

## **1 Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction - an opportunity for patients with chronic disease**

Psychologists from Waikato District Health Board and The Psychology Centre are undertaking a study into the health benefits of "mindfulness training" for people suffering from chronic disease. Funded by the Waikato Medical Research Foundation, it is the first study of its kind in New Zealand. Based on a concept developed in the USA, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) programmes have proliferated in health centres and hospitals through the USA and Europe. MBSR programmes aim to teach people to act "mindfully", that is, to **choose** how to respond in stressful situations, rather than **automatically reacting** to them. This has implications for how they cope and manage chronic illness.

The eight-week group training (2-2.5 hours per week and one full day) is quite a commitment but, according to increasing amount of research, is probably worth it. MBSR has now been used with a wide variety of chronic health and psychological problems. Studies have demonstrated improvement in pain ratings, better outcomes from medical treatment, better immune functioning and improvement in psychological functioning. However more research is needed.

This is the first study of MBSR with people suffering from chronic illness in New Zealand and is for people who suffer chronic pain, Graves Disease (in remission), Diabetes and Heart Disease. If you have patients who suffer from any of these conditions and would like to refer them, please contact the lead investigator Philippa Thomas, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, The Psychology Centre, PO Box 4423, Hamilton. There is no cost to the patient.

## **2 Mothercraft Unit Seeks Help**

Due to staff shortages, the mothercraft unit will operate with 5 rather than 8 beds until early November. They are grateful for your assistance in helping them to work within this constraint when considering potential referrals. Please consider whether other services might be able to assist your patients e.g. midwives for babies under 6 weeks of age, the Family Centre or Plunket. It may also be difficult for them to accommodate mothers who have had a previous admission for a similar problem. Since the cut off age for infants with a sleep problem is 1 year of age and because of the current waiting list, it is unlikely that infants referred when they are more

than 9 months of age will be able to be accommodated.

Your help and support during this time is greatly appreciated.

## **3 Welcome to....**

**Dr Pierre De Villiers** has joined the general medicine department, having spent the last 4 years in the Bay of Plenty. He will be at Waikato Hospital for the next 12 months with a particular focus on respiratory medicine.

**Dr George Waxter** hails from the USA and has also joined the general medicine department. His original degrees were in Biomechanical and Electrical Engineering, followed by a master's degree in Electronic and Computer Engineering. After a 12 year career in engineering and teaching computer science in Maryland, he changed tack and went to medical school. He worked in various parts of the USA and in Timaru before arriving in the Waikato.

Outside medicine he enjoys outdoor activities, especially hiking, and is also an ordained minister in the Universal Life Church.

## **Cellphone survey**

In June, Waikato Hospital brought in a new acute referral process designed to enable direct communication and transfer of care between GP and specialty registrar. The new process gives GPs a single telephone number to call, with calls being put through to the appropriate on-call registrar's cellphone. At the time it was introduced, the decision was made to evaluate the process after a three month trial. To that end, a brief questionnaire is included with this Outreach. It would be much appreciated if you would please take a minute to complete the survey. A similar document has been sent to all registrars. Health Waikato will forward you a copy of the evaluation, and any subsequent recommendations, as soon as possible.

Please return your responses via fax on **07 839 8824** by Friday, 30 September 2005. Alternatively, please phone or email Mark Watson, surgical services operations manager: 07 839 8899 ext 7566  
021 471798  
Email: [watsonma@waikatodhb.govt.nz](mailto:watsonma@waikatodhb.govt.nz).

Thank you for your assistance.

