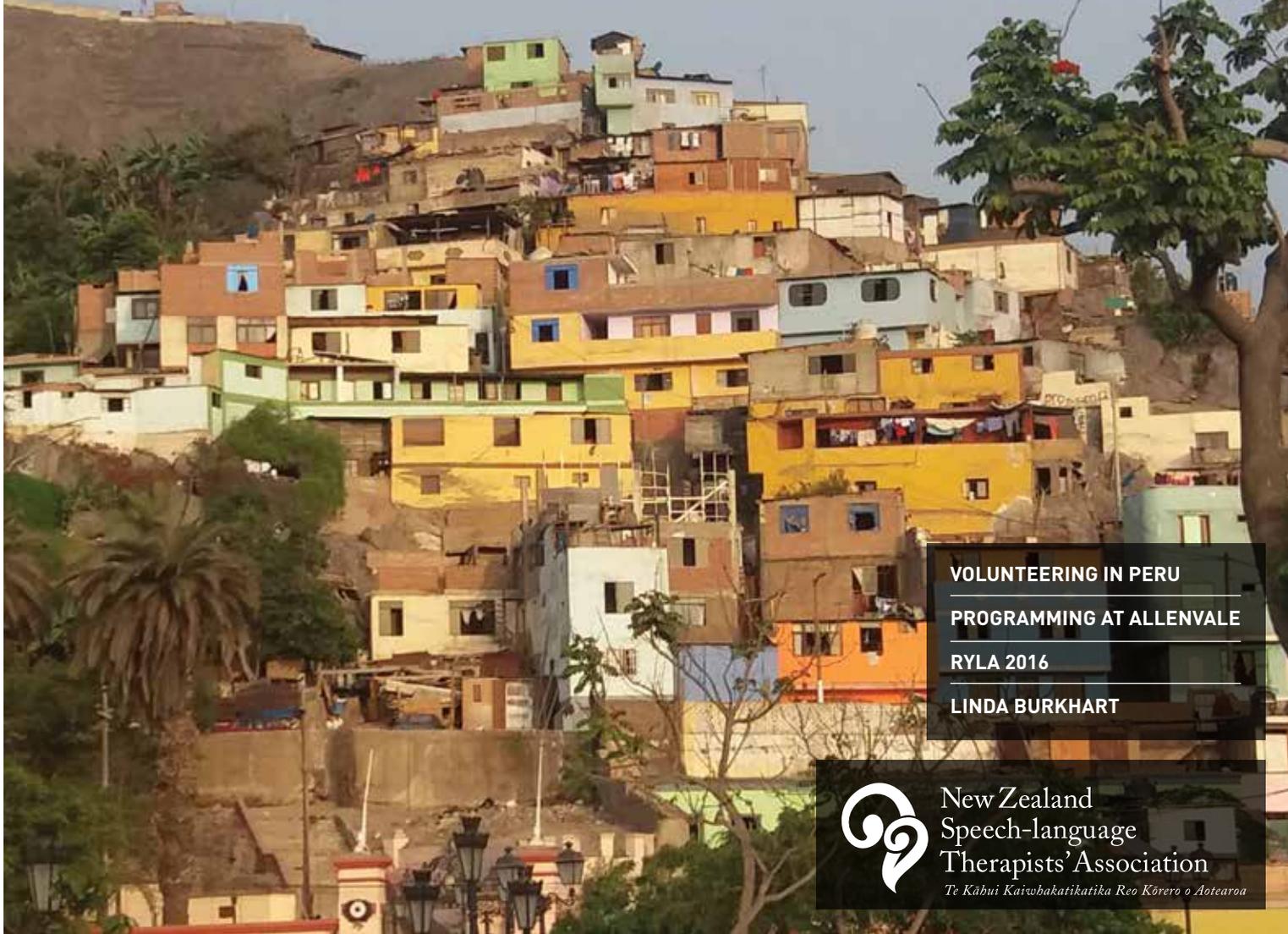


communication

SUMMER 2016

# matters



VOLUNTEERING IN PERU

PROGRAMMING AT ALLENVALE

RYLA 2016

LINDA BURKHART



New Zealand  
Speech-language  
Therapists' Association

*Te Kāhui Kaiwhakatikatika Reo Kōrero o Aotearoa*

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Cover photo: Lima, Peru, where Megan Chinnery volunteered as a Speech-language Therapist (pp. 6-7).



