

Pitopito kōrero

Quarterly newsletter from Regional Public Health - Wairarapa
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Issue 10

Public Health: working with you in our community



Talking the Walk | Arrow FM 92.7

Talking the Walk is a radio show aimed at the community, particularly youth, with the hope to inspire young people into education beyond school. The monthly radio show covers health topics from all perspectives, with a focus on public health messages and pathways that lead to careers in health. The show is hosted by Trish Morison from UCOL and coordinated by Amanda Taylor and Clare McLennan-Kissel from Regional Public Health – Wairarapa. The show is a partnership between the two organisations.

Trish Morison has worked at UCOL for 11 years lecturing in Anatomy and Physiology and Sciences. Trish is the programme coordinator for Health Science and the Technology Level 3 programme and is also a sport enthusiast, running long distances on a daily basis and recently competed in the football masters. UCOL is a government-funded tertiary institute, with courses from level two to degree level and a recently developed youth guarantee programme.

Amanda Taylor is a Public Health Advisor at Regional Public Health – Wairarapa. Amanda works closely with primary schools as a Health Promoting Schools Facilitator supporting the schools to achieve their highest level of well-being for the children and the community. Originally from the South Island, Amanda recently moved to the Wairarapa to enjoy the warmer northern climate and explore the surrounding areas on offer. She too has a passion for physical activity, and likes to get involved in a variety of sports, including basketball, running and waterskiing.

Clare McLennan-Kissel is also a Public Health Advisor at Regional Public Health – Wairarapa working with early

childhood centres and coordinating the Breastfeeding Wairarapa group, as well as keeping her fingers (freshly washed of course) in several other (healthy) pies. Clare hails from Ōtautahi and has been living in Masterton since

2012. Clare enjoys living close to the Tararua mountain range which is excellent for bush walking and tramps and loves the opportunities which come from living in a smaller community.

Public health aims to keep our population well, improve health, and prevent illness. Health is influenced by a wide range of factors including our housing, income, diet, and access to health and other social services. An important part of public health work is working together with communities and health services to influence the many wider causes of good health or ill health in our population.

Tune in to Talking the Walk on the first Tuesday of the month at 3:30pm on Wairarapa's only community access radio station, Arrow FM 92.7, or listen to podcasts at www.arrowfm.co.nz



Clockwise from left: Clare, Amanda and Trish.

Immunisations

More than a million Kiwis get the annual influenza immunisation - why not join them?

Influenza continues to be a major threat to public health worldwide because of its ability to spread rapidly through populations. Although people with underlying health conditions are most at risk from influenza associated complications, previously healthy people can still become seriously ill and even die. Influenza can infect up to 1 in 5 of us every year.

Influenza (or 'the flu') is caused by three types of influenza virus – A, B and C – that infect the respiratory system. It is contagious and is spread by coughing, sneezing and direct contact with an infected person or by touching a contaminated surface.

Anyone over the age of six months can be immunised against influenza. The vaccine is fully funded by PHARMAC for certain groups of people who are considered to be at higher risk of severe outcomes. However, everyone benefits from having the immunisation, not just those at a higher risk. Being immunised against the flu helps to reduce the risk to our most vulnerable populations within our communities, provides protection for yourself, your family and your friends. If you do not have one of the eligible conditions, the immunisation is available at a small cost.

Encouraging your staff to immunise against influenza lessens the chance of it being spread around the workplace which could lead to significant staff shortages. By taking advantage of this year's seasonal influenza vaccine you can reduce absenteeism and increase productivity in your workplace this winter.

This year the vaccine is arriving slightly later than previous years due to the change of influenza strains included and its manufacture. It should be available by mid-March so keep an eye out for advertising in the media!

For further information contact your local medical centre, visit <http://www.immune.org.nz> and <http://www.fightflu.co.nz> or phone **0800 IMMUNE** (0800 466 863).



Influenza.
Don't get it.
Don't give it.

Immunisations for children: grandparents can get involved!

This year the **Well Child Tamariki Ora programme** is focusing on encouraging toddlers to learn through play. As we know, a sick child is not very interested in playing, let alone learning. With this in mind it is helpful to remember to have your child up-to-date with all their vaccinations. This provides them with the best protection against infectious diseases in our community.

We know that for some parents there can be a difficult balance between caring for your child's health needs, working, and meeting the demands of a busy life. Grandparents can show their support by being aware of when their grandchild's vaccinations are due. Offering to take the child for their vaccination, cooking a meal for the family or caring for other siblings can be an enormous help for a busy family.

Remember not to forget your own immunisations: at ages 45 and 65 years, the tetanus and diphtheria booster immunisations are free (there is a small cost for administration of the vaccine only).

If you have any vaccination questions, phone your medical centre for more information.

