



ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2020



Equitable access to day surgery for rural New Zealand

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Welcome

Like all organisations, Mobile Health was not immune to the impact of COVID-19 during the first half of 2020. Thanks to our dedicated team and great partners throughout the country, most parts of the business still finished the year ahead of budget. Just two areas narrowly missing their targets (surgery -2% and GP training -12 hours), and both these targets were quickly caught up following return from lockdown.

During the last year, we continued our focus on delivering better healthcare and education for those living and working in rural New Zealand. Some highlights aside to our COVID-19 response included expanding our webinar and education programme, and expanding our telehealth support services.

Mobile Surgical Unit

We are delighted to have treated a further 1,443 patients this year on the Mobile Surgical Unit (MSU). Last August the team reached its milestone of treating its 25,000th patient. This milestone is a tribute to the hard-working staff throughout the country who have supported the service for more than 18 years.

Rural Health Education

Before lockdown, our education programme was already exceeding performance and making a shift to the Zoom video platform. During the lockdown this change was accelerated; for example, we moved from just one webinar a month to periods where we hosted up to five webinars per week. We more than doubled our education programme output reaching a total of 7,478 hours achieved, well ahead of our target of 3,500.

Telehealth Resource Centre

COVID-19 saw a significant increase in the demand for telehealth information as general practices and hospitals looked for a different way to safely deliver healthcare. The team worked hard to meet demand during this time.

As a result of our response, the Ministry of Health (MoH) has increased our funding for the provision of extra education and telehealth support for the next 12-24 months.

Thank you to all the individuals and organisations for your hard work and ongoing support of our service – especially during these challenging times.



Mark Eager – Chief Executive



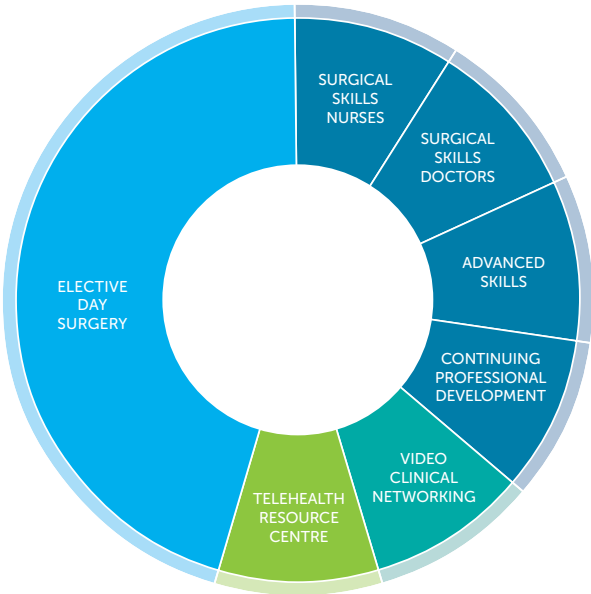
Services

Mobile Health provides a wide range of services to support rural health in all areas of New Zealand, in partnership with the Ministry of Health. There are four broad service categories, and while they are reported separately, each is closely interlinked. Mobile Health is uniquely positioned to provide the following services on a national basis:

- 1. Elective Day Surgery
- 2. Rural Health Education Hub
- 3. Video Clinical Networking
- 4. Telehealth Resource Centre

The Rural Health Education Hub provides continuing professional development to rural health professionals in four different areas:

- Surgical Skills Nurses
- Surgical Skills Doctors
- Advanced Skills
- Continuing Professional Development



“Firstly, thank you so much for these amazing webinars! I really feel it is not over-exaggerated to say they have been life-changing for me! It is amazing being able to access so much information and keep ‘up to date’ all the while being at home. It has certainly broken down so many barriers for me in accessing applicable CPD. So thank you!”