Editorial –

R. Lucas van Ryn

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As the end of the year is upon us, some things are winding down, only for us to get busy with others. Although the crazy season is here, I trust that you have made holiday plans and that the Summer break will bring you some time for reflection and contemplation and to spend with friends and family. I also hope that all of you have stayed safe through the recent Kaikoura earthquake.

This issue of Communication Matters highlights the range of things us Speech-language Therapists get involved in. Megan Chinnery shares her experience of volunteering as a Speech-language Therapist in Lima, Peru (pp. 6-7). Working alongside the local therapist with children in an orphanage, Megan implemented a variety of communication strategies, including core boards and key signs, and extended the therapy outside of clinic sessions by modelling communication strategies with carers in the orphanage. Both Megan and the orphanage were extremely grateful for the experience and input they gained.

The Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is a leadership training camp for young leaders within their field. Jessamy Amm, Speech-language Therapist at The TalkLink Trust,

attended RYLA this year and tells us about the range of leaders she met with, the importance of follow-through in what you say, and the value of reflection (p. 4).

Mereti Howe and her Speech-language Therapist Marie Jardine give us an insight into the intensive care setting—from both a patient's and therapist's perspective—through their journey of combating Myasthenia Gravis, a neuromuscular disease (pp. 12-13). Mereti comments she was “sad . . . to leave people I now consider friends, who helped me over a really challenging five months in hospital.”

Michelle King, Speech-language Therapist at Allenvale school, talks to Information Technology teacher Jenny Gosney about Allenvale's new digital technology curriculum (pp. 10-11). While many students, especially in a special education setting, use digital technology to access the curriculum, or to access communication, Allenvale aims to enable students to use digital technology as active creators, and has succeeded in finding a range of motivating technology solutions. Stay tuned too for news about AAC at Allenvale in the next issue.



COMMUNICATION MATTERS IS PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER USING VEGETABLE-BASED INKS



## President's Report – Philippa Friary

president@speechtherapy.org.nz

### KIA ORA KOUTOU,

Spring always proves to be a bit of an unpredictable season, yet not as volatile as it has been recently with the earthquakes across the country. Our thoughts and wishes go out to everyone who has been affected across New Zealand. With the Christchurch earthquakes a very recent memory, I imagine there are a lot of unsettled people out there.

Our university programme had students on placement across the country at this time. While I was busy trying to get in contact with them all, a fellow student commented that they were all fine as she could see that they had checked in as 'OK' using Facebook. While I marvelled at the simplicity of this software, I also wondered how our clients with communication difficulties may cope given potential access issues. As we progress down this exciting technological path, is everyone coming with us? Or are the systems we are putting in place to create efficiencies for some creating barriers for others?

How accessible is the world to our clients with communication challenges? What part can we play, as experts in this field, in making our environments more accessible to them? These questions are being asked by the strategic group of our national Giving Voice campaign. We will keep you informed on our progress and how you can all help out. Great thanks to Sally Kedge, Ann Smaill, Annette Rotherham, Amy Oughton, and the national Giving Voice Champions for their time and energy.

More change has happened within our secretariat service as we have partnered with a new company, ONZL Limited. This transition has been seamless, with our new team members quickly getting themselves up to speed with our systems and policies. We welcome Susan Wells and her team to the NZSTA.

A further highlight for 2016 has to be our successful bid to be the hosts of the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics Conference in 2022. The NZSTA is formally partnering with the New Zealand Audiological Society and Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development to host this grand event. One of our first steps is to select our organising committee. We will be in contact with those who have sent through an expression of interest to be a part of this event in the new year.

Well, it is time to look back over 2016 and reflect on a great year. We launched our new-look vision and values, our new strategic plan, and a new website. There have been many submissions made to Parliament, new professional and clinical guidelines, a top class conference and developments made to our Programme Accreditation Framework. We are nurturing our relationships nationally and internationally through He Kete Whanaugatanga, our Programme Accreditation Committee, our work on the Mutual Recognition Committee and the International Communication Project's strategic and working groups. With all this great mahi ('work'), now is the time to press pause for a bit—to absorb and replenish, and get ready for an even greater 2017. On behalf of the membership, I wish to warmly thank everyone who has rolled up their sleeves to help out in 2016, in particular our Area and Student Representatives, the Programme Accreditation Committee and the three university programmes, our Patron Andrew Becroft, and the Executive Council members: Karen Brewer, Anna Miles, Annette Rotherham, Jodi White, and Claire Winward. Wherever the festive break takes you—be well and be fabulous. Mauri ora. Philippa

## Linda Burkhart Workshop 2016

WORDS: JANE WENDELKEN, TEACHER / TRAINER, THE TALKLINK TRUST

Several of us at the TalkLink Trust were lucky enough to attend a two-day workshop presented by Linda J. Burkhart in October this year. What a fantastic couple of days! Linda has such a wealth of knowledge and experience in teaching children with complex communication needs. As a teacher, I found it particularly refreshing and exciting to hear from someone who has practised with such skill as a teacher for so long.

