

across the spectrum

for the people, families and communities of Spectrum Care



Issue: 64 – Spring 2009

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Across the Spectrum is going digital!

As part of achieving Spectrum Care's ongoing vision of 'people with disabilities living great lives', we're constantly looking for opportunities to streamline our activities and provide higher-quality support to our service users. To this end, we're pleased to announce that *Across the Spectrum* will be available via email from August 2009.

Our aim – over time – is for *Across the Spectrum* to become an email-only newsletter, as the change will make more resources available to support our service users in living great lives.

If you'd like to receive *Across the Spectrum* by email, please send your email address to: newsletter@spectrumcare.org.nz, or simply go to our website (www.spectrumcare.org.nz) and join our mailing list in one easy step.



Spectrum Care's 'Showcase' Talent Quest Grand Final

Spectrum Care's 'Showcase' Talent Quest Grand Final was held on Friday 31 July 2009 at the Freeman's Bay Community Hall. The grand finalists were selected from a series of regional heats held throughout June and the standard was uniformly high.

The event was a great success, with spectators and performers alike having a fantastic time.

Popular comedian 'Gish' (aka Justin Hansen) was on hand to provide some comic relief in his role as Master of Ceremonies and the audience hugely appreciated his hilarious routine and musical talent.

We were all thrilled to welcome *Dancing with the Stars'* Jonny Williams and world-champion board sailor Barbara Kendall to the grand final as our celebrity judges. As well as managing his judging responsibilities, Jonny dazzled with his partner Kristie Boyd on the dance floor, putting on a spectacular showcase of their own.

While all our competitors were winners on the day, Hope Tangimai deservedly took top honours for his stirring rendition of the Bob Marley classic 'Picture on the Wall'.

Spectrum Care would like to express heartfelt thanks to Barbara, Jonny, Kristie and Gish.



Workchoice Day 09

For the second year running, Spectrum Care hosted Workchoice Day on Tuesday 19 May. This year, we hosted students from both Otahuhu and Marcellin Colleges.

We're very pleased to be able to offer the colleges this opportunity and the day was a resounding success, with positive feedback received from many of the students.

Launched in 1995 by the Workchoice Trust, Workchoice Day is a programme designed to give Year 12 students career exposure and help them make informed decisions about where they are headed with their careers.

Workchoice Day is held annually on a national basis and offers a link between New Zealand's future workforce and employers, enabling students to gather knowledge firsthand and share experiences of people employed in their field of interest.

To find out more, visit: www.workchoice.co.nz



Events calendar

Spectrum Care's annual Ball will be held on Saturday 17 October 2009 at the Ellerslie Convention Centre. Don't forget to put it in your diaries – it's always a great night out! The theme for this year's Ball is yet to be decided, but more details will be available closer to the date.

The Spectrum Care Art Exhibition will be held here at The Hub (270 Neilson Street, Onehunga) from Wednesday to Friday, 26-28 August 2009. This year's categories are Sunflower, Abstract, Still life, Portrait, Open Photography, Open Craft and Wooden Art. It's a fantastic event and is open to all our people to exhibit their work in all mediums.

Our aim is to have another art exhibition later in the year, with more details available closer to the date.



Spectrum Care's journey towards business excellence

One of Spectrum Care's most important values is the pursuit of 'excellence' and we are driven, in all our activities, to be at the forefront of our field. The better we can be as an organisation, the more able we'll be to achieve our vision of 'people with disabilities living great lives'.

As noted last issue, we're now applying a much more rigorous, internationally recognised standard – the New Zealand Business Excellence quality framework (ie the Criteria for Performance Excellence) – to all aspects of our organisation and activities.

The Criteria for Performance Excellence have been used by thousands of organisations worldwide to improve performance and capability; to help them respond to current challenges; and to address all the complexities of delivering results today while preparing effectively for the future.

