

New Zealand Rural General Practice Network

Annual Report 2022

Pūrongo A-Tau

22



NEW ZEALAND
RURAL
GENERAL PRACTICE NETWORK

*Growing healthy & thriving
rural communities in
Aotearoa New Zealand*



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Acknowledgements

Tukutuku design cover image:

With this Poutama tukutuku, woven panel, we acknowledge and embrace its spiritual symbolism. For us the Poutama represents the stairway for the aspirational, inspirational and scaffolding nature of our work and journey to meet the needs of rural communities.

Front cover image:

This photo shows the final National Rural Health Conference convened under the NZRGPN banner. This image is symbolic of the end of the 30 year journey that the NZRGPN embarked on. At this conference the decision was made to merge the NZRGPN into a new collective organisation speaking as a single voice for those committed to the wellbeing of rural communities. Here we see Minister for Health, Hon Andrew Little with the NZRGPN Chair and Chief Executive, and the Chair of Te Rōpū Ārahi, leading delegates from all aspects of rural health and wellbeing, into the Pōwhiri at Wairakei Conference Resort, Taupō 2021.

Chair's report

Te pūrongo o te Tumu Whakarae



This year has been one like no other: one full of change, full of challenges, full of hard work and full of mixed emotions. It marks the end of an era with the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network (NZRGPN) joining with five other partner organisations, alongside Te Rōpū Ārahi, to become a united voice for rural health - **Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network**.

The decision to make the step forward on this journey happened in the context of an ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and a major challenge for the health system, with the Health and Disability System Review leading to the largest systems change that we have seen in the health service for many years.

2021 marked the outbreak of the Delta strain of the COVID-19 virus in Aotearoa New Zealand. Rural areas were not spared and faced huge challenges to stop the spread, when we knew how thinly stretched our resources already were. Rural hospitals (especially those in tourist areas) dealt with a disproportionate number of those very early COVID-19 cases requiring hospital admission. We also saw an impact in rural areas during the Level 4 lockdown when, despite advice to the contrary, many people chose to leave the cities to isolate in their rural holiday homes.

COVID-19 necessitated a marked change to the model of care that we delivered; the most significant being a move to more telephone triaging and virtual consults. It was no longer acceptable to see people with respiratory illnesses alongside all those coming for their ongoing acute and chronic care needs. To mitigate this, we developed “red” and “green” streams within our teams, and we became adept at screening, testing, and managing people with COVID-19 in the community. However, the long-term failure of investment in primary care and rural hospital care has resulted in immense pressure on rural healthcare teams. The NZRGPN has been able to help some of those rural practices impacted by the extra burden of managing this through the Tautoko Rural initiative, which was launched early in 2022 to replace the Pandemic Emergency Roving Locums initiative. Tautoko Rural was able to provide locum relief to rural general practices across a range of health professionals to fill staffing gaps.

Towards the end of 2021 it became obvious that vaccination rates were much lower in rural communities. There were many reasons for this including the distances rural people needed to travel to services, poor public transport options in rural areas and higher costs of travel. The small rural healthcare teams needed to not only be able to provide 24/7 care, but also be able to absorb the extra work of immunising their communities within a short time frame. There was an incredible response in rural areas where we saw many people come back to the workforce after retirement to provide COVID-19 immunisations. We saw communities being mobilised to support them in drive-through clinics, we saw vastly more vaccinators trained and we saw lwi providers address some of the transport and access issues with innovative outreach and mobile vaccination clinics. Rural access to COVID-19 vaccinations will continue to be a challenge as further COVID-19 vaccination needs to be rolled out on top of maintaining vaccination rates for all the other routine immunisation programmes.

The release of the Geographic Classification for Health (GCH) this year has been a game changer for rural health policy and delivery as it is the first specifically designed and validated classification for health purposes in Aotearoa New Zealand. We hope the GCH will be used to help specifically identify the gaps that we see in the outcomes for the health of rural people and that we can use it to measure how the rural health plan improves these.

The 2022 Peter Snow Memorial Award was awarded to Dr Branko Sijnja. Branko was nominated for inspiring future rural doctors in Aotearoa New Zealand, having been the director of the University of Otago Rural Medical Immersion Programme. Congratulations to Branko on this well-deserved recognition.

In 2022, we celebrate 30 years of the NZRGPN, which is being marked with the commissioning of a book, **“Growing Rural Health | Tipu Haere Tuawhenua Hauora: 30 Years of Advocacy and Support in Aotearoa”**. This book has been crafted by Professor Jean Ross, Dr Martin London, Tania Kemp and Shelley Jones and will be launched at the National Rural Health Conference in September 2022.

After 30 years of advocacy and support through the NZRGPN, we are building on our strengths and transforming from our small organisation to a larger, more inclusive one with a broader representation of rural health and a firm commitment to equity for Māori. This is the culmination of many years of planning and connecting, resulting in the official launch of Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network at Parliament on June 28, 2022. In the lead up to the launch, we worked hard to ensure that “rural” was included as a priority in the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Legislation and, much to our relief, after input from the Rural Caucus, it was. This gives us a firmer foundation from which to advocate for a robust, equitable, funded rural health plan to address the issues which we continue to face in rural communities and which impact upon the health outcomes of rural people, in particular Māori.

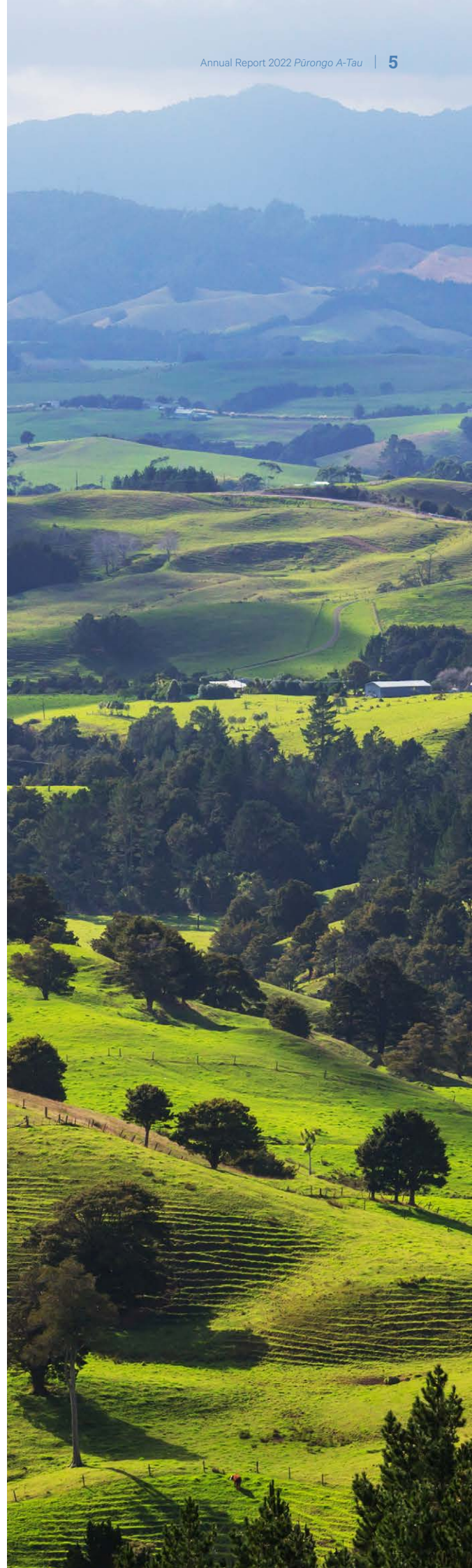
Thank you to the NZRGPN Board, Te Rōpū Ārahi, to my kaumātua Russell Riki, to the new Board and Council of Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network; and most of all to our Chief Executive Dr Grant Davidson, our General Manager for Advocacy Marie Daly, and the rest of the senior management and staff for all they have accomplished over this year.

