

NEW ZEALAND NEWS

Maternal birth injuries are now covered by ACC

The long-awaited amendment to the Accident Compensation Act 2001 sees a long-awaited change in law finally in place as of 1 October 2022. As of that date, maternal birth injuries are included as part of our accident cover as result of the Accident Compensation (Maternal Birth Injury and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. The legislation was introduced by Minister for ACC the Hon. Carmel Sepuloni and passed its Third Reading on 27 September 2022. This is great news for expectant whānau, and this change takes our communities one step closer to providing the support that birthing parents deserve. Maternal birth injuries affect up to 80% of birthing parents in Aotearoa New Zealand, and this change provides coverage for approximately 28,000 birthing parents each year. See <https://www.acc.co.nz/for-providers/maternal-birth-injuries/>

Celebrating 30 years of continence support in Aotearoa New Zealand

On 29 September 2022, Continence NZ celebrated its 30th birthday! Continence NZ was incorporated as a society on 29 September 1992. We were established to provide a service to incontinence sufferers, caregivers, health professionals and the general public by providing information and education on topics of incontinence.

The Continence NZ team is privileged to be a part of this history and to contribute to our organisation's long history of supporting those living with incontinence to have an improved quality of life. To see some familiar faces we have a snapshot of our celebrations on our YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkC15t_z9Fw&feature=youtu.be

Education and events

As we have moved through the next phase of the Omicron outbreak in Aotearoa New Zealand, our continence nurses Louise and Lisa are now able to offer face-to-face education, as well as online education, to our communities. We are pleased to be able to offer our *Pelvic floor focus* workshops for fitness professionals around the country again in early 2023.

In addition, Auckland Unlimited has provided funding for a 2-day conference to be held in Auckland in the second half of 2023; details will be released in the coming weeks.

Upcoming research project

Continence NZ is undertaking a significant review of the services we provide to our community. The review will occur over the next 6 months and is funded by the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board. The purpose of this project is to make recommendations as to how Continence NZ can most effectively serve those living with incontinence in Aotearoa New Zealand. We are currently in the design phase of the project and hope to commence data collection before the end of the year.

Team update

I am thrilled to have joined the Continence NZ team in September as CEO and I look forward to meeting more of our stakeholders and community in the coming months. I would like to acknowledge Louise Judd for her exceptional leadership, passion and dedication as CEO for the past 5 years. We are incredibly fortunate that Louise will continue with Continence NZ as our Funding and Planning Manager.

We recently welcomed Emma Cherrington to our Executive Committee as our community representative. Emma was the face of our 2019 World Continence Week Campaign where her bravery in speaking about her experiences inspired many to reach out for help. Emma is a mum and grandmother and, in addition to supporting her whānau, Emma cares for two women with additional needs. Emma's lived experience makes her a valuable voice in our Executive Committee, as she perseveres with her learning journey about continence and continues to seek medical solutions and support.

Laura Fear
CEO, Continence NZ