

# Waikato Diabetes Clinic shares the load

When Huntly woman Gayle Bruce was doxed in to the 'Waikato Diabetes Police' by her general practitioner, it was with great trepidation that she agreed to an appointment.

Having moved to Huntly from Auckland three years ago, Ms Bruce's Auckland-based family doctor knew she wasn't exactly a 'diabetic angel' and worried that she wasn't looking after herself.

But Ms Bruce had not had a good experience with support from her previous clinic and had only attended three clinics in the 10 years since she was diagnosed as having Type II Diabetes.

However, since visiting the Waikato Diabetes Clinic for the first time in November, she has had a change of attitude and is ready to start making her body work for her.

"The positive reinforcement I received from the staff at the Waikato Hospital clinic was amazing," said Ms Bruce.

"They have been thorough, kind and compassionate, which is something I hadn't encountered with my clinics before.

"They gave me so much education about Diabetes and have dispelled a lot of misconceptions I had about what I could and couldn't eat."

She said the encouragement of the staff has not made Diabetes something she wants to ignore anymore, but something she can work with.

"They made me realise the importance of exercise and I now use my treadmill three times per day. I also enjoy swimming and aqua jogging as it is painless, weightless exercise."

She said she can still eat the food she enjoys such as fruit, but now steers clear of takeaways and watches her carbohydrate intake – something she didn't know to do before.

Huntly-based Diabetes educator Howie Brown has also been a source of support and encouragement to Ms Bruce and she said he is on her door-



**UP, UP AND AWAY:** Just a handful of the "awesome team of professionals from the Waikato Diabetes Clinic". (From left) Susie Whitcombe, Julia Staines, Vikki Lowe-Reid, PeiPei Allen and Louise Wilde, who took part in the release of 148 yellow and black helium balloons at Waikato Hospital in November to mark the first day of Diabetes Awareness Week.

step whenever she has needs him.

"They are just a great bunch of people who work there, that I have complete confidence in," she said.

"They have made me feel like we are working

for control of my diabetes – and that is something I had never felt before coming to Waikato.

"I would encourage anyone who might be at risk of Type II Diabetes to go and have a check up because it can be very hard to know.

"And if you have been diagnosed, don't be afraid because you will no doubt get the same positive reinforcement and support that I have enjoyed from the awesome team of professionals at the Waikato Diabetes Clinic."

## Woman of many talents joins Waikato District Health Board

Being nominated as a Waikato District Health Board member came as a "pleasant surprise" for Ngaruawahia woman Glenda Raumatī.

Having been nominated by a friend, the first she heard about it was when she was asked to be a candidate. The role is not an easy one, but Ms Raumatī has worn more than one hat where health is concerned, for many years. In addition to her new role on the board, she is also the manager of Maori health service Nga Miro, based at Turangawaewae Marae which serves the entire North Waikato area.

Prior to being named service manager in 2000, Ms Raumatī worked as a health promoter for the same organisation. But it's her new role that has got her excited at the prospect of far-reaching influence.

"My first thought as a Waikato DHB member was one of awe at the sheer scale of the organisation," said Ms Raumatī.

"I don't think people realise how large and

complex the Waikato DHB is – or how many functions it performs."

Although, she is quick to add that the mammoth scale doesn't faze her.

"I didn't go to that first meeting and get worried – I got excited," she said.

"It's an exciting thing to be a part of. It's amazing to be able to make some sort of contribution to the governance of healthcare in the greater Waikato, as well as the northern area."

Maori health has always been a particular passion for Ms Raumatī, so it is no wonder her main goal as a board member is to see health disparities reduced – particularly for Maori.

"Reducing inequalities is a Ministry of Health objective as well, so to be in line with the bigger picture and make a contribution is brilliant."

Ms Raumatī loves her role with Nga Miro and is glad she can stay in Ngaruawahia where she grew up, having attended Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Bernard Fergusson and later Waikato Diocesan

School for Girls. She then finished her education at the University of Waikato where she graduated with a Bachelor of Social Science, majoring in political science in 1993.

"I have loved growing up, living and working in the Waikato," said Ms Raumatī.

"I was raised on Turangawaewae Marae and have always been actively involved there.

"We grew up hearing about all the work done by Princess Te Puea, who was a champion of many causes including public health work, so it is great to work along the same vein as her at Nga Miro and now further afield as well."

Ms Raumatī, who is of Ngati Mutunga and Waikato descent, is also an active member of many other community organisations such as Te Kapa Haka o Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Te Reo Irirangi o Tainui and Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Bernard Fergusson Boards of Trustees, Project Energise, Waikato PHO and Work and Income NZ Benefits Review Committee.



**APPOINTED:** Ngaruawahia Maori health service Nga Miro manager Glenda Raumatī, is ready for action as one of Waikato District Health Board's newest appointed members.

### Who is most at risk of Type II Diabetes?

A healthy lifestyle is the best way to reduce the risk of developing Type II Diabetes.

Although there are a number of risk factors responsible for the development of pre-diabetes (a blood glucose level higher than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed as Diabetes) and Type II, it is strongly associated with obesity.

Obese people are 10 times more likely to develop Type II than a person of normal weight and account for 85 per cent of all people with Diabetes. Pre-Diabetes may develop into Type II within 5-10 years if left untreated.

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