Finally thank you to you, our members, for staying with us during these challenging times and to those new members who have joined us. These are vital times for us to support one another and to continue with our rural advocacy which is crucial to shape the future of rural health in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Dr Fiona Bolden

Chair



Chair's report *Te Rōpū Ārahi*

“Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei”

Seek the treasure you value most dearly. If you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations underpin the work that the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network (NZRGPN) has been doing and provides the foundations we have begun to lay for Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network (HTRHN).

This year, the NZRGPN continued to pursue equity in health by advocating to have ‘rural’ recognised as a priority population in the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) legislation. This significant achievement ensures Government must establish and be accountable for a Rural Health Strategy that is focused on meeting the health and wellbeing needs of rural communities, and most importantly rural Māori.

The Rural Health Conference 2022 to be held at Pae Ora Convention Centre, Christchurch, in September will be a full and exciting gathering for our Members and colleagues who are committed to the rural health sector.

The conference theme is:

Shaping the Future of Rural Health
Mā mua ka kite a muri, mā muri ka ora a mua.

“Those who lead, give sight to those who follow; those who follow give sight to those ahead”

To move forward into the future as Hauora Taiwhenua, it is essential we acknowledge the contributions of those who walked before us; the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network (NZRGPN), the Rural Hospital Network (RHN), the Rural Health Alliance Aotearoa New Zealand (RHAANZ), Students of Rural Health Aotearoa (SoRHA), Rural Nurses New Zealand (RNNZ), and the New Zealand Institute of Rural Health (NZIRH), as well as former members of Te Rōpū Ārahi.

We will continue to weave a bicultural approach in shaping the future of rural health with the first strands woven into our Conference, our Pōwhiri, opening address formalities and karakia to bless all kai.

Te Rōpū Ārahi contributed to the book “Growing Rural Health | Tipu Haere Tuawhenua Hauora” and its planned launch at the 2022 Conference. This book celebrates the thirty years of the NZRGPN and its advocacy and support of the rural health sector in Aotearoa New Zealand. Kaumātua to the Chair, Russell Riki, will bless this book at its launch at the Conference.



Te Rōpū Ārahi

Te Rōpū Ārahi have worked with management to develop a fun and interactive Tikanga training programme for all staff. We support and assist staff in regular team sessions and are delighted to see them gain confidence and understanding of tikanga practices such as pepeha, waiata and karakia.

We have begun considering how we can support Te Whare Taumata O Whānau Whānui, Chapter of Hauora Taiwhenua in its reach across Aotearoa New Zealand to broaden membership and its representation at all levels of rural health.

The NZRGPN has a stated commitment to improving health disparities for rural Māori. We believe this will be further strengthened under the mantle of Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network.

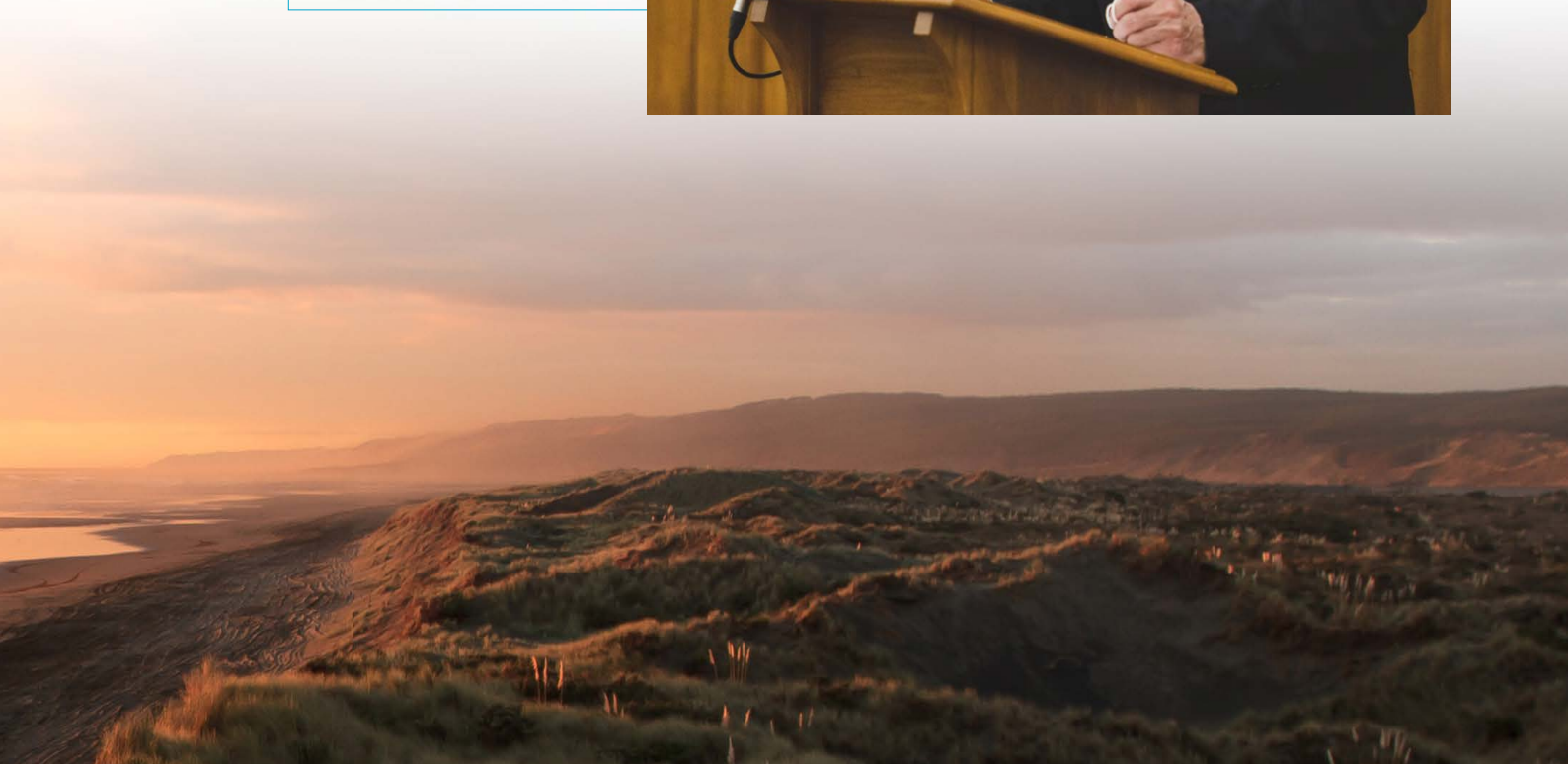
Ma te Atua koutou e manaaki



Bill Nathan

Chair - Te Rōpū Ārahi

Right: Chair - Te Rōpū Ārahi
Bill Nathan speaking at the
Hauora Taiwhenua Rural
Health Network launch.



