

The Westerly

June 2006

Te Hauauru

After 33 years on the job that man deserves a DB

One of the West Coast DHB's most familiar faces has retired. After 33 years on the job in the trades departments Gary Sara has retired and he is wasting no time finding himself something to do. In July he heads for Australia for three weeks and after that his plan is simple.

"I'm retired so I'm going to retire."

He said he decision to stay at the hospital for so many years was an easy one.

"A jobs a job so there was no reason to change."

After 33 years on the job Gary wasn't about to go quietly with the trades department gathering together to give him a send off to remember.

"It was excellent, I really appreciated that people from way back came along."

Like Gary those people from way back will remember just how many changes the hospital site has been through in the last three decades.

When Gary first started here there were wards one and two, an engineering block and outpatients.

"Its grown a lot since then.

"There's been a fair few changes, and there will be more."

All Gary hopes is that there will always be a Greymouth Hospital.

"About 10 years ago things weren't looking so good."



Gary Sara at his retirement party

He said the Coast is now emerging from a time when things were a bit doom and gloom, to a region that is really going ahead. "Its good to see the mines coming back and the tourism."

iSOFT goes live

You have seen the emails and had the training and as of July 1, iSOFT is officially up and running. The iSOFT computer system is designed to give staff better access to patient information. This computer system will be available in most West Coast District Health Board sites from July 1. While everyone gets used to the new system we will be asking patients and staff to be patient as people get used to the new system. The idea behind iSOFT is that by improving patient

management the District Health Board can improve patient outcomes.

The iSOFT project is part of a \$2 million IT upgrade at the DHB, with PrISM and PACS already in operation.

The new systems have meant the DHB has taken the first steps towards a paperless system.

iSOFT also means the DHB is no longer simply keeping up with technology but is now an industry leader.

Congratulations to the iSOFT team!



Deb Thomas and Michelle Higgs with just some of the hundreds of iSOFT manuals that have been handed out over the past few months.

Diabetes Hui on the way

With around 930 West Coaster's living with diabetes the District Health Board has joined forces with agencies from around the region to hold a series of hui on the subject.

The Hui while primarily aimed at Maori are open to everyone with an interest in diabetes.

Statistics showed that on average one in five Maori living with diabetes had their free yearly review of diabetes last year. This was in comparison to three in five non-Maori West Coast people with diabetes.

Dr Carol Atmore said people with diabetes were entitled to a free diabetes review from their General Practice team once a year and it was extremely important they took up this option.

These annual reviews check on the status of the person's condition as well as providing valuable information about how to keep well with diabetes.

"Its important that people know they need to have a their annual diabetes review."

Dr Atmore said the Hui would have information on nutrition, exercise, and local services available for people with diabetes. General health checks, smoking cessation advice and women's health checks would be provided. With food provided and spot prizes, it would be an interesting and fun event for the whole family and Whanau.

She said this was a great opportunity for people gain important health information from one easy location.

The Hui will be held on:

Tuesday July 4, Westland High School 2pm to 6pm.

Wednesday July 5, Westport Awatere Centre 2pm to 6pm

Thursday July 6, Cobden School 2pm to 6pm.

End of the line for nurses hostel

The West Coast District Health Board has officially announced that the Old Nurses Hostel at Grey Base Hospital will be demolished.

The building, which was last used as a hostel for polytechnic students, has been empty for over a year after a structural report raised safety concerns.

The building itself is made up of two separate parts the oldest being built in 1925 with an extension built in 1939. An upper storey was built into the attic of the newer section of the building in 1954.

The hostel was originally built to house nurses who lived and worked on site at Greymouth Hospital.

The next edition of the Westerly will carry a special feature on stories from nurses who have lived at the hostel.

With boys and booze featuring in many of the stories some nurses have asked to remain anonymous. So this means if you have a story you would like to share you still have time to contact, Vikki Carter Community Liaison Officer on extension 2665# or email vikki.carter@westcoastdhb.org.nz.

Nurses day a huge success

This year's theme was "*Safe Staffing Saves Lives*". To highlight the importance of safe staffing, nurses joined in a candlelit walk through Greymouth.

Donna Thomas who organised this years events in Greymouth said the candles symbolise the vital role nurses play in "watching over" their patients.

