

# The Matagouri Rural Health Club

## Tiki Tour Report 2026



## **Part 1 - Jacob Jones (Treasurer)**

### DAY 1

The Tiki Tour trip returned for its second year, this time venturing south from Otago University to explore rural South Otago and Southland. We met on Saturday morning outside the Hunter centre and began the trip with some whakawhanaungatanga (relationship-building) as a group. The 3-hour drive commenced to our first destination: Te Anau. The Tiki Tour couldn't have happened without some help along the way, and we'd first like to thank Mark Eager from the Mobile Health Group and his colleagues for assistance with fuel vouchers. 7 cars set off on the journey and arrived at the Kepler track carpark near the control gates of Lake Te Anau where we stopped for lunch, courtesy of the Bowling Club, a local Dunedin catering company. We are grateful for the mahi of Liam & Jackie for providing our kai in mobile containers for us to take with us and prepare at our various resting points across the country. The first meal was falafel wraps with hummus, relish and sauerkraut alongside some of their homemade shortbread. This feed gave us the sustenance we would need for our hike along the Kepler.

Dr Steve Hoskin met us at the carpark and joined in for the walk, sharing some wisdom and local history to our group as we explored the lake & forest. However, our walk would inevitably be interrupted, as we encountered an "injured arborist" who had suffered a compound fracture of his left tibia/fibula and was fading in and out of consciousness. This commenced our Remote-Rescue scenario, as a group with Steve's aid we would have to figure out how to manage his vital signs, address any breathing, bleeding and circulation issues - truly putting out DRS ABCD skills to the test. With little help on the way due to our remote location, we had to improvise with the kit available and created a stretcher out of his climbing rope and two sturdy nearby tree branches. With his leg fracture reduced & splinted, we practiced loading him onto the stretcher with his cervical spine stabilized, then carried him back towards the walk's entrance.

As second- and third-year students this was most of our first experiences in any kind of trauma accident response, and as a collective we enjoyed the application of the theory we had been studying thus far. I'd like to express our gratitude for Steve's enthusiasm and Ezra's patient acting skills for this exercise. Here the group parted ways, with one car deciding to explore the Kepler further and the rest following Steve to the lakefront's idyllic wharf for phase 2 of the afternoon's exercise: a hypothermia water rescue. Ezra had collapsed off of the wharf and Andrew heroically jumped in after him to drag him to shore where Steve taught us the important things to consider when hypothermia was a possibility, for example the importance of keeping Ezra horizontal at all times to maintain brain blood supply with the hypotension that accompanies removal from the water.

Next the group had some downtime after checking in to Te Anau Central Backpackers so we settled down for a bit before setting off on foot to meet Steve again at the Te Anau Bowling Club. Here we were taught the basics by club legend Shona Elder, and divided into teams to play a few ends each. This helped us to establish the Matagouri Representative Bowls team,

composed of the four students who displayed the most promising talent. These students would then go on to compete against the Te Anau All Star team, valiantly led by Steve's daughter. The match would end 2 points a piece after 2 ends played, and in a tie break Steve's daughter bowled her ball within 20cm of the jack to carry the Te Anau team to a convincing win, pocketing the \$100 prize money.

After the friendly competition, we gathered inside for some amazing local kai and drinks from the club bar. Thanks to Steve, his family, Doctors James & Paula, the wonderful bowling club members for putting such an amazing evening on for us. Steve would then share a presentation on a 'week in his life', which gave us great insight into what life was like as a rural doctor. The night ended early for some and later for others as we made our way back to the accommodation.

## DAY 2

Sunday began early for some who explored the town on foot, and we all shared some toast & spreads for breakfast courtesy of Fiordland Medical Centre and muesli & yoghurt courtesy of The Bowling Club, Dunedin. We all headed away to our final events in Te Anau which included a visit to the Southland Rescue Helicopters Trust where we had two scenarios. We learnt airway management first aid training, with cardiopulmonary resuscitation. We practiced co-ordinating the first aid with a larger group of people to learn how to maximise time 'on-chest' and how we would approach a scenario when a patient was in respiratory depression and had no pulse. Meanwhile, the rest of us learnt how to winch in and out of a helicopter, operate a scoop stretcher and package our patient up safely to be winched into the helicopter hovering above. Finally, we toured Fiordland medical centre and shared some kai as a group (more wraps) and thanked Dr Steve Hoskin, Ezra, the medical centre staff and ambulance team.