Chief Executive's report

Te Pūrongo o Te Tumuaki Whakahaere



Kia ora tatou

The past 12 months have been a year of remarkable change and success for the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network. Some of our achievements represent the realisation of our strategic goals, others are new and exciting steps we are taking into the future.

Our efforts to improve rural Māori health outcomes has been underpinned by our partnership with our Te Tiriti partners Te Rōpū Ārahi. Our Board has nurtured this important relationship, which is vital to ensuring our work reflects our commitment to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and that we are fully embracing our strengths as a bicultural organisation.

Within the organisation, we have embarked on this journey towards becoming a bicultural organisation by undertaking a bespoke Tikanga training programme. This training has helped all of us develop our cultural competence, empowered us to embrace Tikanga Māori practices in our work, and has given us the confidence to speak more Te Reo Māori every day.

It is unfortunate that we have witnessed the state of the rural health workforce continue to decline, changing from a workforce shortage into a workforce crisis. We have not simply sat back and watched this happen, but have created opportunities and advocated for initiatives that will ensure a robust future rural health workforce. To this end, in 2021, we were delighted by the Ministry of Health's decision to reinstate funding for our Rural Health Careers Promotion Programme. This programme enables us to visit rural schools and marae all over the country to promote rural health careers and to support current tertiary health students to go 'rural' when they graduate.

Some of our most significant work is the role that our NZLocums team plays in strengthening the current rural health workforce. Consistently delivering on our placement targets in the past 12 months, the NZLocums team has had a year of success despite the challenges of COVID-19. They have stepped up to the challenge to deliver on our Pandemic

Emergency Roving Locums (PERL) initiative and then our Tautoko Rural initiative which replaced PERL early in 2022. Tautoko Rural acknowledged that the pressures faced by our rural health workforce were changing and that we needed to adapt the support we could offer. We managed to secure more funding, and increase the applicability criteria, to be able to offer financial support to rural general practices and rural hospitals, impacted by the stresses of COVID-19, by funding relief staff cover for any members of those teams.

Having our voice heard by those with the most power to effect change has been our top priority, particularly over the last six months. One of our most significant achievements has been the outcome of our submission to the Pae Ora Bill Select Committee. Without specific representation of rural communities, the Pae Ora Healthy Futures Bill threatened to overlook rural health and widen the inequities already present. Through our consistent advocacy, and with the support of our partners, our voice was finally heard, and rural communities have been included as a priority population in the Pae Ora Legislation. This ensures that rural health will have its own strategy, that rural health outcomes will be tracked, and ultimately that government agencies will be held accountable for these outcomes.

One of the most important tools in advocating for rural health has been the development of the Geographical Classification for Health (GCH), led by Garry Nixon from the University of Otago. This tool will allow us, for the first time ever, to provide an unequivocal definition of 'what is rural' from a geographical perspective. Using this we will be able to seek comparative data comparing health outcomes for rural versus urban populations. We can also look at any differences that might be experienced between remote rural and rural areas. Our advocacy now is that

this tool is embedded within the Ministry of Health and all other Government Agencies when analysing data concerning the health of New Zealanders.

As the health sector has begun its major transformation, so has our organisation. Our transition to Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network began in November 2021 when the Hauora Taiwhenua Council held its inaugural meeting, during which the inaugural Hauora Taiwhenua Board and the nine chapters were named. In March 2022, our members showed their support, voting in favour of this transformation to a new collective organisation that promises a stronger and united voice to advocate for healthy and thriving rural communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

On 28 June 2022, we were supported by over 150 Ministers, members, colleagues, and friends for the launch of Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network in Parliament. It was humbling to watch the culmination of all our efforts to bring this new organisation to life and to take that first step towards what we hope is a much stronger future for rural health. In 2022, as we celebrate 30 years of the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network, we hope you will grab a paddle and join us in our waka as we embark on our new journey together.

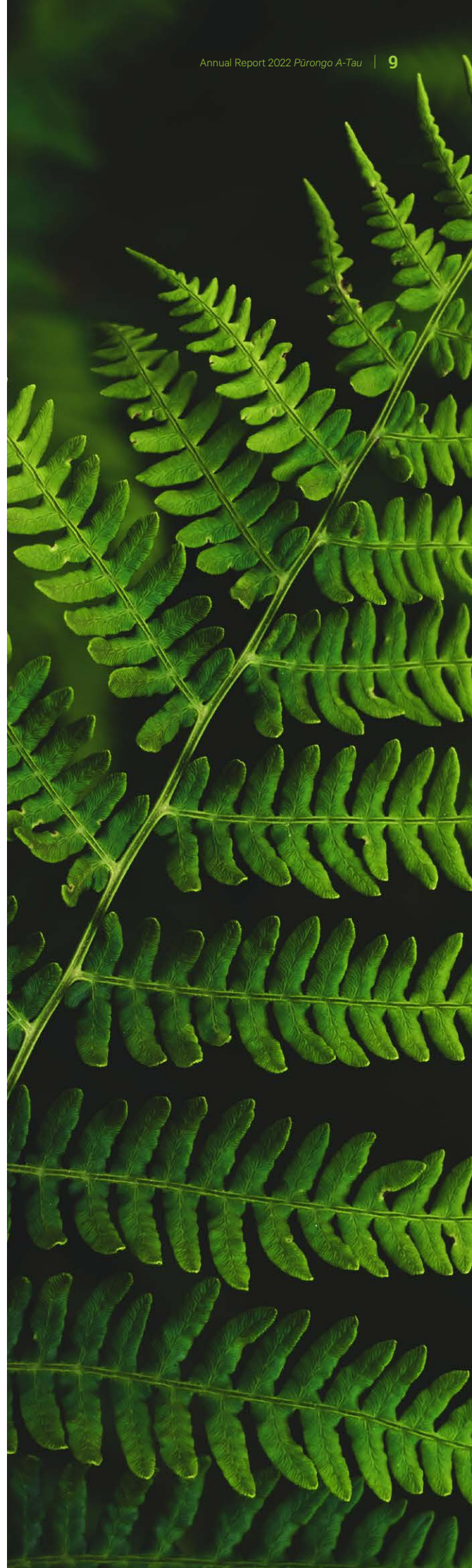
Finally, a massive shout out to the incredible team that is the NZRGPN. This extended team includes our staff, our Board members, Te Rōpū Ārahi, our rural general practices across the country, the volunteers who help us deliver our messages, and those in the various agencies that support our mission. We can only continue to make the progress that we have done with your continued energy and support. Thanks so much.