REMINDER:

Public Health Nurses will be in schools during term 1 for the school-based immunisation programme. Year 7 girls and boys will be offered the Boostrix vaccination for diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough). Year 8 girls will be offered the Gardasil vaccination for human papillomavirus infection (HPV). For more information, contact Regional Public Health – Wairarapa on (06) 377 9111 or visit www.rph.org.nz

Influenza	A cold
Sudden onset of illness. Moderate to severe illness	Mild illness
Fever (usually high)	Mild fever
Headache (may be severe)	Mild headache (congested sinuses)
Dry cough, may become moist	Sometimes a cough
Muscle aches	Muscle aches are uncommon
Shivering	A runny nose
Bed rest necessary	
Can suffer severe complications (e.g. pneumonia)	

Immunisations

Persistent cough - could it be Pertussis?

Pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, is a highly infectious bacterial infection spread by coughing and sneezing. It causes severe bouts of coughing, which may be accompanied by vomiting and a whooping sound. Pertussis can last up to three months and is sometimes referred to as the '100 day cough.' Many babies catch it from their older siblings, parents or grandparents - often before they are old enough to be fully vaccinated.

Preventing the disease from spreading

On-time immunisations for infants at six weeks, three months

and five months in addition to children receiving boosters at four years and 11 years is the best prevention.

Tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough booster immunisation (Boostrix®) is recommended and free for women between 28-38 weeks of pregnancy through their Doctor.

All cases of pertussis should be excluded from early childhood services, school, or community gatherings until they are well enough to attend and have either received five days of antibiotics or three weeks have elapsed since the onset of coughing spasms.

What is public health: prevalence vs incidence

Prevalence and incidence are concepts used to quantify the amount of disease in a population. These terms are often confused and misused interchangeably, but they have two distinct meanings.

Prevalence describes the number of cases of disease that *already exist* in a population at a given point in time. Prevalence includes new cases and those who contracted the disease in the past and are still surviving. **Incidence** measures how quickly people in a population are catching the disease (records the change from non-disease to disease) and it differs from prevalence because it only considers *new* cases.

The relationship between incidence and prevalence is dependent on how long the disease persists for before cure or death. For example, the incidence for the common cold would be high, yet because it is of a relatively short duration these new cases will remain prevalent in the population for a short time. Whereas, diseases like diabetes, has a high incidence and longer duration, the prevalence will be higher than the incidence.

Snippets

Talking the walk: remember to tune in on the first **Tuesday** of the month to the Regional Public Health – Wairarapa and UCOL radio show on **Arrow FM 92.7**.

Check out the **Regional Public Health, Breastfeeding Wairarapa** and **Arrow FM** facebook pages!

Youth clinic: Masterton Medical Te Rangimarie Clinic offers **free and confidential consults** for youth aged 13-23 years every Monday and Friday from 2pm-5pm at 131 Cole Street.

Snacktivity

Balloon Tennis

Have a go at creating your own tennis racquet. Pair it with a balloon and voilà you have your very own tennis set!

Things you need:

- Wire coat hanger
- Pantyhose or knee high stockings
- Duct tape or masking tape
- Balloon

Instructions:

1. Bend the hanger into a racquet-like shape (kite, oval shape).
2. Push the handle in toward the wire stem, to make a small oval shape.
3. Stretch the pantyhose over the racquet from the top, pull the end of the stockings down to cover the handle and tie a knot with the end of the stocking and secure with tape.

For the younger ones, attach the balloon to the racket with a 40cm piece of string. For the pros, challenge them and ask them how many times they can hit the balloon up without letting it touch the ground. Practicing the skill of striking the balloon will help develop your child's hand-eye coordination, temporal awareness and refine their gross motor control: great practice for getting ready for the real game!



Head lice tips

- Check hair often, at least once a week.
- If head lice are found, promptly begin treatment for all family members and make sure that you closely follow the directions of use.
- Be sure to brush hair first, as this will detangle any knots that are present, and then use the nit comb for finer combing and easier eradication of lice and eggs.
- Make sure combing is consistent until no more live lice and eggs are found, this needs to be 7-10 days at least (this is the length of the head lice reproductive cycle)
- Continue to check for head lice weekly.

What the team has been up to...



Our team at Regional Public Health –Wairarapa had a great time at their CPR and anaphylaxis refresher training. Thanks to Kathy for her enthusiasm and fantastic knowledge!

For CPR the most important thing to know is our **DRS ABCs**.

D is to check for **Danger**.

R is to check for **Responsiveness**.

S is to **Send** for an ambulance – ask a bystander to dial 111 and tell you when they have done so.

A is to check the **Airway**.

B is for **Breathing** – if not breathing, start CPR. Otherwise, if alone, leave the patient and dial 111.

C is for **CPR** – chest compressions. If you have a mouth barrier device, after 30 compressions, open the airway and give two breaths. If you don't have a mouth barrier device, continue with chest compressions.

If you have a child with an anaphylaxis reaction who attends your school or centre, please contact us on (06) 377 9111 if your staff would like training from one of our Public Health Nurses.

Regional Public Health – Wairarapa works to keep the community healthy by providing services that promote good health practices and prevent disease.

We go where you work, learn, live and play to help you stay healthy; health begins before you need medical care. Our vision is health and well-being for the members of our community most at risk.

The team is available for advice and practical help. If you would like a public health nurse or advisor to come to see you or for more information about public health services in the Wairarapa call (06) 377 9111 or visit www.rph.org.nz.