## **Part 2 – Andrew McLennan (President)**

Upon saying goodbye to Dr Steve Hoskin in Te Anau, we leave via the south road and begin our trip to Southland hospital in Invercargill. A recommendation of a slightly more scenic route took us down rural roads and then between the Takitimu mountains and the edge of Fiordland. This was stunning, and we were all very grateful for the slight detour. Once back in the flats of Southland, we were greeted by a drizzle that got heavier and heavier. This became a torrential downpour the closer we got to Invercargill. Apparently, this is very uncharacteristic of Southland, so more time will need to be spent in the area to know for sure.

Once we arrived at Southland Hospital, we were greeted by Dr Konrad Richter, Michaela Peters (TI), Dr Lucy Robertson, Maia Lockyer (5th year), and Tiffany Kenyon (4th year). Once we had chance to meet our welcoming committee of doctors and medical students, they kindly showed us around the Otago Medical School student facilities hidden behind the bricks of an old hospital building. This was a great and modern space, and it was awesome to look around the student areas and some of the research offices. The most exciting part of the student facilities were the simulation suite located upstairs. As pre-clinical students still in our 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of medical

school, we have had little to no clinical interaction with any real or simulated patients, so to have the opportunity to view an advanced dummy with blinking eyes and a rising chest was very cool. As our guides made his 'vital signs' fall on the monitor behind him, we snapped into action, started to administer CPR and saved our very first 'patient'! A super cool experience!! We then got a chance to ask questions, mostly about medical school and what it's like working at Invercargill hospital. Finally, we were given an in-depth tour of the hospital and everything that a patient in Invercargill may experience while at the hospital. We thanked our amazing guides and carried on our journey into Invercargill town.

We then checked into our accommodation for the night; the Tuatara Lodge Backpackers located in central Invercargill. We quickly got dinner reheated from the Bowling Club, a Gormeh Sabzi curry which was a great way to warm up on a rainy night. After this, we all enjoyed some free time that varied from some visiting family in Invercargill, to some undertaking the obligatory Invercargill Kmart trip! We then hit the hay, ready for the last day of the trip and return home to our own beds.

### DAY 3

Our third and final day was off to a great start with a surprise breakfast of French toast, scrambled eggs (kindly put on by one of our group members) and the regular selection of mueslis and toast. We quickly left town and headed up SH1, going to Gore. Once we reached Gore, we met with Karl Metzler, the CEO of Gore Health, who showed us around his hospital. As it was Anzac Day observed, it was relatively quiet and we were able to move throughout the hospital as one big group. It was great to chat about his role and what it's like to live and work in Gore, as well as how Gore hospital functions and how it differs from a big city hospital. We thanked Karl for his generosity and stopped at the Gore fish (Trevor the Trout) on our way out of town.

Once we arrived in Balclutha, we met Dr Branko Sijnja and Dr David Mason at the Clutha First Medical centre. This is the only Hospital in Balclutha. We were lucky enough to also meet three 5<sup>th</sup> year RMIP (rural medical immersion programme) medical students; Jennifer Cato, Phoenix Aranui-Evans, and Daniel Nieuwenhuize, who shared with us about RMIP and their experience working and studying in Balclutha so far. Branko gave us a short presentation about the history of Balclutha and Balclutha Hospital, while also putting on a feast of sandwiches, custard squares, and juices. This food especially was very greatly appreciated as our long weekend away was taking a big toll on our energy levels. We then split into several groups for a tour of the facilities, including the student tutorial room and the maternity ward, and we even got to meet a newborn baby and his mum!!