Mauri ora




Dr Grant Davidson

Chief Executive



Ō tātou
mēma

Our members
Ō tātou mēma

- Member Practices
- Non-Member Practices
- Rural Hospitals
-  Mobile Health

WE WORK WITH:


5 partner organisations:

Rural Health Alliance Aotearoa New Zealand (RHAANZ),
Rural Hospital Network (RHN),
Students of Rural Health Aotearoa (SoRHA),
Rural Nurses New Zealand (RNNZ),
New Zealand Institute of Rural Health (NZIRH)

 **4**
Universities

31 
Primary Health
Organisations

We represent **194** rural health practices across New Zealand of which **148** are members.
We work with **24** rural hospitals.



22
stakeholder
organisations



245
rural
schools



3
Forums and
working groups:

General Practice Leaders Forum
(GPLF), National Rural Health
Advisory Group (NRHAG),
PRIME working group

Who we are *Ko wai tātou*

Our staff | Tō tātou kaimahi

Dr Grant Davidson | *Chief Executive*
Dr Jeremy Webber | *Clinical Director Rural Health*
Marie Daly | *General Manager Advocacy*
Linda Reynolds | *Conference Manager*
Denise Brennock | *Finance Manager*
Ingrid Busby | *General Manager Membership Services*
Rumer Grace Archer | *Communications Advisor*
Edison Harris | *Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive & Board Secretary*
Samantha Hill | *Rural Health Careers Programme Coordinator*

NZLocums & NZMedJobs Team

Luke Baddington | *General Manager Workforce Recruitment*
Jenny Butt | *Senior Relationship Manager*
Debra Wilson | *Relationship Manager*
John Ferguson | *Relationship Manager*
David Davenport-Brown | *Senior Relationship Manager - NZMedJobs*
Jason Ng | *Recruitment Co-ordinator*
Ayumi Sakakibara | *Project and Events Co-ordinator*



Ko wai tātou

Our Board | Tō tātou poari

Dr Fiona Bolden | Chair

Rhoena Davis | Deputy Chair

Dr James Reid | Secretary

Ray Anton | Treasurer

Dr Kyle Eggleton | North Island Representative

Rhonda Johnson | South Island Representative

Dr Grahame Jelley | Northern North Island Representative

Dr Rory Miller | Eastern Middle North Island Representative

Kristi Daniel | Western Middle North Island Representative

Judith MacDonald | Southern North Island Representative

Gemma Hutton | Northern South Island Representative

Wilson Mitchell | Southern South Island Representative

Francis Bradley | Student Representative



2022 HIGHLIGHT

Celebrating 30 Years of the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network

In 2022, we celebrate our 30-year anniversary as the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network.

This is a monumental milestone for the group of passionate rural General Practitioners who first came up with the idea for a Network to support rural general practitioners and their families in 1991.

At the inaugural National Rural Health Conference in Rotorua in February 1992, the network officially formed. It soon became the only nationwide membership-based organisation in New Zealand to represent the specific interests of rural health.

In 2000, the NZRGPN was incorporated under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908, and in 2008 became a registered charity under the Charities Act 2005.

Throughout the years the NZRGPN supported the formation of more rural health organisations including the Rural Health Alliance Aotearoa New Zealand, Students of Rural Health Aotearoa, the New Zealand Rural Hospital Network and Rural Nurses New Zealand.

The NZRGPN has worked closely with these organisations to

form enduring partnerships alongside strong relationships with District Health Boards, Primary Health Organisations, St John PRIME service, ACC, Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners, General Practice New Zealand, New Zealand Nurses Organisation, New Zealand Medical Association, New Zealand Institute of Rural Health, as well as many of New Zealand's Universities, Polytechnics, and training organisations.

These important relationships have been nurtured over time to help us build an influential platform, which has enabled us to engage closely with the Government and Ministry of Health. Our voice has also been key in important advocacy groups including the General Practice Leaders Forum, the National Rural Health Advisory Group, and the National PRIME Committee.

To commemorate the 30-year history of the NZRGPN, a book was produced: *Growing Rural Health | Tipu Haere Tuawhenua Hauora*. It celebrates this legacy, our founding members, past and present Board members and sector leaders, and all those who helped to shape the Network.



Right: Key people and moments from the NZRGPN's history.

Left: Founding members of the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network.





Our Strategy *Tō tātou rautaki*



Our Strategic Plan 2019-2021 outlines our strategic priorities and the work we intend to do to achieve them. This plan will help us make our vision of healthy rural communities a reality.

In 2022, we look to the future with a new strategy as we begin our journey towards becoming Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network.

- 1 The Health System will reinforce Te Tiriti principles & obligations so that the unacceptable level of inequities experienced by Māori living in rural communities are addressed.
- 2 Rural people will have Health System support to help them stay well in their own communities with health outcomes equitable with other New Zealanders.
- 3 Rural people have equitable access to high quality Emergency or Specialist care when they need it.
- 4 Digital services & technology will enable rural people to access care from within their home and/or communities at equitable levels of affordability to other New Zealanders.
- 5 The rural health workforce is available, valued, well trained, and supported.



What we've been working on *Te whakatutuki*

"Rural populations are in desperate need of a lot more focus on them and we cannot wait any longer"

– DR FIONA BOLDEN, CHAIR

"For health equity for all New Zealanders, rural communities must be acknowledged as a priority population"

– DR GRANT DAVIDSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

***Whaowhia te kete
matauranga***

***Fill the basket
of knowledge***

Improve rural Māori health outcomes

Nurturing our partnership with Te Rōpū Ārahi

The NZRGPN works in partnership with its Te Tiriti partner, Te Rōpū Ārahi, as part of our commitment to enacting the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Te Rōpū Ārahi and our kaumātua provide wisdom and guidance to enable us to meet these obligations and achieve our goal of equitable health outcomes for Māori.

Tikanga Training

In 2021 the NZRGPN embarked on a journey to grow our cultural confidence as an organisation. Staff began a bespoke Tikanga training course through Skills Active Aotearoa Ltd, to gain a deeper understanding of Tikanga Māori practices and how they can be applied in our workplace and in our interactions with Māori stakeholders and partners.

Through this training, staff continue to develop an understanding and appreciation of te ao Māori through mihi/pepeha, karakia, waiata, pōwhiri, and tākaro and by speaking more te reo Māori in our everyday conversations.

We continue to challenge ourselves to grow while also creating a safe environment for individuals on their own personal competency journeys.



Grow our rural health workforce from within the heart of rural Aotearoa New Zealand

Rural Health Careers Promotion Programme

Our Rural Health Careers Promotion Programme, run in partnership with Students of Rural Health Aotearoa, is one of the ways we contribute to addressing the rural health workforce crisis.

In 2021, the NZRGPN was delighted that the Ministry of Health agreed to extend funding for this programme for another year.

This has allowed us to continue our promotion of rural health careers through our renowned rural school trips, noho marae, practice visits, and conferences. Promoting rural health careers to students is a vital part of our long-term solution to the rural health workforce crisis and will ensure we have a strong and sustainable future workforce.



