

NEW ZEALAND NEWS

As we approach the end of 2024 we are in the final stages of several significant projects and planning for the coming year.

CEO Laura Fear moved on to a new role in January, and we have had the acting CEO role in place to allow the organisation time to complete several important projects before commencing recruitment. As these projects are coming to a close, we plan to begin the recruitment process in early 2025.

I would like to thank our small team for their ongoing commitment and dedication during this interim period. Despite having less human resources and an increased workload they have continued to successfully deliver key outcomes and we are very grateful for all that they do for the organisation.

One of the projects nearing completion is our website redesign, which has been a comprehensive undertaking. We have focused on enhancing the user experience and look forward to sharing the finished site with our members and the public in the near future.

Another significant project has been the community review of our pregnancy guide. We released a comprehensive pregnancy guide in late 2023, which has been very well received. We have reviewed feedback from key stakeholders and are making final adjustments with the aim of releasing an updated guide in 2025. The guide has been endorsed by the Aotearoa New Zealand branch of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and we are very grateful for their support as we progress this important work.

World Continence Week

Our World Continence Week campaign in June once again featured beloved New Zealand entertainer Jason Gunn. The campaign focused on encouraging New Zealanders to look after their pelvic health, through signing up for our Pelvic Floor Challenge. Participants received daily motivation and tips, and our comprehensive pelvic floor guide was shared widely.

Jason's engaging and inspiring campaign video reached over 71,000 people, and we are very grateful for his ongoing involvement with our work.

We would like to thank our members for their ongoing support, we truly appreciate the effort that went into promoting and sharing the campaign to raise awareness, reduce the stigma, and encourage help seeking. The campaign had over 650 online shares and comments, and 534 people signed up for the challenge. Many of these were people supporting a larger group, and we also appreciate the time taken by those who shared their feedback about the campaign. We were delighted with the positive response and look forward to our 2025 campaign. You can find the full details of the campaign on our website.

Education

With funding from the IHC Foundation we have

developed a webinar series to support disabled students, their teachers and support staff, parents, carers, and whānau (family) around New Zealand.

The webinars have been released weekly and are also available on demand on the education page of our website. We are very fortunate to have the expertise of our wonderful former colleague, Continence Nurse Lisa Smith from the Children's Continence Service, who ran these webinars on our behalf.

This webinar series joins a range of other courses and webinars on our website. We encourage members and non-members to access these via the education page, at no cost.

Health Promotion and Resources

We have recently completed an education programme with three special schools for disabled students in New Zealand, supporting a total of 675 disabled students and their whānau. Lisa Smith also led this project for us, and the project was overwhelmingly well received. We have been inundated with requests for support from other special schools, who will be well supported by our latest webinar series with Lisa.

Our team has been working to promote our education and support to organisations and community groups around the country, which has resulted in significant uptake of our online courses and webinars. We are thankful for the positive feedback we continue to receive, which assists as we work towards the development of new resources.

The help and support section of our website now has several guides available, including a guide for carers, tamariki (children) and teens, and a bowel health guide.

Strategic Planning

It is an increasingly difficult period for our health sector, with immense challenges, and our Executive Committee are reviewing our strategic plan in September to ensure that we are well placed to continue to serve our members and the New Zealand public through these difficult times. Our education offerings remain important, along with our ongoing health promotion and advocacy.

Louise Judd

Acting CEO, Continence NZ