For the final stop on our tiki tour, we visited the Otago Southland Rescue Helicopter Trust hangar in Mosgiel. This is a service that every medical student is very familiar with, as the helicopters fly in and land over our heads at the roof of the hospital at all hours of the day. We had a sit-down chat with some of the paramedics as they told us about their job and the service they provide all over the bottom of the South Island. After this, we had a look around and a tour

through their hangar and some of the incredible and well-equipped helicopters that they use every day for the amazing work that they do.

After thanking the Helicopters team, we finished up with some final words outside the helicopter hangar. This was a great chance to thank the entire group for such an amazing tiki tour and to wrap up everything we have experienced and learnt over the long weekend. From here, we returned home to Dunedin, exhausted but excited about everything we have learnt and the possibilities for a career in rural medicine.

Our goal as the Matagouri executive for our tiki tour was to showcase the full rural healthcare system that exists outside of a big city centre. We decided that the best way to do this was to follow a 'patient' and their medical journey after suffering a severe injury in the Fiordland back-country. After treating and extracting our 'patient' in the Fiordland bush via a homemade stretcher, we could winch him out and fly him to Southland Hospital via Southern Lake helicopters. Then we gave him 'surgery' at the simulation suites, and visited him in the wards at the hospital. and then visited him as he had follow up appointments in Gore and Balclutha, where he may have originally lived. We then followed up the whole process at the Otago Southland rescue helicopters. While not entirely accurate, it gave a great theme to our trip and was a cool way to connect each of these places as it happens in the real world.

With limited access to rural health and rural medicine in our pre-clinical years, it is so crucial that we can showcase some of the amazing rural communities that exist throughout Otago and Southland, and most importantly how special it is to live rurally. For most medical students, we never would have time or the opportunity to explore our own backyard, especially to stop in some of the places that are off the beaten track and away from the main highways. We are often caught up in the pipeline of city living and big city medicine, moving from one city to another. This takes away the experience and opportunity to visit these vibrant rural communities, and without these opportunities, our classmates may never experience the magic that happens within a small-town medical practice and the relationships that you are able to build with your patients.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who could help to make this trip possible. So many different people and organisations came together to welcome us into their communities and provide us with amazing experiences wherever we went. This trip would not have happened without the kindness and generosity that has been shown to us over this weekend. Countless emails and phone calls to organise visits, alongside meeting so many people at the WONCA conference, came to fruition and created an amazing weekend away for the club. Even on a long weekend with two public holidays and a Sunday, everyone still came into their work on their days off to show us their workplace and their towns. Everyone in the student group had such an amazing time, learnt so much about rural health, and came away absolutely buzzing from the experience. We are extremely grateful to everyone who helped us provide this to our club. The opportunities and connections that have been created for the future of the club is very exciting. Our only regret is that we couldn't bring any more students on our trip, something that may be able to be accommodated for in the future.

