRight Manager Diane Williams.

"I think the nurses in the first few practices involved are discovering they can make some positive changes for people. It shows the value of nurse-led care and validates the extended time needed for this type of service. We are thrilled that the final two have signalled they are keen to come on board."

Diane says HealthRight is a fairly new way of working with patients to reduce the incidence and impact of some chronic health conditions. She says the programme assists people with cardiovascular disease and diabetes to take more control of their own health.

The programme was developed by Pinnacle Group Ltd and is being rolled out across the five primary health organisations it administers.

HealthRight offers patients who fit the criteria a free extended nurse or general practitioner assessment, then where appropriate, a short general practitioner consultation for a prescription. Following that patients can be referred for care and support from any of the HealthRight staff including a social worker, the lifestyle coach, and/or the two mental health clinical liaison staff. These HealthRight staff currently work out of the Turanganui PHO office on Grey St.

Patient invitations to the HealthRight programme are based on New Zealand Guidelines Group criteria around age, ethnicity, known conditions, and cardiovascular and/or diabetes risk.

The assessment tool used by staff is *bpac*, which stands for Best Practice Advocacy Centre. It is used by staff mainly for cardiovascular disease risk assessment and diabetes annual checks.

The tool allows staff to explore a person's needs, provide education required, and set 'SMART' goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely). Appropriate referrals can then follow.

Community News

This section of our newsletter is devoted to you and your projects. If you would like to advertise your event, seminar or meeting, email details to [The PHOnetic](#).

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please click [here](#) and send an email

Diane says patient CVD scores are collected for HealthRight, and one advantage is that they dovetail into the CVD component of Pinnacle's QP 12 quality programme.

Diane says the inevitable hiccups, software glitches, staff adjustment to change, and slow patient response, provided challenges for the Navigation Sites coming to grips with the new programme.

"There have been some teething problems, so it was a good idea not to have everyone on board right away. Our staggered approach has meant we have been able to iron some of the glitches out."

There will be a review for HealthRight in January 2009 giving staff the opportunity to provide feedback so processes can be refined. Information about the review, and relevant dates, will be sent to staff before Christmas.

In other HealthRight news:

- City Medical Centre signed its contract in October 2008 and is still in the early stages of the programme.
- An updated Medtech manual for use with HealthRight is due to be released early next year
- All practices bar Desmond Road Medical Centre are offering the Primary Mental Health program.
- General practice staff are reminded that Primary Mental Health clinical liaison staff Robert Armstrong and Helen Love will be taking no new referrals from December 10 2008 until 5 January 2009.
- The HealthRight assessment tool *bpac* is already used in City Medical Centre and at Mangapapa (for diabetes assessment), which will make it easier for some of their staff as the practices implement HealthRight
- Turanganui Primary Health Organisation and HealthRight staff will be unavailable during the holiday break from midday Wednesday 24 December, 2008, to 8.30am Monday 5 January, 2009.

With Sympathy It has been a sad two weeks for the health sector. The Turanganui PHO family extends its sympathy to both the Duffy and Wilson families during this difficult time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Page last modified on December 10, 2008, at 01:39 PM

requesting that you unsubscribe.

Alternatively you can request an addition to The PHOnetic's email distribution list.

Christmas Giving with Turanganui PHO

Turanganui PHO invites all its member general practices, and Turanga Health staff to donate one or more non-perishable items for a gift to the Salvation Army. A Turanganui PHO staff member will call in on Friday 19 December to collect any items.

Tairawhiti District Health Board Meeting, Tuesday 16 December, 9am, Morris Adair Building, Gisborne Hospital.

Community and Public Health Advisory Committee/Disability Support Advisory Committee Meeting Wednesday 17 December, 9am/11am, Morris Adair Building, Gisborne Hospital.

Hospital Advisory Committee Meeting, Monday 15 December, 12.30pm, Morris Adair Building, Gisborne Hospital.

Visit www.tdh.org.nz for all TDH meeting agendas.