- RACHAEL, REGISTERED NURSE

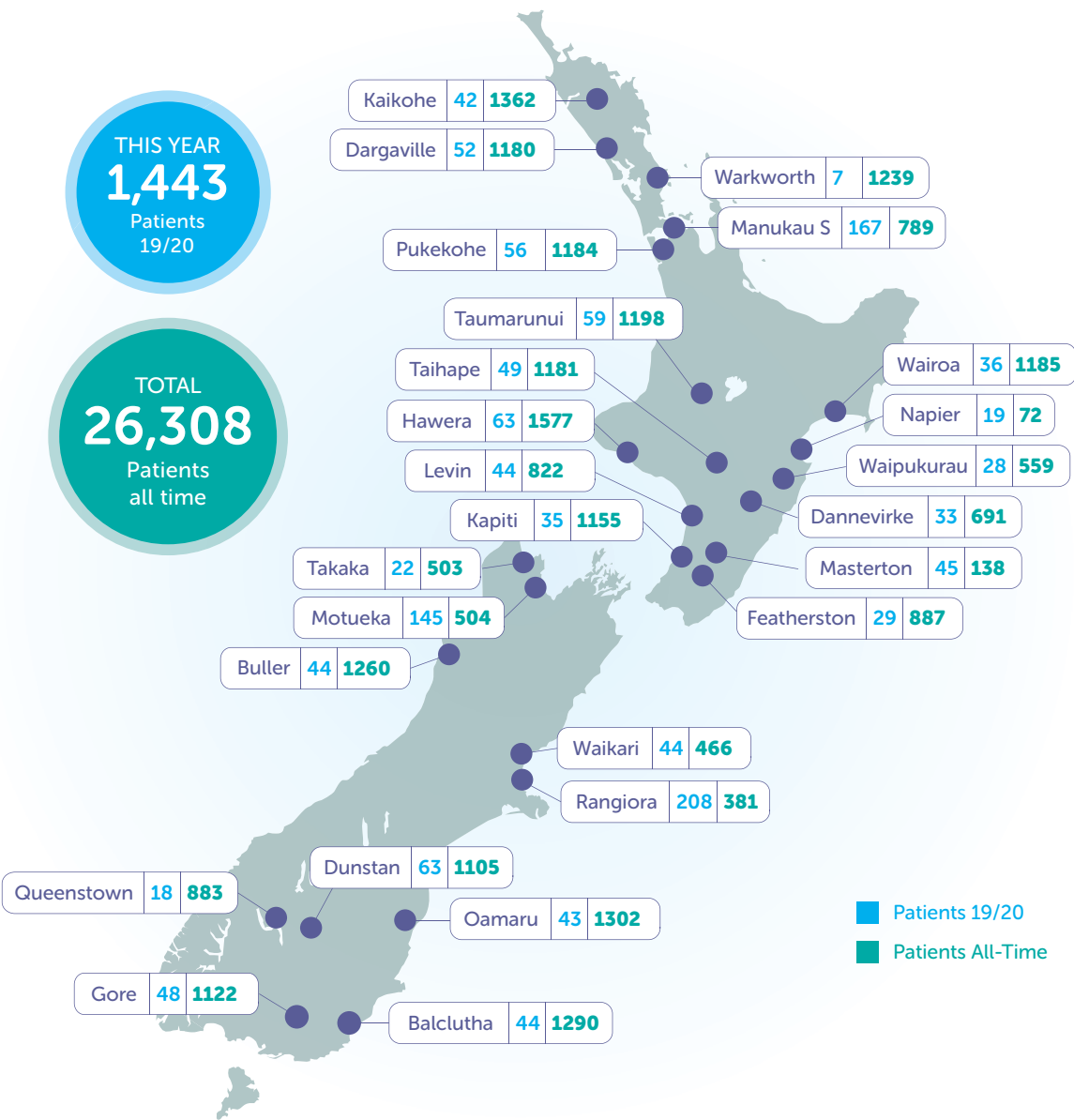
Surgery

With more than 700,00 people living and working in rural areas, the mobile surgical unit creates additional capacity to assist District Health Boards to meet their elective surgery targets, as well as creating the opportunity for rural doctors and nurses to upskill.

There has been significant investment in the mobile surgical unit including a new truck to pull the unit and a new anaesthetic machine.



Host Locations & Number of Operations



Happy patients are healthy patients



(Back row left to right) Dr Nathan Kershaw – Anaesthetist, Jill Hansen – Dunstan Hospital Nurse, Karenza Heath – MH Clinical Nurse Leader and Chris Heath – MH Anaesthetic Technician. (Front row, middle) Ella Jones.

The Mobile Surgical Unit has visited Dunstan Hospital more than 150 times since 2002 and has treated 1,105 local patients during that time. One of the most recent surgeries to take place was a dental procedure on eight-year-old Ella Jones. Her mother, Dana, praised the team and emphasised that the experience from beginning to end was easy and enjoyable; and said she received good communication through the entire patient journey. The team aboard the mobile surgical unit at the time included Tim Mackay, Surgeon, Nathan Kershaw, Anaesthetist and Karenza Heath, Clinical Nurse Leader.

“I would just like to add that the whole team who took care of my daughter Ella in the Mobile Surgical Unit (MSU) at Dunstan Hospital in Clyde were beyond incredible.

“Ella had such an amazing, happy, calm experience before, during and post-surgery thanks to this amazing team: Margaret, Marg and Jill were so warm, gentle and kind, from the Dunstan health side. Chris, Jason and Karenza from Mobile Health with their great sense of humour, calm, gentle and happy approach. And the amazing doctor Nathan Kershaw and the

incredible doctor Tim Mackay, who did the most amazing surgery. Doctor Tim is now her favourite dentist.

