

TE WHETU MARAMA

# NOVA

THE OFFICIAL STAFF NEWSLETTER FOR THE AUCKLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD

**It's time to roll up our sleeves**  
**get the free influenza vaccine**



**Inside this issue!**

- ACH performs on world stage
- HPV programme for Auckland schools
- Smiles all round for new clinic

## Comment from the chief executive

### Keeping well

Every year, GPs and hospitals see numerous cases of illness and disease that may have been avoided through preventative measures. This is why it is critically important that we all strive to keep ourselves well by protecting our health both now and for the future.



As the summer months draw to a close and we edge towards the season of colds and flu, there are simple things that healthcare workers and the wider community can do to protect their health and the health of those around them.

We know, for example, that vaccination among older people against influenza is associated with a reduction in the risk of hospitalisations for heart disease, cerebrovascular disease and pneumonia or influenza, as well as the risk from death from all these causes during influenza season.

We also know that outbreaks of influenza in hospitals are associated with low rates of vaccination levels among healthcare workers, and higher vaccination levels among staff have been associated with a lower incidence of influenza. Annual influenza vaccinations have been shown to reduce the rate of staff illness related absences, which is certainly helpful during the busy winter periods.

Another example of protecting our health through preventative methods is that of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) immunisation programme that aims to prevent young women from developing cervical cancer. This immunisation programme has been extended to now include girls in years 8 and above (see page 2) and immunisation will begin in schools throughout the ADHB region this month.

By reducing future health needs, preventative care can also deliver cost savings that can be reinvested back into the health system.

For example, due to HPV, there are approximately 30,000 abnormal smears and 27,000 colposcopy visits each year which require further follow up. The HPV vaccine has the potential to decrease these numbers, reducing the burden of disease that HPV places on both the individual and the health sector.

Preventing the occurrence of infections in the healthcare setting is also a priority for the health sector, due to the disease and economic burden that these infections create.

The Minister of Health's Quality Improvement Committee has developed a National Quality Improvement Programme, which includes the Infection Prevention and Control programme for improving the prevention and control of infection in healthcare facilities.

The ADHB is the lead district health board for this work and we are responsible for providing a national framework for the adoption of World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines for hand hygiene, developing and piloting guidelines on reducing catheter-related bloodstream infections and improving surveillance of surgical and procedural site infections.

International evidence is clear that improved hand hygiene practices can substantially reduce the likelihood of patients contracting a healthcare acquired infection.

All these preventative measures, as well as many others, are key pieces of work which have substantial benefits for improving health outcomes at a reduced health spend for all New Zealanders.

Garry Smith  
Chief Executive

ISSN 1178-5373 (print)  
ISSN 1178-5381 (online)



The NOVA Awards were introduced in 2005 as one way to recognise employees and teams whose own values align with the four ADHB adopted values: Integrity; Respect; Innovation; and Effectiveness.

The NOVA Award works by nomination – anyone can submit a story about an individual or team who has demonstrated our values 'above and beyond' that expected in the workplace. Nominations are then reviewed by a committee, and worthy nominations are put forward to receive an award at one of the six monthly State of the Nation addresses.

By encouraging stories to be told, ADHB hopes to uncover the stars that glow within our midst. NOVA is the name given to a star when it is born, and its Maori translation Te Whetu Marama means 'Bright Star'.

For more information on the Nova Awards, or to make a nomination, visit the Nova Awards page under CEO News on the intranet.

## Nova commits to staff focus

From April 2009, *Nova* will be refocused on to its primary function – a staff magazine. In the past *Nova* has served a number of audiences but we have made the decision to bring it back to its roots and keep its focus simple – staff, staff achievements and staff successes.

This change will mean we will refine the number of articles to ensure they all meet our audience's needs and this will also result in a reduction to eight pages. While not the primary goal, in the current economic climate this is a fiscally responsible decision. As one of the ADHB's three key goals that guide all the decisions we make is to 'live within our means', we feel the decision to reduce the pages – not the quality – reflects this goal at this time.

We are proud to produce *Nova* each month and understand it is of value to staff and an important part of our culture. While the pages of the magazine are to be reduced, we want to reassure you that the amount of positive and informative stories will not be reduced – neither will the quality be compromised.

Due to space constraints we may have to run some articles at a shorter length, we hope in future to be able run in-depth stories on our intranet when appropriate and will provide links to enable you to easily view them.

*Nova* will continue to be available to ADHB staff and ex-staff but will not be as widely distributed to other organisations.

For anyone who would like to offer feedback on *Nova* and the stories it contains please contact [ADHBcommunications@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:ADHBcommunications@adhb.govt.nz).

# HPV immunisation programme rolls out to schools across Auckland

Around 13,000 young women living within the ADHB region, in school years 8 and above will be eligible to receive the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine Gardasil through a new school-based campaign.

The HPV immunisation programme, which aims to protect future generations of women from HPV infection and the development of cervical cancer, is being rolled out to 78 schools across the ADHB region this month.

In February, consent forms were sent to parents informing them about the vaccine and requiring them to either decline or agree to their daughter having the HPV vaccination at school.

"Immunisation in schools begins on 16 March. Over the next two years ADHB has 15 full time nurses dedicated purely to ensuring that young women in the school environment truly understand what the HPV vaccine protects against, as well as administering the vaccine to those who have opted to have it at school," says ADHB's schools based HPV programme coordinator, Natalie Desmond.

The school campaign is part of a national 'catch-up' programme that aims to vaccinate girls from 12 to 18 years of age.