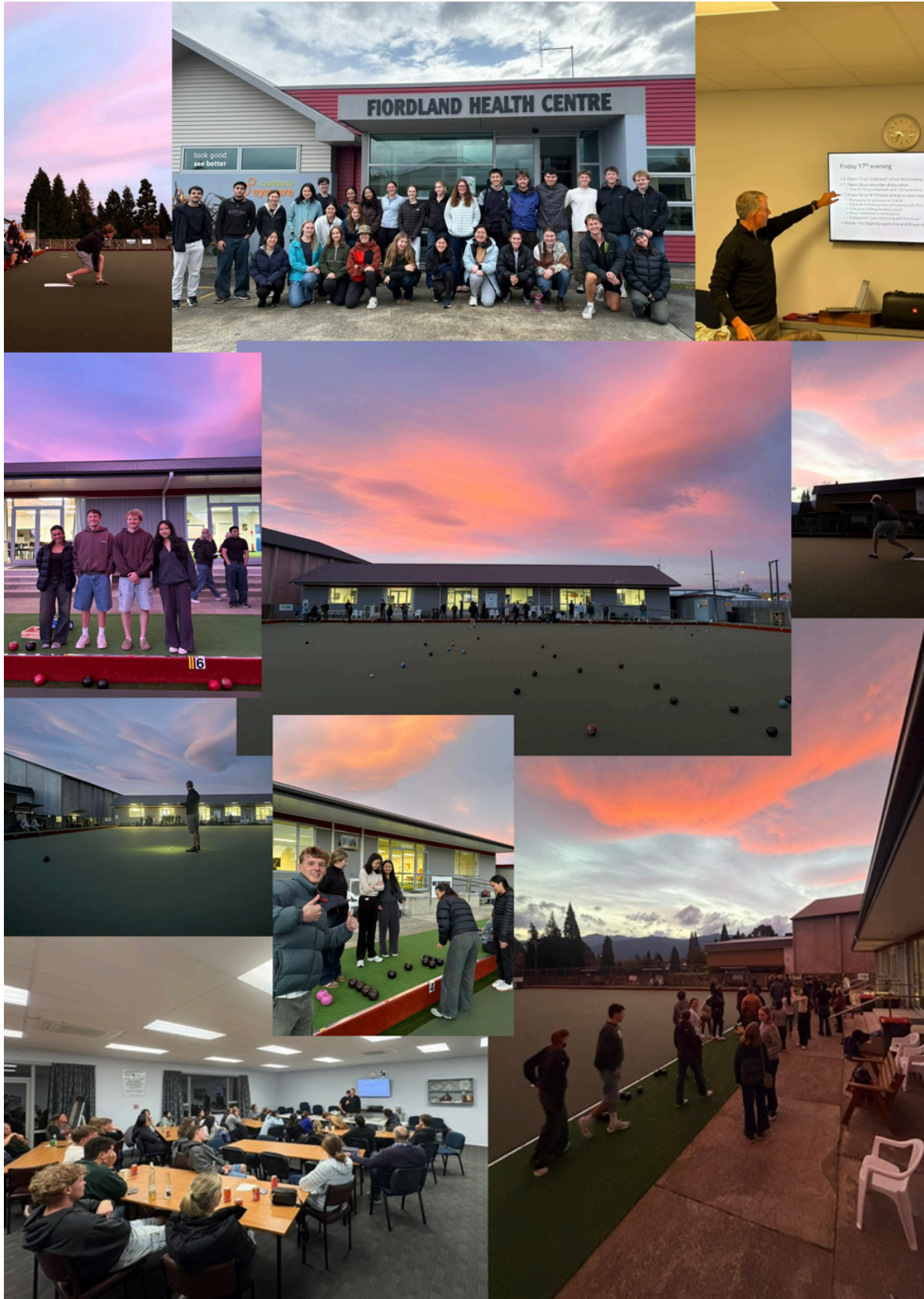
Thanks again to everyone for such an amazing weekend. We hope that our Tiki Tour has not only inspired our current group to the wonders of rural health and working in a rural community, but also creates a groundwork for future years of the Matagouri Tiki Tour to thrive from.

Acknowledgements:

- Mobile Health Group
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- Southern Lakes Helicopters
- St Johns Te Anau
- Southland Hospital
- Gore Health
- Clutha Health First
- Otago Southland Rescue Helicopter Trust
- The Te Anau Bowling club
- Fiordland Meats
- Fiordland Health Trust
- The Bowling Club Dunedin
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- Ezra Muir (TI)
- Dr Konrad Richter
- Michaela Peters (TI)
- Dr Lucy Robertson
- Maia Lockyer (5th year)
- Tiffany Kenyon (4th year)
- Karl Metzler
- Dr Branko Sijnja
- Dr David Mason
- Jennifer Cato (5th year RMIP)
- Phoenix Aranui-Evans (5th year RMIP)
- Daniel Nieuwenhuize (5th year RMIP)
- Kristie Saumure
- Dr Emma Boddington
- Members of the Matagouri Rural Health Club