“The caring, warm, happy environment that this whole team created allowed Ella to have the most amazing healing experience on all levels.”

- DANA, MOTHER OF 8 YEAR OLD ELLA JONES

Karenza has been working on the mobile surgical unit as a clinical nurse leader for 18 years, and brings a wealth of operating theatre experience covering an extensive range of surgical procedures and specialties. When posed the question ‘Why did you want to be part of this service?’ she said she wanted to continue working in the operating theatre and the mobile surgical unit job was the perfect role. “I also had an appreciation of the problems facing locals who live far away from central health services,” Karenza says. “Rural communities make up 14% of the New Zealand population and shouldn’t be forgotten or disadvantaged because of where they live. The level of service may differ from main centres, but the quality shouldn’t.”

“The mobile surgical unit is valuable because the service helps maintain community viability and collectiveness. The local people benefit from not having to travel long distances and being treated in their own community. It also means that rural health professionals can maintain competence in a range of skills that the mobile surgical unit helps provide and gives a sense of worth and connection among peers,” she adds.

If the patient lives in a region where the unit visits, depending on the schedule, specialty and procedure required, they may be offered the opportunity to have their procedure on the surgical unit.

“The surgical unit is a fantastic and highly valued resource serving our rural communities. Without it, many of our patients would have to travel long distances to receive their procedures. The service is unique and helps us minimise the disadvantages rural communities experience in accessing health services,” Kathryn de Luc, Chief Executive of Central Otago Health Services, which runs Dunstan Hospital, says.

The mobile surgical unit also provides hands-on experience for rural doctors and nurses, and is a valuable opportunity for them to gain exposure and expertise in an operating theatre environment.

“In addition to the many benefits for patients, the surgical unit enables local rural nurses and GPs to partake in training for surgery and recovery where possible,” Carolyn Dobson, Acting Director of Nursing and Clinical Services Manager at Dunstan Hospital says.

“The unit has provided an important opportunity for rural clinicians to perform and undertake some practical airway management skills. These skills are invaluable for when we are caring for critically unwell patients either in our rural practices or our rural hospitals,” Mark Smith, Clinical Director at Dunstan Hospital, adds.

The services provided by Mobile Health has proved to be pivotal in delivering high-quality healthcare to those living and working in rural communities, eliminating the need for them to travel.

The concept of the mobile surgical unit aligns with one of the guiding principles of the New Zealand Health Strategy: Equitable access for all New Zealanders to a comprehensive range of health and disability services. Eight-year-old Ella is one of 26,308 rural patients who have received high-quality treatment in the mobile surgical unit.

Rural Health Education Hub

We continue to deliver valuable training for rural health teams to increase their knowledge and skills through the education programme. Rural clinical teams are supported with professional development in four key areas:

Surgical Skills Nurses

Overseen by clinical nurse leaders, nurse training takes place on the mobile surgical unit. It is a valuable opportunity to have hands-on clinical experience for the roles of scrub, circulating and recovery nurses. At the end of the training, each nurse is assessed to ensure they have developed the knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to demonstrate the achievement of competence in a perioperative environment.

2,764
hours of training
+15%
ahead of target

Surgical Skills Doctors

Rural GPs have the opportunity to work alongside specialists on the mobile surgical unit. Rural GPs are frequently sole charge in rural and remote areas. Areas of focus include airway anatomy, airway management, LMA insertion, nasal intubation and care of an unconscious patient. This programme was suspended during COVID-19 level 3 and 4; the target was obtained in early July.

68
hours of training
-15%
behind

Advanced Skills

We hosted advanced training days in Tokoroa, Taumarunui and Oamaru. The course enables registered nurses to develop their clinical and theoretical knowledge and skills required in the identification and assessment of acute deterioration in adult health status. Information covered includes rapid and acute assessment frameworks as well as a review of airway, breathing, circulatory and neurological systems.

864
hours
+570%
ahead of target

Video Clinical Networking

The core of this programme captures interviews from keynote speakers at conferences, making information accessible to people unable to travel to the conference, especially those in rural and remote areas.

