



## May 2010 Newsletter

**Kia ora** to all and a huge welcome to any new members that may have joined our section this year in 2010. There were several women who indicated that they wish to join the section over the last couple of months, and once I have all their details I will be getting a welcome pack out to them.

Hopefully all of you who attended the WHS (NZNO) conference in Napier in April, have now recovered from the beautiful surroundings, weather, and of course the material that was presented by the speakers.

A **huge thank you** to the organising committee in Napier, their skills were without fault, and I am sure everyone will agree that the programme was pertinent, useful, interesting, and great fun!

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There were 6 OBEX open papers presented by Nurses from around the district. It was great to hear of innovative projects that nurses are involved in out there. I certainly have been thinking about some of these projects in relation to my own workplace, as I am sure many others are also.

Congratulations to Michele Lowe, who won the OBEX award of \$1000 toward education, it will be exciting to hear how Michele uses this money. The paper that Michele presented was on "The trials and the trauma: supporting mothers diagnosed with HIV infection".

The WHS sponsors a First Time Presenter Award (\$200) each year, and this year was awarded to Suzanne Marshall who presentation was titled "Smoke free Women in New Zealand – Aotearoa".

Well done to both these brave nurses to present in a large forum to nurse and midwife colleagues. I'm sure all will agree, it's a little daunting to put yourself and your projects out so publicly, but is worth it for the sense of achievement and informing others of the exciting and inspirational work that we do as Nurses!

Alison Gemmell



## Letters from Members

The following letters are from grateful members who were awarded some money from our Education fund to further either their studies, or attend conferences etc.

### **Conference Report – Women's Health Section**

By Pat Lawson

Women's Health Conference April 2010 held in Napier

I attended the 8<sup>th</sup> Women's Health Conference in Napier with the Support of The Women's Health Section of N.Z.N.O from April 22 -24 held in the War Memorial Conference Centre on the foreshore with a stunning view. It was well organised with mostly excellent speakers and a very enjoyable Conference Dinner. The opening Address by Eldred Gilbert was short succinct and in support of Nurses and their Practice. Pauline Grogen the keynote speaker was inspirational, finding the positive side of her many severe setbacks in a life as an ex Nun, Mother, Author, and Playwright/performer and how they were overcome. All the Obex Papers were well presented on a wide variety of topics from Smoke Free through Sexually Transmitted Infections in the young, family violence, the care of Mothers diagnosed with H.I.V., holistic care for high risk Pregnancies and the one I found most interesting the success of a Nurse led Clinic in rural Hawkes' Bay, The two Nurses were registered smear takers so they had been able to do meal time clinics at the local factories thus enabling Women to keep up their routine smears which improved the failure to keep appointments numbers. Women were also able to drop into the Practice which also encouraged attendance.

It was good to catch up with Linda Croft after her presentation "It's all coming down" discussing treatment for Prolapse and Jenny Hayward who is a Specialist for Doctors for Sexual Assault Care dividing her time between

Wellington and Hawkes' Bay. This was an eye opener for me, a forensic examination can take up to 3hours and requires meticulous documentation as it may be months before an offender is brought to trial, when the Defence will argue that it was consensual. Whilst mostly women, she had examined 3 men this year. She emphasised how important it was to have a Nurse helping as women often opened up to them rather than the Doctor. I can now understand why women do not want to report rape to the Police.

Dr McAllum a Palliative Medicine Specialist demystified palliative care and reminded us of what we can do and when to recognise that you want or need input from a Specialist. Mr Howard Clentworth from Wellington gave an excellent presentation on vulval disease, he pulled no punches about a very unpleasant and serious diagnosis but was highly entertaining.

This was followed by the Charge Nurse Manager of the Gynae Oncology unit in Wellington discussing the care of these Women from 1<sup>st</sup> referral to post surgical follow up.

Finally Mr Duncan a Consultant Plastic Surgeon spoke of the development in breast and nipple reconstruction.

In all, an excellent two days so my thanks again to the Women's Health Section for enabling me to attend.



### A TOAST TO WOMENS HEALTH

Warm balmy autumn days  
The blue of the ocean, as far as the eye can see  
A prestigious building perched on the water's edge  
Fine food and wines from the Hawke's Bay.....  
A perfect "TOAST TO WOMENS HEALTH"

Whether it was consolidation of knowledge on health issues of women, experience and sharing of knowledge and research from RN's and Midwives in their areas of expertise, techniques and available treatments for disease and health issues of women, or inspiration from the triumphs of a woman who has experienced trauma and deep despair in the face of adversity, there were topics to wet most appetites and heighten areas of interest.

The organisers of the 2010 NZNO Women's Health Section Conference can be congratulated on a very successful conference, covering a diverse array of women's health issues and tributes to the dedicated health professionals who deal with them.

Personally whilst I gained a vast array of knowledge from the presenters and discussions with other nurses attending, the highlights were by **Lani Morris** and her introduction to the **Holistic Development Model**. A thought-provoking concept and a valuable tool for nurses in their work as advocates, mentors and healers. One that hopefully in time may help answer the questions of Nurses: "What does it do for humanity"? and Managers: "What does it do for the bottom line"?

**Its all coming down** presented by **Dr Lynda Croft**, was very factual and informative. Such a despairing thought with the statistics she

presented for pelvic organ prolapse and incontinence, but proven it can be successfully managed with surgical repair, lifestyle adjustments and some medicines. Especially interesting as the average age of the nursing workforce increases. An interesting speaker, with an obvious passion in her field.

**Pauline Grogan** would have to be one of the most inspiring women I have met. She presented her life story in a short time frame and had many of us with tears in our eyes. What one woman can endure in a lifetime and still manage to find positive outcomes from is truly remarkable. It proves that women are a strong breed and can still face challenge after challenge in their busy lives and survive.

