

NEW ZEALAND NEWS

Continence helpline

As we receive very limited government funding, the availability of nurses on our continence helpline relies on our ability to obtain funding from community trusts and organisations. The Lindsay Foundation kindly funded a 6-month trial of our children's continence nurse Lisa Smith on the helpline for 3 days per week from June 2021.

During the trial, call volumes to the helpline increased by 26%, and we were inundated with requests to provide education to groups and organisations working with children which we were able to accommodate. As a result, the Lindsay Foundation will generously continue to fund the children's continence nurse role 3 days per week during 2022. We are very grateful for their support.

We continue to have continence nurse Louise Mills available on the helpline for the remaining 2 days each week. Helpline calls have increased significantly since the availability of a continence nurse from July 2018, and we would like to remind our members that it is a resource they are also able to access for support and advice as required.

Education

With the ongoing challenges associated with COVID-19, and the arrival of the Omicron variant to New Zealand, we have made the decision to continue with the provision of online education in 2022.

We have recently released online courses for health professionals which are available via our website and member portal. The courses currently available are Managing constipation in children, and Supporting people with dementia and incontinence. A pelvic health online course and an online education series to support people living with disabilities are in progress and will be released soon.

We will have a range of education options available throughout the year, and will keep members updated via our member newsletter and online member portal.

World Continence Week: 21-27 June 2022

Planning for our World Continence Week 2022 campaign is underway, and we look forward to sharing these details soon. We have been very grateful for the support of our members with each annual campaign and will once again be asking people to assist us to raise awareness around New Zealand. Our 2021 campaign to support carers was widely viewed and has led to collaborations and partnerships that will make a long-term impact.

2022 projects and priorities

We have several projects in progress and continue to focus on enhancing both our service delivery for New Zealanders living with incontinence and our education and support for members.

A research project to review our service delivery, which has been funded by the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board, is a core priority in 2022. We are in the process of collecting feedback from a variety of key stakeholders and appreciate the time taken by our members to participate in this process.

Updating our website to enable easier access to information is also a high priority and the feedback obtained within the research project will assist with this work. Our website is currently being reviewed, and planning to enhance the accessibility and user experience is our next focus.

The pregnancy guide that we have developed will be available in April. The guide has been created in collaboration with health professionals, and we hope that it assists New Zealand women during their pregnancy journey and beyond. Once this has been published, we will be working on the development of new content and resources to support other groups living with incontinence.

We are working with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of New Zealand to develop a comprehensive pelvic health training workshop for fitness professionals who support men undertaking the Prost-FIT exercise programme.

Planning for our World Continence Week 2022 campaign is underway, and we look forward to providing an update on our planned activities in the next journal.

We are also in the process of recruiting a treasurer for our Executive Committee. Once this position has been filled, we will commence recruitment to fill the remaining executive-appointed roles available. We require a diverse range of governance skills and experience to assist with our development journey and anticipate that the recruitment process will take several months.

Despite the many challenges of the pandemic, we remain focused on our development and growth, and thank our members for their support during this time.

Louise Judd

CEO, Continence NZ