"In the first year of implementation, school years 8, 12 and 13 will be offered the vaccine, with years 8, 10, 11 and 12 following in 2010. From the third year onwards, the school-based immunisation programme will only be immunising year 8 girls," she adds.

"Offering vaccination in schools brings the immunisation directly to young women, making it easier for them to access it. Immunisation programmes at schools tend to have a high success rate, which is great news for the fight against cervical cancer."

ADHB also hopes the roll out of the HPV immunisation programme in schools will encourage more Maori and Pacific girls to have the vaccine.

"Maori and Pacific women have a higher incidence of cervical cancer so this protection is particularly important in trying to reducing health inequalities," says Natalie.

"We know, for instance, that for Maori women cervical cancer is the third most common cancer and it is often only caught in the later stages. For New Zealand women overall, it is the ninth most common cancer.

"This vaccine offers much hope to reduce such rates, as well



The HPV Programme team shows that it only takes three shots!

as preventing the emotional and physical impact that cervical cancer or pre-cancerous abnormalities has on women and their loved ones.

"It really is an opportunity for all young women to proactively protect their future health and wellbeing," she adds.

Those who have already left school or who do not choose to receive the HPV vaccination at school can still go to their GP to receive the vaccine. When choosing whether to have it at school or with a GP, it is important for all three doses to be administered at the same place.

## Did you know?

- Only some strains of HPV can lead to cancer. HPV strain 16 is the most common high-risk type and is found in approximately 60% of all cervical cancers. HPV strain 18 accounts for approximately 10% of cervical cancers.
- Each year in New Zealand, approximately 160 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer, and 60 women die from it
- Over 99% of all cervical cancer is linked to infection with HPV
- Due to HPV, each year there are also around 30,000 abnormal smears and 27,000 colposcopy visits which require extensive follow-up and invasive treatment

## 2009 sees highest intake of graduate nurses to the ADHB

The ADHB has warmly welcomed 118 graduate nurses to the organisation for 2009. They will be working in areas such as adult and child health, mental health and primary healthcare settings.

The ADHB supports graduates through formal, nationally recognised graduate programme frameworks; specifically the Nursing Entry to Practice (NETP) Programme, NETP Expansion Programme and the New Graduate Mental Health Nursing: Entry to Specialty Practice Programme.

"Through these programmes graduates are offered a permanent position within a specific clinical setting," says

ADHB recruitment consultant Darren McLean, adding that graduates are provided with benefits such as precetorship, clinical study days and post-graduate study options.

"The ADHB is seen as an employer of choice for graduating nurses for a number of reasons. We are home to the leading teaching hospital in New Zealand; we are the country's major tertiary referral hospital; and we offer a tremendous breadth of clinical experience for graduates."

Graduates also appreciate the comprehensive orientation and familiarisation programmes that are provided by nurse educators, according to Darren.

# ADHB urges all staff to fight the flu this winter



The ADHB is encouraging all staff to protect themselves, patients and colleagues this winter by having their free influenza (flu) shot for 2009.

According to the ADHB consultant occupational physician, Dr Tony Chew, annual immunisation is required for two reasons: protection lessens over time so last year's jab won't offer much protection; and, the strains of influenza virus circulating each year may change.

He adds that a new virulent strain of the 'Brisbane flu' is doing its rounds and it is important for Kiwis to try and protect themselves against this.

"As health professionals we should try to get vaccinated to decrease the risk of passing on the infection to patients," says Tony.

"It takes about two weeks for the vaccine to give full protection so we'd encourage employees to vaccinate sooner rather than later."

The ADHB employees who should consider being vaccinated include:

- Physicians, nurses, receptionists, and staff who have contact with patients in hospital or outpatient settings, including medical emergency response workers
- People who work in nursing homes and chronic-care facilities who have contact with patients or residents
- People in assisted living and other residences for people in high-risk groups
- People who provide home care to others in high-risk groups.

The New Zealand Ministry of Health and authorities such as the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, also recommend that healthcare staff receive the influenza vaccine, adding that New Zealanders may be particularly vulnerable to the virus this year due to low immunisation rates and several mild flu seasons.

**The free vaccine is available to all ADHB employees free of charge from Monday, 30 March 2009.**

## ADHB Influenza Vaccination Timetable - 2009

<p><b>Monday</b> 30 March Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Tuesday</b> 31 March Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Wednesday</b> 1 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b> 2 April GCC, Level 1, Rec. J 0700 - 1600</p>	<p><b>Friday</b> 3 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>
<p><b>Monday</b> 6 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Tuesday</b> 7 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Wednesday</b> 8 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b> 9 April GCC, Level 1, Reception J 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Friday</b> 10 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>
<p><b>Monday</b> 27 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Tuesday</b> 28 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Wednesday</b> 29 April Transition Lounge, ACH 0700 - 1900</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b> 30 April GCC, Level 1, Reception J 0700 - 1600</p>	<p><b>More dates and locations will be added shortly so keep checking NOVA and NOVA noticeboard for updates.</b></p>



### Flu vaccination facts

- 20% - 40% of healthcare workers in New Zealand receive an influenza vaccination each year
- This year's influenza vaccine contains a Brisbane H3N2-like strain, an H1N1-like strain and a B strain
- The vaccine is generally well tolerated and most people have no reaction to the injection. Occasionally the area where the injection is given may redden or feel sore and, in the worst case scenario, people may feel unwell for a day or two.

### Flu myths

- 'Natural immunity' is a myth
- An influenza vaccine will not give you influenza