A strong advocate for women and their coping abilities.

And to quote from Pauline Grogan  
**"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf"**

**SO KEEP SURFING LADIES, WE CAN DO IT!**

**Thank you to the Women's Section for assisting me with funding to attend this conference.**

**Debbie Wieldraayer**  
RCpN, E



## WHS: Special Meeting 2010

This year we did not have an AGM as the section voted to move to a Biennial General meeting which we will have as part of the Blenheim National Conference in 2011. This meeting consisted of presenting the Treasurers report, (last one for Jill Lamb) and a very last Chairpersons report from Ann Simmons, which was presented in a Sam Hunt style with witty prose and musings, including some deep messages to nurses and midwives working in Women's Health. We do wish both Ann and Jill well on the next stage of their journeys; they have been inspirational women in their specialty fields. Although they will be sorely missed from the committee we will of course keep in touch and ask for lots of advice.

We had an interesting discussion at our "Special Meeting" around ideas from members regarding our new project, namely "nurses working with women in early pregnancy loss". Jude Moore presented a literature search she had conducted through the year, which clearly showed that there was very little around about the nursing role. It transpired from the discussion that this was the area we need to pursue. The committee will be working this year to write up a paper on "The Nurses role in Early Pregnancy Loss". If any members have ideas, thoughts, examples, then please email me with these to [alisongemmell@southerndhb.govt.nz](mailto:alisongemmell@southerndhb.govt.nz).

The next conference will be held in Blenheim in 2011. Dates and Venue are yet to be confirmed but we will keep you in touch as this information comes to hand.

The Theme for this conference is **MENOPAUSE**

### **AND YES IT WILL AFFECT US ALL**

If I said to you the workloads of nurses today are often frantic, with numerous demands pulling them in several directions at once, you would reply "what's new?" and rightly so. Through all my 20-something years, nurses have worked their way through numerous alterations to the health system. Many changes were thrust upon us with little or no input; changes that have left us battle weary and often bewildered. Management structures blossom while nursing staffing levels are stretched to their limit but one constant remains — our patients. It is their needs that bring us back for the next shift. Because nurses by their very nature are giving people, it is our own health requirements that are often overlooked as we try to meet the needs of other people. The result is a nursing workforce that is tired, stressed and feeling under-valued.

From questions asked by fellow nurses I came to realise there was a considerable knowledge deficit relating to menopause. With the average age of nurses in New Zealand creeping into the late 40's menopause is a very relevant topic. Menopausal symptoms affect most women in varying degrees. A well informed, knowledgeable nursing workforce would enhance nursing competencies and ensure nurses will assist in nursing patients within this age range with greater understanding.

(abridged: from an article written in 2008 by Wendy Diack, RN Blenheim)

Any ideas for newsletters or advertising of local Women's Health study days, conferences etc, please email:

[alisongemmell@southerndhb.govt.nz](mailto:alisongemmell@southerndhb.govt.nz)



## Light Relief

These are real notes written by parents  
*Spellings have been left intact.*

1. My son is under a doctor's care and should not take PE today. Please execute him.
2. Please exkuce lisa for being absent she was sick and i had her shot.
3. Dear school: please ecsc's john being absent on jan. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and also 33.
4. Please excuse gloria from jim today. She is administrating.
5. Please excuse roland from p.e. for a few days. Yesterday he fell out of a tree and misplaced his hip.
6. John has been absent because he had two teeth taken out of his face.
7. Carlos was absent yesterday because he was playing football. He was hurt in the growing part.
8. Megan could not come to school today because she has been bothered by very close veins.
9. Chris will not be in school cus he has an acre in his side.
10. Please excuse ray friday from school. He has very loose vowels.
11. Please excuse Lesli from being absent yesterday. She had diahre dyrea direathethe (shits).
12. Please excuse tommy for being absent yesterday. He had diarrhea, and his boots leak.
13. Irving was absent yesterday because he missed his bust.
14. Please excuse jimmy for being. It was his father's fault.
15. I kept Billie home because she had to go Christmas shopping because i don't know what size she wear.
16. Please excuse jennifer for missing school yesterday. We forgot to get the sunday paper off the porch, and when we found it monday. We thought it was sunday.
17. Sally won't be in school a week from friday. We have to attend her funeral.
18. Please excuse Jason for being absent yesterday. He had a cold and could not breed well.
19. Maryann was absent december 11-16, because she had a fever, sorethroat, headache and upset stomach. Her sister was also sick, fever an sore throat, her brother had a low grade fever and ached all over. I wasn't the best either, sore throat and fever. There must be something going around, her father even got hot last night.

*Now we know why parents are screaming for better education for our kids.*

## Note from New Chairperson

Hi All,

I feel very privileged to be appointed to the role of chair, and have some very big boots to fill. Ann has done a superb job and I don't know how I can match it, so I feel very nervous, and excited at the same time.

As a wee introduction of who I am, I am aged between 50 and 60...not telling which side of 55! I work primarily with irritable bowel syndrome, but as most of my patients are women. There is a strong link between both endometriosis and IBS. I have a huge interest in women's health. I have worked for many years in the past as a theatre nurse in a women's hospital in Perth WA.

I have been privileged to be on this committee for 2 years now, and have seen some absolutely fabulous women have to leave the committee as their term of office expired; the latest 2 being Ann Simmons, Chairperson, and Jill Lamb, Treasurer. Susan Hunter who is taking over from Jill will do a great job. Thank you so much Jill for all your hard work.

I look forward to working for and with you all over the next 2 years, and will no doubt see many of you at future conferences. Blenheim is a must see, and not only for the programme, but the wine, the weather, ..... and then there is wine....!

Regards,

Jude Moore

## Women's Health Section Committee Contacts

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