Organised
4 rural school visits

Ran **4** virtual rural health career sessions

Visited
38 rural schools

Attended
1 Noho Marae

Reached over
2000 school students

In 2020/
2021 we

Rural Secondary School Visits

The rural secondary school visits are the foundation of the Rural Health Careers Promotion Programme. They involve groups of tertiary students touring regions to visit rural schools hosting interactive health career workshops with pupils. This initiative has proven to be invaluable for rural school pupils engaging them in discussions about their futures and the health career pathways available to them.

In November 2021, we hosted virtual rural health careers sessions with senior school students from rural schools throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. These virtual sessions replaced our usual in-person rural health careers presentations as part of our rural school visits, which were postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.



** Given that our ability to visit schools was impacted by COVID-19 we were delighted with the results and the positive feedback we received.*

Sixth-year medical student rural placements

In 2021, the NZRGPN worked with RHAANZ, Mobile Health and the University of Otago to provide rural placement offers to sixth-year medical students that included the opportunity to spend time in a rural hospital and the Mobile Surgical Unit, along with time in a rural practice. Sixth-year medical electives normally occur overseas, but during the pandemic they were restricted to Aotearoa New Zealand. The provision of rural electives provided a great opportunity to promote rural health as future career options.

“ I’m so glad I came and did this placement because now I’ve seen what it would actually be like, and I definitely am interested in working rurally.”

These placements aimed to give students positive experiences of work and life in a rural practice and community to increase the likelihood of them choosing to work in a rural area after they graduate.

- **Right:** Julia Kerr (right), a sixth-year medical student from the University of Otago, completed her 12-week rural placement in November 2021, split between Wakatipu Medical Centre in Queenstown and Dunstan Hospital in Clyde.



Showcasing our inspiring rural health professionals

In 2021, the NZRGPN launched a new video series to showcase inspiring health professionals working throughout rural Aotearoa New Zealand. We shared these videos on our website and social media, with the aim of attracting tertiary health students and rural rangitahi to work rurally in the future.

- **Left:** Awhi Kingi (Te Atihaunui-a-Papārāngi Ngāti Rangi, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Tūwharetoa), is a rural registered nurse working in Ohakune who shared her story with us.

Our key achievements

Ngā hua o te tau

2021 – 2022 Financial Year



84
Media mentions



10
Media pitches



3
Videos



2
Conferences
attended



2
Awards



1 Noho
Marae



1 Rural
Elective
Placement



80 Rural Telehealth
Workshop Attendees



80

**Tautoko Rural
Applications**



2,902

Twitter mentions

48



**Rural Hospital
Summit Attendees**

4



Webinars



1

**Mystery Creek Fieldays
Health and Wellbeing Hub**

Rural Schools



2

Rural School Tours



38

**Rural Schools
Visited**

2000+



**Rural School
Students Reached**

1



**COVID-19
Level 4
Lockdown**

Provide excellent and sustainable service to our members

Whakarato ratonga pai me te pumau tonu ki o tātou mēma

Advocating for healthy rural communities

Over the last 12 months, our advocacy has been focused on listening to our members, rural health providers, and rural communities about what issues are affecting them and what change they would like to see.

We took the issues we heard and produced a three-year rural health plan which we shared with the Pae Ora Bill Select Committee ahead of our oral submission in January 2022.

Our principal focus has been on ensuring our rural voice is heard so that rural communities are recognised in the health reforms. We have continued to repeat, loud and clear, that rural health can no longer be ignored.

Rural scores last-minute win in Pae Ora legislation

In January 2022, the NZRGPN presented an oral submission to the Pae Ora Bill Select Committee.

We were dismayed when the draft of the Pae Ora Healthy Futures Bill, recommended by the Select Committee to a second reading in Parliament, overlooked rural communities as a priority population group.

The NZRGPN argued that if the Bill didn't highlight a focus on rural communities, and hold Government Agencies accountable for rural health outcomes, the health inequities faced by rural New Zealanders would not improve.

"We wish you luck if you have a medical emergency or accident on a remote rural road and are waiting for a response from an under-funded and overworked rural GP or nurse who is on a 24/7 call roster, or wait for an ambulance that has to be dispatched from a depot 3 hours away" – Dr Fiona Bolden, Chair, NZRGPN Board

Our views were supported by many politicians who made powerful speeches during the second reading of the Bill at Parliament.

"For our voices to be ignored again is beyond disappointing and we are increasingly frustrated that rural communities are being overlooked by those with the power to effect real change"

– DR GRANT DAVIDSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NZRGPN

In June 2022, Health Minister Andrew Little introduced a last-minute Supplementary Orders Paper for the inclusion of rural communities as a priority population to the third and final reading of the Pae Ora Healthy Futures Bill at Parliament.

The NZRGPN and other rural health groups celebrated this victory.

"This inclusion will mean that rural health will have its own strategy developed, health outcome data tracked, and government agencies held accountable for those outcomes. Rural communities, many with high percentages of Māori, can now have some surety that they will be visible and front of mind among Government Agencies when these health reforms are implemented come 1 July."

– Dr Fiona Bolden, Chair, NZRGPN Board

Bringing the Pae Ora advocacy to life early – we worked with our partners and Ministry of Health to propose a significant rurally focussed component of Te Pae Tata, the Interim New Zealand Health Plan.

New Chair appointed to National PRIME Committee

The NZRGPN appointed a new Chair to the National PRIME Committee, Mark Eager. Through Mobile Health's support for the National PRIME Committee, there has been increased provider engagement, they have advocated for paramedics working in primary care to be funded to attend ACC notifications, and advocated for a review of PRIME and afterhours in the Interim New Zealand Health Plan.

"Where is the rural voice in the health reforms?"

– DR SHANE RETI, NATIONAL PARTY
SPOKESPERSON FOR HEALTH

Supporting rural health services prepare for COVID-19 outbreaks

In January 2022, the NZRGPN was contacted by the Ministry of Health seeking advice on how they could put immediate actions in place to support rural health services prepare for outbreaks of COVID-19 in rural communities.

To ensure our briefing paper, in response to this request, reflected the experiences of a wide range of rural communities and rural health services, we asked our members to tell us what they needed. Despite such a short timeframe, we were overwhelmed with the number of responses we received. There were four key issues in the feedback we received, all of which we managed to reach positive outcomes on with the Ministry of Health.

Issue 1: The rural health workforce shortage is the single biggest threat through COVID-19.

Outcome 1: The Ministry of Health allocated funding for the NZRGPN to set up a system to provide COVID-19 staff relief for any roles within a General Practice or Rural Hospital team. This led to the creation of our Tautoko Rural initiative.

Issue 2: Access to RATs and PPE as a priority for rural practices

Outcome 2: The Ministry prioritised RAT provision to rural practices and wanted to know of any practice that was having difficulty getting RAT tests, or appropriate PPE.