We've launched into this new accreditation framework with enthusiasm and energy and, over the past year, have:

- 1 Formally entered the 'Business Excellence' programme as an alternative quality framework
- 2 Redesigned our management structure to incorporate business excellence as a key driver of our activities
- 3 Set up teams to develop world-class systems for each area of our organisation
- 4 Provided training for these teams
- 5 Set up 'terms of reference' and documentation systems for this process
- 6 Trained 'evaluators'
- 7 Obtained an independent evaluative snapshot of where Spectrum Care is currently on the global scale in all sectors

It is our ambition to be ranked not only among the world's best disability service providers, but comprehensively as one of the world's best organisations, and we'll provide updates here as we make progress on this exciting journey.

As we improve as an organisation, so too we improve our ability to deliver the highest-quality support to people who use our services.



Telecom's jelly bean and fish tank giveaway

In mid-October 2008, Spectrum Care's principle sponsor – Telecom – kindly donated a fish tank filled with jelly beans with which to run a competition and giveaway. Stemming from the recent Total Home Plan promotion, Telecom's offer included dividing the jelly beans between our residential and respite houses, and donating the fish tank to one lucky residential house.

Staff and service users were encouraged to visit the Hub (270 Neilson Street, Onehunga) and guess the number of jelly beans in the fish tank, with the closest guess earning the winner a \$100 voucher, supplied by Spectrum Care.

There was much deliberation by entrants and several very complicated 'systems' were applied to the problem of 'guesstimation', with an Excel spreadsheet even applied by one enthusiastic entrant.

Guessing 91,000, Edmundo Maliwat from Little Orchard was closest to the actual total of 90,667 and deservedly took home the \$100 voucher.

Little Orchard at Kumeu was picked as the recipient of the stunning fish tank (pictured) and the residents are enjoying their new addition immensely.

Congratulations to all involved and heartfelt thanks to Telecom for their support.



What's New in the Health and Disability Commissioner's Office?

Tania Thomas has been reappointed in the new role of Deputy Health and Disability Commissioner – Disability. Tania manages all disability-related investigations and will have greater input into the resolution of complaints from the disability sector that do not meet the threshold for an investigation.

Tania sees herself as a person who enjoys making it happen rather than thinking and talking about making it happen. She shares the sense of frustration with many in the sector regarding how long it takes to get meaningful change for even the smallest of changes that would make a world of difference for people with disabilities.

Tania is keen to talk to people in the disability sector, consumers and their families and providers, both managers and frontline staff. She wants to know, if you had her job, what are the two things you would want to make happen?

If there is something on in your community of interest, please invite her to attend.

Disability Initiatives appointment

Hemant Thakkar has recently joined the Auckland office of the Health and Disability Commissioner as Disability Initiatives Manager. Hemant has over 15 years of experience in the disability sector and possesses qualifications in special education, psychology and social work. Hemant's key role is to identify and develop educational resources and initiatives for consumers and providers in the disability sector.

To find out more about the office of the Health and Disabilities Commissioner, visit: www.hdc.org.nz



Spectrum Care launches an all-new website

As part of our ongoing quest to improve our services, better meet the needs of the people we support and better communicate our objectives, we've undertaken a range of initiatives from rebranding and redesigning our service brochures and newsletters *Across the Spectrum* and *Talking Point*, to launching a revitalised Spectrum Care website.

To see how things have changed, visit www.spectrumcare.org.nz.

We hope you share our excitement not only with the new 'look and feel', but also with the enhanced level of functionality and wider variety of content, including the 'What is a disability?' and 'Outcomes philosophy' sections.

We've also added a section called 'How can you help?' with information on sponsorships, bequests and volunteers.

Volunteering provides an opportunity to meet people, learn new skills, share existing skills and give something back to your community.

We're currently in the process of developing our capability to work with volunteers and, while we're not currently able offer specific opportunities to volunteers, we'd be very interested to hear from you if you're interested in volunteering with our organisation.

