

Health Targets:

Smokers in Hospital get Help to Quit

The number of Timaru Hospital patients who are offered help to quit smoking has shot up in the past year.

Hospital staff are giving smokers the chance to quit and improve their health. They are also working towards meeting the government's "Better Help for Smokers to Quit" health target.

Latest results show 75 percent of patients were offered help to quit smoking between April and June. This is a big improvement on 10 percent recorded last year. The government's target is 80 percent.

The results include hospital inpatients and those patients presenting at the emergency department, day stay and other hospital-based interventions.

General manager of secondary services Christine Nolan says the marked improvement is due to increased efforts by front-line staff to identify patients who are smokers and refer them to the hospital's Smokefree Team, and also to better data collection.

"I think staff have been doing a great job for some time now - reaching out to patients who are smokers. At first those efforts weren't necessarily reflected in the data we were able to collect, but we are confident that this is occurring now," she says.

"This quarter's results show the effort and focus that staff throughout the hospital have placed on this health target. We know that health outcomes are better for patients who can be supported to quit smoking."

A similar initiative is underway for GP patients, although it will also benefit from improved data collection, according to Fiona Pimm, SCDHB's general manager of primary and community services.

"Patients are already being supported by their GPs and general practice teams to quit smoking, though approaches can differ between practices.

"We are working to ensure practice teams have the appropriate resources to continue good support and follow-up of patients, so when patients are ready to quit they know what help is available and how to access it," she says.

Latest Health Target Results.
Between April and June, 2010 -



75% of hospitalised smokers were provided with advice and help to quit.



97% of patients were admitted, discharged or transferred from the Emergency Department within six hours.



101% of planned elective surgery was provided to patients.



89% of patients needing cancer radiation treatment had this within six weeks of their first specialist assessment.



91% of two-year-olds were fully immunised.



69% of diabetes or cardiovascular patients had good management of their condition.

Sharing Lab Results

The transfer of hospital patients between Timaru and Christchurch will go more smoothly from next month.

TestSafe South is a secure online database that can be used to access patient lab results. Canterbury District Health Board recently introduced TestSafe South, and South Canterbury DHB is working with Canterbury to introduce it next month.

This means laboratory results from tests performed in one area will become immediately available on-line to hospital clinicians working in both Christchurch and Timaru.

There are also plans to use TestSafe South to make test results available to the patient's general practitioner down the track.

Sharing lab results will improve and speed up patient care, especially when patients are transferred by helicopter from Timaru Hospital to Christchurch Hospital in an emergency. The results of lab tests carried out at Timaru Hospital will be immediately available to doctors in Christchurch.

It will also help in situations where Christchurch patients are treated at Timaru Hospital, or South Canterbury patients are referred to specialists in Christchurch for further advice or treatment.

South Canterbury DHB chief medical officer Bill Taine says that up to now, doctors and nurses only had some of the test results available to them.

"The value of having the full picture of a patient's tests in front of a doctor or nurse at the point of care is huge," he says. "It will lead to more appropriate care and less duplication of lab tests."

How Alcohol Affects Our Developing Brain

The Brainwave Trust, WAVE and Community & Public Health invite you to a presentation on how alcohol use affects the developing brain of young people.

September 6, 7.30pm, Free
Grosvenor Hotel, 26 Cains Tce, Timaru
Ph 687 2600 to secure a seat

Family Advisor Mental Health



Margerie Gould is the new family advisor for Timaru Psychiatric Services. Part of her role is to represent the needs of family members, whanau and people caring for mental health clients. She does this by providing a family perspective to the mental health team when planning, developing and evaluating the service.

Margerie provides education to staff on the importance of involving families and how to best go about this.

She also surveys families who have used the Timaru Psychiatric Service. Results are used to drive ongoing development.

Family members of mental health clients can contact Margerie if they have any questions about mental health services. She is available on Wednesdays and Thursdays, phone 03 684 1337 or email mgould@timhosp.co.nz.

Study Day to Welcome New Paediatricians

SCDHB's public health nurses are hosting a "Community Paediatric Study Day" on September 17, in the Timaru Hospital Education Centre, from 9am to 4:30pm.

The day is aimed at agencies and services that work with children and families in our community.

It is mainly about networking and developing relationships with one another, but also provides an opportunity to welcome South Canterbury DHB's two new paediatricians and introduce them to community workers.

This is a free study day and anyone who is interested in attending is welcome.

Contact Linda Merrilees, phone 03 684 1513 to register your interest, or for more information.

Board Meetings

Health Board and Hospital Advisory Committee
Friday, September 24
Hospital Advisory at 8.30am and Board at 10.30am

All meetings are open to the public and will be held at the Education Centre, Timaru Hospital. Agendas and reports will be available for inspection 48 hours before the meeting on the website at www.scdhb.co.nz or from the SCDHB Administration Building, High Street, via Jenny Williams, personal assistant to the CEO. Draft meeting minutes normally will be available for inspection at the above address seven days after the meeting.