Issue 3: Funding for increased PRIME callouts that are likely during the pandemic when St John can't respond to predicted volumes

Outcome 3: The Ministry agreed to fund any practice that had a PRIME contract at an additional rate if called upon to undertake COVID-19 related care for COVID-19 positive patients in their PRIME role.

Issue 4: Supporting infrastructure costs for COVID-19 management in General Practice and non-DHB rural hospitals

Outcome 4: The Ministry believed that these costs are a responsibility of the DHB and suggested practices had conversations directly with their DHB contacts. Consequently, DHBs began funding some key infrastructure requests in order to prepare for COVID-19.



Taking our shot against COVID-19

Over the last year, the NZRGPN has continued to grow and adapt as COVID-19 outbreaks occurred in our rural communities. From a sudden lockdown in August 2021 to Super Saturday, we supported our rural practices and communities to vaccinate and get vaccinated to protect themselves and others against COVID-19.

The response from our practices, rural health professionals, and communities across the motu has been phenomenal, with everyone pulling together to support each other. We've seen practices harness telehealth, set up mobile vaccination services, and form partnerships with other local providers to ensure their communities had access to all the health services they required.

Advocating for more support for rural hospitals

The NZRGPN collaborated with the Rural Hospital Network to advocate for greater attention to be paid to the specific needs of rural hospitals in their preparation for the influx of COVID-19 patients, which continued to be overlooked by government.

Accessing COVID-19 Vaccination Statistics

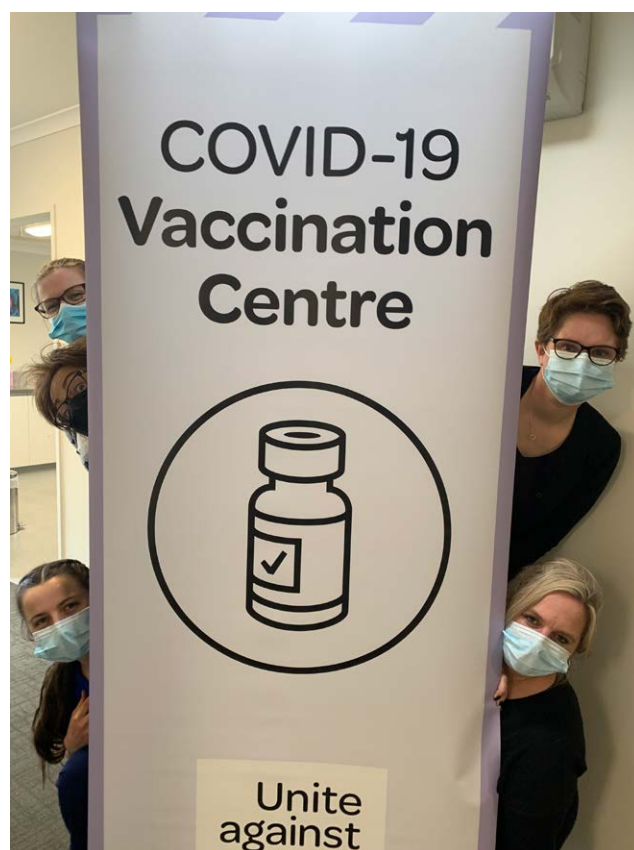
The NZRGPN partnered with researchers from the University of Otago to access data on COVID-19 vaccination rates in rural areas so that we could jointly advocate for more targeted support and therefore equitable outcomes.

Data confirmed that rural areas were falling behind in COVID-19 vaccination rates and that inequitable access to vaccination sites was playing a big role in this.

"What is most concerning is that it confirms that the productive rural backbone of our country is significantly at risk."

– DR GRANT DAVIDSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NZRGPN

Having access to this data led towards strategies to increase rural vaccination rates, including offering incentives and support for rural areas to get involved in vaccination drives like the Super Saturday vaccination day.



"Even though the government is planning on investing significantly on the Health Reforms with the aim to reduce "post code lottery" for access to health services, it continues with a strategy of ignoring rural hospitals and health centres, and by default rural communities, in the delivery of health services."

– RAY ANTON, CHAIR, RHN

Innovation Library Launched

In January 2022, we launched our Innovation Library to showcase the innovations that rural people and practices are doing that make a difference in delivering healthcare to rural communities.

Our Innovation Library enables us to share collective knowledge so that Members can learn from others. This empowers our rural health professionals and practices to harness innovation and help them become more effective and efficient in their delivery of health services to rural communities.

Tautoko Rural initiative boosts support for rural practices and hospitals

As COVID-19 began to enter rural communities, the NZRGPN surveyed our rural practices and hospitals for their greatest concerns. The key message we received was that their community's health would be compromised if any of their staff went down sick.

The NZRGPN pulled a team together to produce the new Tautoko Rural initiative, replacing our Pandemic Emergency Roving Locums (PERL) initiative. The Tautoko Rural initiative allowed the NZRGPN to provide rural practices and community-owned rural hospitals with staffing support as they managed COVID-19 outbreaks in their communities.

Funded by the Ministry of Health, Tautoko Rural helped to fill short-term staffing gaps in rural practices and hospitals due to COVID-19 illness, isolation requirements or work stressors caused by managing COVID-19.

We recieved

80 

Tautoko Rural Applications

We made

35 

Placements

COROMANDEL RESPONDS TO COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Coromandel Family Health Centre went into immediate response mode, not only when Level 4 Lockdown was announced in August 2021, but also when locations of interest were named in the small rural town.

Dr Bryan MacLeod, a GP at the practice, said the whole team adapted as quickly as possible to this situation.

“Our admin, reception and all staff responded quickly to changes required including setting up drive-through swabbing and vaccination services.” he says.

“We started by swabbing 230 people on the first day of lockdown. Since then, we have been continuing with vaccinations, about 80 a day.”

“We’re doing this in addition to seeing urgent cases, being on-call and providing virtual consultations, as well as lots and lots of phone calls.”

The practice also partnered with local iwi-based health provider Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki, which was invaluable in enabling them to share the load of swabbing and vaccinating.

CASE STUDY



Honouring Rural GPs

Rural GP, Dr Branko Sijnja and Taupō GP, Dr Peter Fleischl were awarded Distinguished Fellowships of The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners acknowledging their contribution and dedication to general practice, medicine, and the health and wellbeing of their communities.

Dr James Chisnall, a Motueka GP, was recognised with a Community Service Medal for his tireless work for his patients and community.

NZLocums Achievements

Our NZLocums team have driven our recruitment service to Aotearoa New Zealand rural practices over the last 12 months despite the barriers they have faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the worsening health workforce crisis. They have worked tirelessly to deliver on our contract with the Ministry of Health and provide vital support for our rural health services.

Our NZLocums team continued to lead our Pandemic Emergency Roving Locums (PERL) initiative which was established at the beginning of 2020 to provide critical and urgent support to rural practices effected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This was replaced by the Tautoko Rural initiative established as its replacement in early 2022.

Former NZRGPN Board student representative receives prestigious Rhodes Scholarship

Dr Ben Alsop-ten Hove, former Board student representative, was awarded a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship, supporting him to study at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom where he joins a cohort of more than 100 Rhodes Scholars from around the world in October 2022.