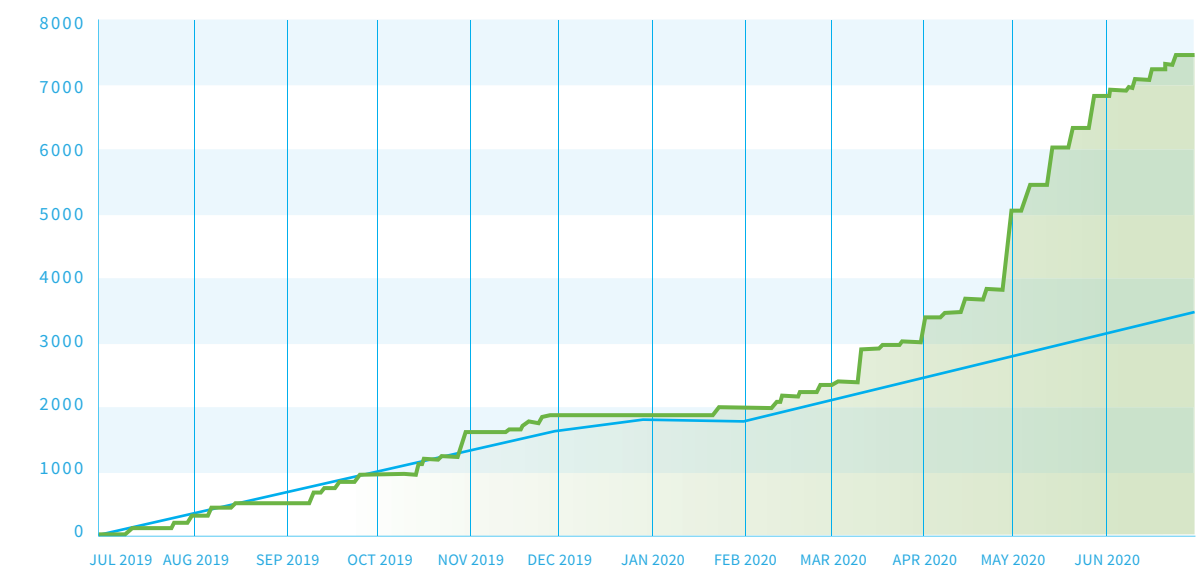
39
productions
+11%
ahead of target

Continuing professional development

The education programme links presenters with specialist knowledge to health teams in rural areas by video conferencing. The service is available to any rural health team who are able to select from a wide portfolio of topics relevant to their local area. The presenter will often cover core theory and information first, before facilitating discussion related to clinical practice in the rural town environment.

7478
hours of training
+113%
ahead of target

Hours of professional development training July 2019 - June 2020



Education webinar from the Christchurch studio to a number of West Coast locations from Fox Glacier to Karamea.

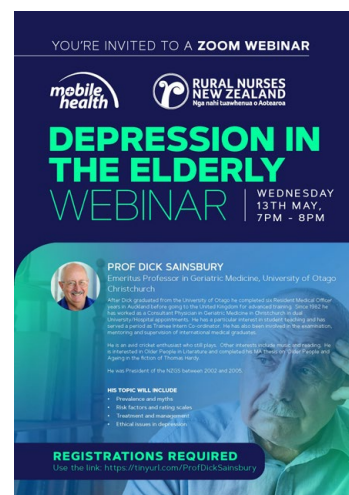
We have been conducting an increasing number of webinars for more than two years, but COVID-19 significantly increased demand for these sessions. We rapidly scaled up the frequency of sessions; at the height of demand we were running up to five webinar sessions per week.

“The first webinar after COVID-19 was presented by a well-respected microbiologist and the attendance exceeded anything we have seen before. Mobile Health hit the nail on the head by reading and responding to what clinicians needed and I think this led to a huge turnout, the session ran an hour overtime due to all the questions,” Cathy Beazley, Nurse Practitioner at Hokianga Health and member of Rural Nurses NZ executive team.

“This delivery method of education is becoming the new norm. Topics to suit a variety of roles is demonstrated by those attending, including doctors, nurses, occupational therapists, radiographers and physiologists, to name a few. Clinicians seem to be using this forum to stay connected during uncertain times,” she adds.

The Top 5 most-watched webinars:

- March: COVID-19: Ben Harris, Medical Microbiology Scientist
- April: Introduction to Telehealth in NZ: An Introduction to Telehealth for NZ Health Providers
- April: COVID-19 and Infection Prevention and Control Measures
- May: Telehealth - Equity and Improving Access
- May: Depression in the Elderly



Telehealth Resource Centre

Telehealth is the use of information and communication technologies to deliver healthcare when patients and care providers are not in the same physical location.

Mobile Health runs the NZ Telehealth Resource Centre and the telehealth.org.nz website. Working in close partnership with the Ministry of Health and the NZ Telehealth Forum, our team offers free and independent advice and support for any healthcare provider or organisation wanting to start or expand their telehealth programme.

In recent months, COVID-19 has forced many providers to think differently about how to provide healthcare services. While this increased interest is a start, the team is working hard to ensure providers across the sector implement sustainable, robust and high-quality telehealth solutions for their patients.

As a result of the growth in telehealth services, Mobile Health has received additional funding from the Ministry of Health, which will strengthen our position as the leading telehealth source of telehealth information in New Zealand.



Website: telehealth.org.nz
 Newsletter: telehealth.org.nz/newsletter
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