

## Smokefree youth dance it out for their peers

Tomorrow's 2008 Hauraki Youth Fest promises to be full of both entertainment and education – Emma Hawkins and Te Rina Ormsby will make sure of that.

The Thames teenagers' dance group SEQUENCE\*, will perform at the festival, in the hope of inspiring young people to live the healthy, productive lives they themselves have.

The Hauraki Youth Fest is a part Health Waikato-sponsored event that celebrates national Youth Week (May 26-June 1).

Youth Week is a national initiative that celebrates all things positive about youth.

Emma (17) and Te Rina (16) relish any chance they get to relay positive messages to the community about, and to youth. One of their preferred ways of doing this is dance.

Emma and Te Rina recreated SEQUENCE\* late last year, and after four public performances, the 10-strong "pop-locking, krumping, hip hop and any-kind-of-dance-that-feels-good" crew, are ready to perform in front of all their peers and the community at the Thames Civic Centre tomorrow.

Waikato District Health Board health promoter Clarke Koopu says the girls are great role mod-

els for other youth, and work in advocacy roles in various community organisations such as the Phat Pak, and a local community youth forum.

"And most importantly, Emma and Te Rina live healthy and active lives themselves and are great role models for their peers," said Mr Koopu.

Tomorrow's Youth Fest coincides with World Smokefree Day, which is something the girls say they are strong supporters of.

Te Rina, a Thames High School student, has an interest in all sports, but particularly basketball, rugby and touch.

While Emma, mother of 18-month-old Cameron, is currently studying health education via correspondence.

"We wouldn't be able to do all the things we do if we smoked," said Emma.

"I would never want to smoke around my son, and there is no way we could put the effort we do into dance and sporting activities, if we were smokers."

"I think it's great that the Youth Fest also offers the opportunity to raise awareness about the positives of being Smokefree, and provide some education about the dangers of smoking to youth as well," said Te Rina.



**DANCING FOR HEALTH:** Emma Hawkins (left) and Te Rina Ormsby will dance for their peers at the Hauraki Youth Fest tomorrow.

Although Emma is small in stature and young in years, she said she has been conscious of the importance of positive role modelling for youth for as long as she can remember.

"My dad is a social worker, so I guess he has always inspired me to be aware of what is going on around me, and when I looked, I didn't really like what I saw happening with youth in this area," said Emma.

"There are positive outlets for youth wherever you are, and if there aren't then you have to create them, which is why we created SEQUENCE\*."

"And we are always willing to take new members," adds Te Rina.

To see SEQUENCE\* in action, head down to the Civic Centre tomorrow, from 1-5pm.

See the advertisement on this page for more details.



**Craig CLIMO**

## Keeping you informed

In my nine months as Waikato District Health Board's chief executive officer, I have visited Thames Hospital, along with Health Waikato's other rural hospitals, and must say I am very impressed with what I see.

I am very aware Waikato DHB is largely rural – 60 per cent of our residents live outside of Hamilton – so it is important for me that these people are well catered for where health is concerned. You are the majority.

During these visits, I was only able to meet and talk with a small percentage of people involved in your community.

So I would like to share with you, our visions and thoughts on the short and long-term provision of health services in your area

District health boards have a list of statutory objectives and functions as long as your arm, but to keep things simple, I have broken these down into a couple of overarching goals; to improve the health of the community, and to reduce or eliminate inequalities in health status between groups in our communities.

The single biggest thing we can do is tackle the cause of 70 per cent of all health expenditure and 80 per cent of deaths in New Zealand – chronic conditions.

Chronic conditions are predominantly lifestyle related disease that people have for years or decades.

These conditions include type two diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

Their causes lie in smoking, lack of physical activity and unhealthy diet. Chronic conditions are the biggest cause in inequalities between Maori, Pacific people and other ethnicities. They are an epidemic and western health services face an overrun.

New Zealand as a whole faces an ageing workforce, and our health sector faces a workforce shortage, and a rapidly growing health sector at that.

About 18 months ago, national chief executives asked the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research to model workforce growth.

Based on their medium population growth projection, they estimate by 2021, that New Zealand will need another 23,000 health professionals. This is a 35 per cent increase in just 13 years. Attracting and retaining staff numbers will be quite a challenge.

This means we need to change the way we provide these services, as well as the way we use them.