As a former student representative on the NZRGPN Board, Ben became an outspoken advocate for more equitable health outcomes for rural New Zealanders and rural Māori.

At Oxford, Ben will study for a Master of Public Policy and Master of Science in Evidence-Based Intervention and Policy Evaluation.



Dr Ben Alsop-ten Hove

Peter Snow Award 2022

Influential GP, Dr Branko Sijnja, was named as the recipient of the Peter Snow Memorial Award for 2022 at the AGM in March 2022.

Branko was nominated for his service and dedication to rural health for over 40 years. He is well known in the South Otago town of Balclutha and by many students at the University of Otago (UoO) for his leadership, commitment and inspiration.

In 2009, Branko became the Director of the Rural Medical Immersion Programme at UoO where he mentored fifth-year medical students as they spent a year working and studying in rural New Zealand.

Branko has selflessly taken every opportunity to share his passion for rural health with his students. He is a natural teacher, and this meant he often went above and beyond to ensure his students success.



Dr Branko Sijnja

"Whenever he comes to the conferences you can always spot him as he's the one with the crowd of young doctors around him who know him through the RMIP Programme - he's usually telling them tales and there's always lots of laughter."

– DR FIONA BOLDEN, CHAIR, NZRGPN BOARD

Our performance

Rural Recruitment Service

We assist eligible rural health providers with recruitment of long-term and permanent rural General Practitioners and Nurse Practitioners.

**PLACEMENT TARGET
2020/21**



**PLACEMENTS MADE
2020/21**



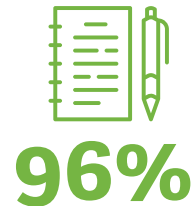
Rural Locum Support Service

We ensure that eligible providers can access up to two weeks locum relief per 1.0 FTE, per annum.

**APPLICATION TARGET
2020/21**

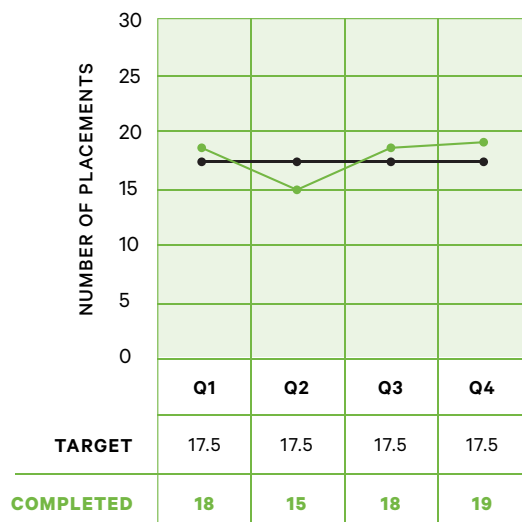


**PLACEMENTS MADE
2020/21**

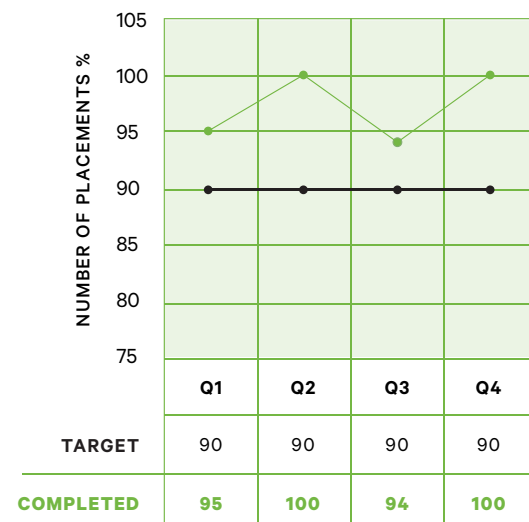


Short-term and Long-term placement targets

LONG-TERM PLACEMENTS



SHORT-TERM PLACEMENTS



PERL placements



24
PERL APPLICATIONS
MADE



28
PERL PLACEMENTS
MADE

Interim placements



90
ADDITIONAL SHORT-TERM
PLACEMENTS INTO RURAL
PRACTICES

Number of locums by length of locum placements

LONGER THAN 12 MONTHS

23

3-12 MONTHS

47

LESS THAN 3 MONTHS

59

Be the trusted and united voice of rural health

Becoming Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network

At the AGM in November 2020, the NZRGPN Board, with support from our Te Tiriti partner Te Rōpū Ārahi, introduced to members a proposal to unite with our rural health partners as a collective organisation.

The stated benefits of a collective organisation included:

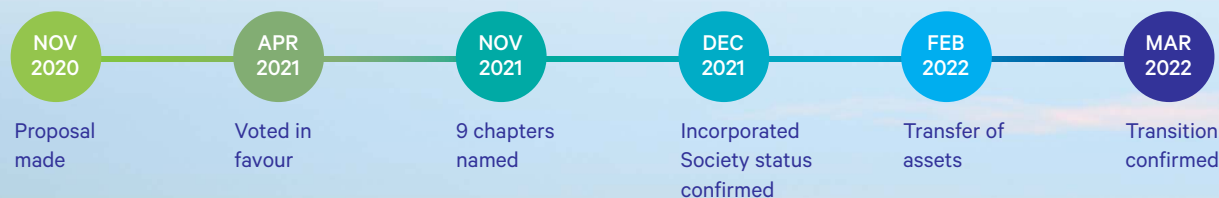
- Specific interest groups to be formed, named Chapters | Ngā Whare Taumata, in which members can meet, share ideas, and identify concerns.
- Membership open to individuals, organisations and other groups seeking membership who share a common vision and the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Greater strength of a united, collective to advocate on behalf of each Chapter with a vision of growing healthy and thriving rural communities.

Following support from the NZRGPN Members and Board during the AGM, the Chief Executive and management team toured the country to consult with members in a series of roadshows to get their feedback on the proposal to form a new organisation.

At the AGM in April 2021, members voted in favour of the proposal to transition to a new collective organisation Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network.

The Hauora Taiwhenua Council held its inaugural meeting in November 2021 during which the inaugural Board and the nine Chapters of Hauora Taiwhenua were named. The final constitution was approved and the charters for each Chapter were accepted. These formed the application for incorporated society status which was confirmed in December 2021.

In early 2022, the Rural Health Alliance Aotearoa New Zealand (RHAANZ), the Rural Hospital Network (RHN) and the New Zealand Institute of Rural Health (NZIRH) passed



motions to carry out the transfer of assets to Hauora Taiwhenua and effectively disestablish their current organisations. Students of Rural Health Aotearoa and Rural Nurses New Zealand, who had informal structures, also agreed to merge and integrate into newly formed Chapters.

Members of the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network voted on making the final commitment to the transition at the AGM on 17 March 2022. Members voted by overwhelming majority for the transition to Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network.