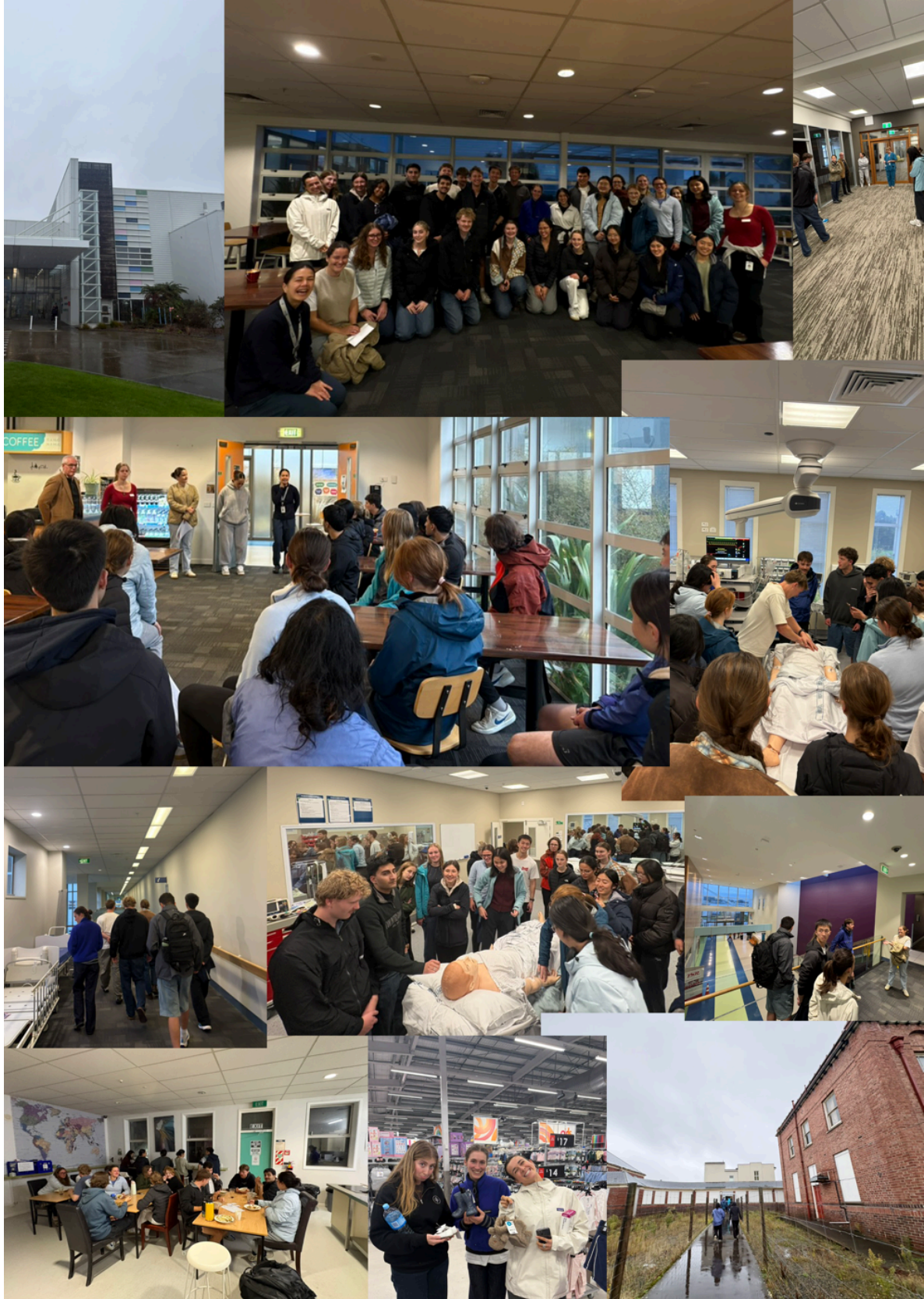
Walking the Kepler Track and rescuing our patient on land and in Lake Te Anau



A game of sunset bowls followed by a delicious dinner and a presentation by Dr Hoskin.



A Visit to the Southern Lakes Helicopter and St John's ambulance with CPR and winch training.



Southland hospital, visiting their simulation suites and chatting with Drs and med students.



Visiting Gore Hospital, a Presentation at Clutha Health First, and the Otago Rescue Helicopters.