There are currently around 225 Full Time Equivalent nursing positions at the West Coast District Health Board, making them by far the largest group of professionals employed by this organisation.



Past and present nurses turned out to celebrate international Nurses Day on May 12.



Around 30 past and present West Coast nurses turned out to a candle-light walk through the centre of Greymouth last night. The nurses were marking International Nurses Day with the candles symbolising the role nurses play in watching over their patients.



Disability Expo draws the crowds



Lyne Heine and Elinor Stratford did an amazing job as Greymouth residents turned out in force to support the **Community Expo** on **may 23 2006** held at the **Regent Theatre** This day included the Disability/Health/WINZ/community sector. They hoped to make this a day of information as to who does what in our communities, how to access services, equipment suppliers, holistic services and more.



Watch out for the new West Coast District Health Board community newsletter coming to a letter box near you. In July the DHB will be launching a quarterly newsletter that will be going into every household in the region!!

Health and Safety



Think safe !

Chris Black is now officially an expert



Chris Black is the first nurse at the West Coast District Health Board to reach the Expert Nurse level under the PDRP. Chris started putting her portfolio together in February of this year and put it forward for consideration in March. However her portfolio encompasses work from over the last three years covering the surgical aspect of nursing with a slant on wound care. "The post graduate certificate I completed last year was based around wound care." Chris said it was extremely satisfying to put the information together.

Chris Black recently celebrated her expert status with an afternoon tea, she is pictured with Pam Birchfield.

DHB to take over Reefton Medical Centre

Board and Dr Julian Ashburner have jointly announced the transfer of the Reefton Medical Practice to the ownership of the WCDHB. The DHB and Dr Ashburner have come to an agreement regarding equipment at the practice and which should ensure a smooth transition and no disruption to service

The practice will be formally transferred into the hands of the DHB at the end of July, when Dr Ashburner leaves Reefton for new opportunities in the North Island. DHB Chief Executive Kevin Hague said he was delighted the two parties had been able to reach an agreement that would guarantee certainty of medical services to the people of Reefton. In a personal statement Dr Ashburner said he appreciated the commitment that the DHB had

made to the continuation of medical services to Reefton and the surrounding area.

He said despite wide advertising in the medical press in New Zealand, the USA and UK, the practice had not been able to attract a GP to take over when at the end of July he was due to leave.

“I believe that the greater resources of the DHB will be able to provide medical cover when I have gone, so that my patients will continue to have GP access at a local level.”

“I wish the DHB success in attracting a doctor, and am convinced that someone, somewhere will be delighted to work in Reefton as much as I have done over the past twelve and a half years.”

Kevin said the DHB would be speaking with all the staff employed at the practice and hoped they would stay on.

“There is a fantastic team of people working there and we really hope they decide to stay on.”

He also paid tribute to Dr Ashburner’s contribution to the health of the people of Reefton. “He has done a fantastic job for the people in the Reefton area over a number of years and he will be missed.”

Kevin said the DHB had decided to step in and take over the Reefton practice in order to ensure that continuity of service could be maintained.

“It’s important that the people of Reefton have confidence that medical practice will continue to operate uninterrupted.”

Health and Safety Recognition Awards



Reefton Hospital

Reefton Hospital has been awarded the Health and Safety Recognition Award for the excellent way in which they handled the Norovirus outbreak. All Staff ensured standard precautions were followed and contained the spread of the virus

**Well done
Great Work
Reefton !**

Viv McSherry

Vic McSherry has been awarded the Health and Safety Recognition Award for following-up relentlessly the safe entrance and exit from Packington Street at Buller Hospital
Congratulations Viv!

West Coast DHB and Work and Income sign agreement

Clare Brown of Work and Income and Hecta Williams GM Primary Health have signed off on a Primary Health Link Service Level Agreement. The agreement will see the DHB and Work and Income working together.



PrISM highly commended at awards.

Just as the Westerly was being finished this month, news came through that the West Coast DHB initiative PrISM had been named as highly commended at the New Zealand Health Innovation Awards in Wellington. The other winners were from Canterbury and Waitemata DHBs. Well done to all those involved
Tom Flanagan and Wayne Champion