**Hauora
Taiwhenua**
Rural Health
Network

**The Board believe that
as a connected and
united organisation we
are in a more powerful
position to advocate
for the health and
wellbeing of all rural
New Zealanders and
shape a better future
for rural health.**





Launching Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network

On Tuesday 28 June 2022, Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network was officially launched in the Grand Hall at Parliament. Over 150 rural health professionals, friends, colleagues and Members of Parliament joined the inaugural Hauora Taiwhenua Board, Council, Te Rōpū Ārahi, and staff to celebrate the beginning of our new journey as a collective organisation.



Looking to the future

We acknowledge and credit the founding members, all past and present Board members and leaders, and all those who helped to shape and to place the NZRGPN in the strong position it is in today. It is only with this strength, and the support of our members, that it is possible to flourish in such a significant way.

As the NZRGPN celebrates its 30-year anniversary, we are proud to take a step forward towards a brighter, stronger

future for rural health and become Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network.

As Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network, we are a collective organisation advocating for the health and wellbeing of rural New Zealanders.

We represent the breadth of the rural health and wellbeing professions who work in rural communities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

Our purpose is growing healthy and thriving rural communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Financial Statements

Tauākī Pūtea

Summarised Statement of Financial Performance

For the year ended 30 June 2022

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| INCOME | | |
| Income Received | 6,110,991 | 5,706,853 |
| LESS: DIRECT COSTS | 3,215,949 | 2,782,810 |
| GROSS PROFIT | 2,895,042 | 2,924,043 |
| LESS: EXPENDITURE | | |
| Amortisation | 5,449 | 5,449 |
| Audit Fees | 13,300 | 4,200 |
| Legal Fees | 8,321 | 19,813 |
| Depreciation | 21,633 | 19,589 |
| Kiwisaver Employer Contribution | 48,303 | 47,736 |
| Long-term Employee Benefits | - | 4,954 |
| Rent | 156,528 | 156,528 |
| Salaries & Wages | 1,655,266 | 1,523,617 |
| Advertising | 71,619 | 67,823 |
| Conference & Trade Shows | 25,002 | 197,496 |
| Other Expenses | 594,628 | 556,585 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 2,600,050 | 2,603,790 |
| NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) | \$294,992 | \$320,253 |
| | | |
| TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE REVENUE AND EXPENSE | \$294,992 | \$320,253 |

Summarised Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2022

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| EQUITY | | |
| Accumulated Funds Account | 3,160,822 | 2,865,830 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | \$3,160,822 | \$2,865,830 |
| Represented By: | | |
| CURRENT ASSETS | 6,558,535 | 4,948,417 |
| FIXED ASSETS | - | 51,753 |
| INTANGIBLE ASSETS | - | 38,538 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 6,558,535 | 5,038,708 |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | 3,397,713 | 2,172,878 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 3,397,713 | 2,172,878 |
| NET ASSETS | \$3,160,822 | \$2,865,830 |

Tauākī Pūtea

Financial Statements

Tauākī Pūtea

Summarised Statement of Cash Flows

as at 30 June 2022

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Cash was provided from | 7,334,548 | 5,450,415 |
| Less: Cash was applied to | 5,703,069 | 5,092,094 |
| NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES | \$1,631,479 | \$358,322 |
| CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Cash was provided from | 3,597,348 | 3,700,000 |
| Less: Cash was applied to | 3,515,744 | 3,576,493 |
| NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES | 81,604 | 123,507 |
| NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS | 1,713,083 | 481,828 |
| CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR | 950,617 | 468,789 |
| CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR | \$2,663,699 | \$950,617 |

Summarised Statement of Changes in Net Assets/Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2022

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Balance at the Beginning of Year | 2,865,830 | 2,545,577 |
| Net Surplus / (Deficit) | 294,992 | 320,253 |
| NET ASSETS/EQUITY AT THE END OF YEAR | \$3,160,822 | \$2,865,830 |

Tauākī Pūtea

Notes to the Financial Statements

Statement of Accounting Policies

For the year ended 30 June 2022

Statement of Compliance

The information set out in these Summary Financial Statements has been prepared in accordance with PBE FRS 43: Summary Financial Statements and extracted from the full financial statements of the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network (NZRGPN) for the year ended 30 June 2022. The full Financial Statements were authorised for issue on 1 December 2022 by the Executive Board. The network's auditor has issued an unmodified opinion over the full Financial Statements.

The full Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with New Zealand Generally Accepted Accounting Practice ("NZ GAAP"). They comply with the Public Benefit Entity Standards Reduced Disclosure Regime ("PBE Standards RDR"), as appropriate for Tier 2 not-for-profit public benefit entities. The NZRGPN qualifies as a Tier 2 reporting entity as for the current and prior periods has had between \$2m and \$30m operating expenditure and does not have public accountability.

All transactions in the Financial Statements are reported using the accrual basis of accounting.

The summary financial statements do not provide a complete understanding as provided by the full financial statements of the financial performance and financial position of the entity. The full Financial Statements are available to Members upon request to the Chief Executive.

Functional and presentation currency

The Financial Statements are presented in New Zealand dollars (\$) which is the NZRGPN's functional and presentation currency. All financial information presented in New Zealand dollars has been rounded to the nearest dollar.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on a realisation basis (refer to note below) due to the emergence of a new legal entity - Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network Incorporated. The NZRGPN is no longer considered to be a going concern due to the transfer of assets and liabilities to the new entity. Accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year.

Events after the reporting Date

From 1 July 2022, the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network began winding down, with assets and liabilities being transferred to the new legal entity - Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network Incorporated. As at 30 June 2023 the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network is expected to have completed the transfer of assets and liabilities to the new entity along with novating any existing contracts. Limited comprehensive revenue and expense transactions for the 2023 financial year are forecasted and the entity is expected to be wound up within the next 12 months.

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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of New Zealand Rural General Practice Network Incorporated Report on the Audit of the Summary Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the summary financial statements, which comprise the summarised statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, the summarised statement of financial performance, summary statement of changes in net assets/equity and summarised statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and related notes, are derived from the audited financial statements of the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network Incorporated for the year ended 30 June 2022.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements, in accordance with PBE FRS 43 Summary Financial Statements issued by the New Zealand Accounting Standards Board.

Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Tier 2 Public Benefit Entity (PBE) Financial Reporting Standards as issued by the New Zealand External Reporting Board (XRB). Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements and the auditor's report thereon. The summary financial statements and the audited financial statements do not reflect the effects that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on the audited financial statements.

The Audited Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated 20 December 2022.

Emphasis of Matter

We draw attention to the Basis of Preparation note to the summary financial statements, which describes the realisation basis of accounting that has been adopted, due to the emergence of a new legal entity – Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network Incorporated. The New Zealand Rural General Practice Network Incorporated is no longer considered a going concern due to its transfer of assets and liabilities to the new entity. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Executive Committee's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

The Executive Committee is responsible on behalf of the Society for the preparation of the summary financial statements in accordance with PBE FRS 43 Summary Financial Statements.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with International Standard on Auditing (New Zealand) 810 (Revised) Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements.

Other than in our capacity as auditor we have no relationship with, or interests in the Society.

BAKER TILLY STAPLES RODWAY AUDIT LIMITED

Wellington, New Zealand
21 December 2022





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