Clinic	Category	Waiting Time
Audiology	Children 9-32 mths	2 months
	Under 17 years	2-3 months
	Children's hearing aids	4 weeks
	Adult diagnostic tests	4 months
	Adult hearing aids	6 months
	Central auditory processing test	12 months
Breast Care	Urgent	3 weeks
	Semi-urgent *BCC Imaging	10-12 months 2 weeks
Cardiac Surgery	Urgent	1-3 weeks
	Semi-urgent	3-6 weeks
Cardiology	Urgent	1-2 months
	Semi-urgent	2-9 months
	Routine	9-12 months
Colposcopy	Invasive	Within 7 days
	High grade	4 weeks
	Low grade	26 weeks +
	Non cervical	26 weeks +
Dental	Urgent	24 hours
	Semi-urgent	3 weeks
	Routine	2 months
Dermatology (1) Fax urgent referrals to 07 839 8670	Urgent	24 hours
	Semi-urgent Routine	6 weeks 6 months
Paediatric Dermatology		7 months
Hands		2 months
Dermatology Lesion Clinic	Urgent	24 hours
	Routine	6 months
Diabetes Consultant (2)	Urgent	3-4 months
	Semi-urgent	5-6 months
	Routine	6 months +
Diabetes Nurse Educator	Urgent	Within 7 days
	Semi-urgent	Within 6 weeks
Endocrinology	Urgent	1-2 months
	Semi-urgent	2-6 months
	Routine	9-12 months
Endoscopy/Colonoscopy	Medical	4-6 weeks
	Surgical	4-6 weeks 4-6 weeks 24 months
ENT	Urgent	1-3 weeks
	Semi-urgent (children)	Up to 6 months
	Semi-urgent (adults)	Up to 8 months
Gastro-enterology	Urgent	2-4 weeks
	Semi-urgent	2-6 weeks
General Medicine	Urgent	1-2 weeks
	Semi-urgent	2-4 weeks
	Routine	2-3 months
General Surgery	Urgent	1-4 weeks
	Semi urgent	3-5 months
	Routine	11-12 months
Gynaecology	Urgent	2 weeks
	Semi-urgent	3 months
	Routine	6-7 months
Haematology	Urgent	2-8 weeks
	Semi-urgent	6-4 weeks
	Routine	4-10 months
	DVT	4 months
Maxillo-facial	Urgent	Within 24 hours
	Semi-urgent	Within 3 weeks
	Routine	3 months
Neurology	Urgent	1-3 months
	Semi-urgent	3-10 months
	EMG urgent	1-4 months
	Routine	4-6 months
	EEG urgent routine	2-8 weeks 2-6 months

Clinic	Category	Waiting Time
Oncology (medical and radiation) Medical	Priority 1	1-2 days
	Priority 2	5-10 working days 15-20 working days
	Priority 3	
Radiation	Priority 1	1-2 days
	Priority 2	5-10 working days
	Priority 3	35-45 working days
Ophthalmology	Urgent	1 month
	Urgent laser	1-3 weeks
	Semi-urgent – Children	6 months
	Semi-urgent – Adults	11 months
	Semi-urgent (diabetic) Minor Operation Clinic	1 month 12 months
Orthopaedic	General	Under 6 months
	Back pain	Up to 8 months
	Paediatrics	Up to 7 months
	Paediatric Gait Clinic	1-4 weeks
Paediatric Medicine	Urgent	2-3 weeks
	Semi-urgent	2 months
	Routine	2-3 months
Paediatric Surgical	Urgent	1 week
	Semi-urgent	Within 2 weeks
	Routine	3 weeks
Pain clinic	Urgent	Up to 3 months
	Semi-urgent	Up to 5 months
	Routine	6 months
Physiotherapy	General musculoskeletal	5 days (urgent) 6-8 weeks (routine) 2-3 weeks
	Respiratory	4 weeks
	Rheumatology	2 days (urgent)
	Women's Health	2-3 weeks (routine)
Plastics (1) Fax immediate/acute referrals to 07 839 8670	Urgent	2 weeks
	Semi-urgent	4 months
	Routine	6 months +
Plastics Lesion clinic	Urgent	2 weeks
	Semi-urgent	3 months
	Routine	6 months +
Rehabilitation	Day Clinic	1-3 weeks
Renal	Urgent	1-4 weeks
	Semi-urgent	2-4 months
	Routine	4-6 months
Respiratory	Urgent	1-4 weeks
	Semi-urgent	1-2 months
	Routine	4-6 months
Rheumatology (3)	Urgent	1-4 weeks
	Semi-urgent	1-2 months
	Routine	2-4 months
Thyroid	Urgent	2-4 weeks
	Semi-Urgent	4 months
	Routine	4-6 months
Ultrasound	Urgent	2 weeks
	Semi-urgent	7-8 months
	Routine	12-15 months
Urology		Within 2 months
Vascular	Urgent	1-4 weeks
Vascular Surgery	Urgent	1-4 weeks
	Semi-urgent	2-4 months
	Routine	4-6 months
<b>Adult Mental Health Waiting Times</b>		
Community mental health team	Crisis referrals Non-crisis/routine	Within 24 hours Within 10 days

- 1 Immediate & urgent dermatology/plastics cases must be discussed with the specialist or registrar to allow appropriate prioritisation.
- 2 All urgent diabetes referrals can be seen on the same day.
- 3 All urgent rheumatology cases should be discussed with the rheumatologist.
- 4 Carotid studies are now being done by the vascular laboratory.
- 5 OPHTHALMOLOGY – PLEASE NOTE FAXED REFERRALS ARE NOT ACCEPTED UNLESS THE PATIENT IS ACUTE AND YOU HAVE DISCUSSED THE CASE WITH THE REGISTRAR. ON YOUR ACUTE FAX REFERRAL PLEASE ADVISE THE NAME OF THE DOCTOR WITH WHOM YOU DISCUSSED THE CASE.