Primary health organisations are taking a proactive 'health promotion' role, in a bid to counteract chronic conditions.

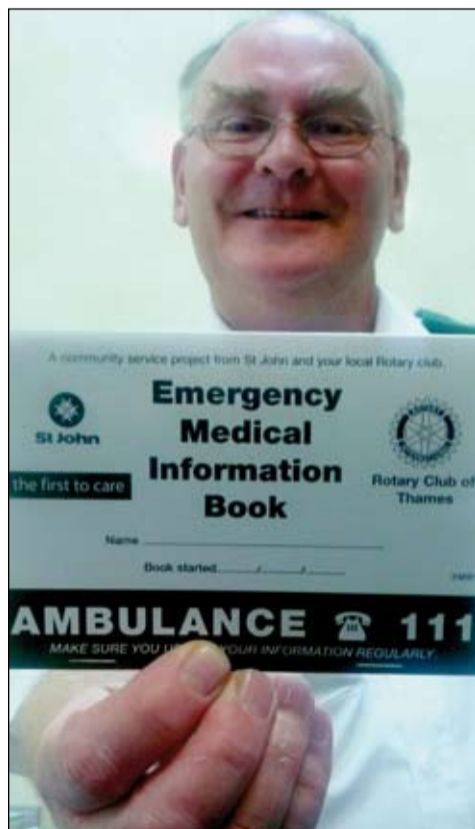
We cannot afford to be reactive where any health issue is concerned and health education becomes increasingly imperative.

There is already a lot of work taking place behind the scenes in various Waikato DHB communities, one of which starts in Thames today.

This is of course, the new way in which you seek after hours' medical care.

Instead of your GP being on-call at all hours of the day, the implementation of a telephone triage nursing system means you can still call Thames Medical Centre, Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki and Sealey House Medical Centre, after 5pm and your call will be dealt with appropriately and quickly.

This initiative is just one of the ways in which we can try to attract more GPs to rural areas, and epitomises what we mean by changing the way in which we deliver sustainable services.



**LIFE SAVER:** St John Thames Coromandel Hauraki district operations manager Bruce MacDonald, introduced the increasingly popular Emergency Medical Information Booklets to his community last year.

## Medical record books prove popular

The increasing popularity of the Emergency Medical Information Booklet has meant a second reprint is in order.

The Emergency Medical Information Booklet is a handy, pocket-sized book for people who suffer an illness or condition which requires ongoing medication.

It was developed by Northland Rotary Club and their local St John branch.

However, St John Thames Coromandel Hauraki district operations manager Bruce MacDonald, heard about the booklet's success up north and asked Thames St John if they would take it on as a joint initiative.

"Rotary really embraced the concept and provided funding. It was well supported by Pinnacle, Thames Medical Centre and Thames Hospital as well," said Mr MacDonald.

The booklets allow people to record their medication details, medical history and conditions, GP contacts, and other useful health information that may be required by St John in an emergency.

"Many of the calls we respond to are from people in immense pain or in a state where they are not able to communicate effectively or quickly," said Mr MacDonald.

"These symptoms are typical of people with such conditions as diabetes.

"We encourage people to get the booklets

filled out when they visit their GP and put them on the fridge, or somewhere we will easily find it."

He said the books had been extremely popular by those who use them, and the feedback from St John staff is that they were incredibly useful to their roles.

"We had a situation in Mercury Bay where two officers arrived to the home of a patient who was not able to communicate with them upon arrival.

"Luckily, the patient had their Emergency Medical Information Booklet up on the fridge and the staff were able to promptly see what meds the patient was on and treat them accurately for their condition."

Mr MacDonald said there was a perception among the community that the booklets are targeted at the elderly, but says this is not the case.

"These booklets have been designed for anyone and everyone with a medical history, and for anyone who might require the care of St John," said Mr MacDonald.

"Unfortunately, that could be anyone, at any time."

The Emergency Medical Information Booklets are available for a mere gold coin donation to cover printing costs, and can be obtained by anyone who needs one, or on behalf of a family member or friend.



**CELEBRATING YOUTH WEEK 2008**  
31st May 2008 @ 1pm-5pm  
Venue: Thames Civic Centre (opposite Goldfields)  
Cost: Gold coin entry  
(children must be accompanied by an adult)

**Live Hauraki youth entertainment**  
Competitions/giveaways