To register your details, simply go to our website and click the button labelled 'How can you help?'. Under the subheading 'Volunteers', you'll find an online form – fill it out, hit send and you're done!

As soon as we are able, we'll contact prospective volunteers and begin working with them, with the aim of helping people with disabilities live great lives.



James D'Mello's trip to India

James was born in Mumbai, India, in 1963 and moved to New Zealand with his mother Mildred in 2001. In 2008, James' mother became unwell and was unable to support James at home any longer. At this point, James' sister Maryanne (who lives in New Zealand) approached Spectrum Care to request suitable supported residential accommodation for James.

It was a very emotional time for James' family (as he had always lived at home) and it was especially important for Mildred to know that James would be well supported.

James moved to a Spectrum Care residence in May 2008 and, though a little apprehensive at first, he was excited to be able to maintain close family connections by going home every weekend. His family take him to church and, while at home, he enjoys getting online on Skype to chat to his sister and brother in Melbourne and other family members in India.

James recently achieved a major goal to go back to India with his family for a reunion at Christmas. This was a very exciting time for James and the highlight of 2008.

James left for India just before Christmas at the end of last year and was met in Mumbai – India's largest city and home to more than 14 million people – by family and friends. After a couple of days catching up and recovering from the jetlag of such a long flight, James and his family then headed further afield, flying south to Goa to meet more family and friends – some of whom he hadn't seen in more than 10 years!

While in Goa, James and his 'entourage' stayed at the Flamingo Hotel, one of the most well-known and popular beach resorts in Goa. Just a five-minute walk to the clear, blue waters of Cavelossim beach, James and his family found a little slice of paradise for their reunion and made the most of the opportunity.

It turned out to be a busy social time as, a few days later – with Christmas looming – the family also had a wedding to attend as James' cousin Keith married Zerlina. The ceremony was beautiful and everyone had a wonderful evening.



Following a couple of days relaxing, swimming and enjoying the beach, the family returned to Mumbai for Christmas. New Years' was also spent in Mumbai and, on 9 January, it was time to begin the long journey back to New Zealand – though this was broken up by a one-day stay in the UAE city of Dubai, with its incredible man-made islands and gravity defying skyscrapers.

Exactly one month after departing, James returned to the 'land of the long white cloud' – Aotearoa – with many happy memories and stories to tell.

Thanks to James and his family for allowing us to tell his story. Thanks also to Amerika Wilson, Vicki Quist, Helga staff, Andrea Parata and Taikura Trust.



Spectrum Care

Vision:

People with Disabilities Living Great Lives

Mission:

Creating Opportunities to Achieve Positive Individual Outcomes

Values:

Person Centred / Innovation / Partnership / Commitment and Passion / Excellence

Pacifika and Luau Night 2009

Spectrum Care's Pacifika initiative is focused on providing high-quality, culturally appropriate support and advisory services to service users from the Pacific Islands and their families.

Pacifika aims to increase Spectrum Care's ability to develop culturally appropriate support; to provide a social context for Pacific Island staff, service users and their families; and to develop networks with external Pacific Island organisations with which we can form mutual support arrangements.

The Pacifika group facilitates at blessings, bereavements, staff advocacy and cultural initiatives.

On Wednesday 20 May, the Pacifika group held its annual Luau Night and, true to form, it was a huge success. Pacific food, music and dancing were all on offer at the Takatimu Hall on Tanners Road at Mangere Bridge and everyone made the most of the opportunity – the entire hall turned into a dance floor by the end of the night! Thanks to all those who helped with the event and particular thanks to our principle sponsor Telecom for supporting the Luau Night 2009.



Would you like to receive *Across the Spectrum*?

Across the Spectrum is aimed at celebrating the achievements of individuals with a disability, as well as promoting awareness and understanding of disability issues. If you'd like to receive *Across the Spectrum* regularly, or know of anyone who you think would benefit from a copy, please let us know. Email newsletter@spectrumcare.org.nz or simply visit www.spectrumcare.org.nz and join our mailing list.