On day one, Linda looked at historical perspectives in AAC and linked this with current understandings, with a focus on Autism Spectrum Disorder, Angelman Syndrome, and Rett Syndrome. Having an understanding of the complex needs of your particular learners is important. It was great to hear some AAC myths busted and the case for best practice made so clearly. Learning language through experience, in natural contexts, without drilling, and with a focus on core vocabulary is the way to go!

A key strategy I took away from day one was using repetition with moderate differences. We all know that our students need to hear, see, and try a new skill multiple times. Making this repetition meaningful and natural will assist in holding their attention and generalising the learning. Linda demonstrated this by using switch-adapted toys. Not only do

her students use the toys for a purpose (move the toy to knock something down, move the toy to carry something...), but the toys are changed up to create a moderate difference. Linda showed us how she did this: By attaching a Velcroed image or placing a puppet over it.

Another gem from day one was the use of the Step-by-Step (Ablenet) multi-level message devices when working on teaching access to two switches. Linda talked about the work she had done along with Caroline Musselwhite, developing Co-Planned Social Scripts and using these on the devices. This was a revelation for me and something I will use with these learners. Students have the opportunity to build their own message by planning with their communication partner.

Day two continued with more practical strategies and resources shared. Linda focused a lot on learners with multiple and complex needs such as cortical visual impairment, auditory impairment, and severe motor challenges. Again, Linda's experience over many years and with learners with complex needs became apparent. I appreciated the combination of research and theory with practical strategies and resources. Linda's work over the years with Gayle Porter was evident

and her knowledge of the Pragmatically Organised Dynamic Display (PODD) AAC system was fantastic. She showed us many adaptations and variations for using the system with learners with such complex needs.

All of us got a lot out of the two days. There were so many 'golden nuggets' to take away. One of the best things we did was get together as a team of Teachers, Speech-language Therapists, and Occupational Therapists the following week to discuss and share what we all took from the training. There was so much in there for us all.



Linda Burkhart.

# Reflections on the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards 2016

**WORDS: JESSAMY AMM, THE TALKLINK TRUST**

This year, I was sponsored by Takapuna Rotary Club to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) 2016 at Muriwai Beach, Auckland for a six-day leadership training camp. This particular RYLA is for 20 to 28-year-olds who demonstrate leadership within their field. My friend, an Occupational Therapist, attended RYLA a few years ago and encouraged me to apply to attend this course.

We interacted with a wide range of New Zealand leaders, members of the South Auckland Poets Collective, young people from the Deaf Society (it was really interesting seeing some of the delegates interacting with Deaf people for the first time), Sam from Sustainable Coastlines, Brando 'Wildboy' Yelavich (who walked around the entire coastline of New Zealand in 600 days), as well as a variety of corporate speakers. Peter Ward and Monique Bradley from Starlight Media House supported us through personality profiling and identification of learning styles. We completed challenges each day to reinforce the learning from each speaker.

My only critique is that I would have loved to have a speaker from a not-for-profit organisation or from a health or education background, as I am not interested in corporate life or owning a huge business. However, the skills which speakers gave us were transferable across contexts and challenged my thinking on several things within the health and education sectors.

One thing that struck me was the emphasis on reflection. I have emphasised the need to engage in self-reflection to my Speech-language Therapy students, but, in the business of work, postgraduate study, church and community activities, sport, and time for important relationships, reflection time seems to have decreased on my priority scale. The follow-on from all this reflection can be conveyed by a motto I have tried to follow for the past year or so: "You are what you do, not what you say you will do." Several speakers emphasised this same idea, though they all expressed it differently.

RYLA takes place throughout New Zealand and internationally. If you are interested, contact your local Rotary Club and see when the next RYLA is happening in your district. I would highly recommend it and would love to see more young New Zealand Speech-language Therapists further developing their skills to take our country forward!

Thank you to the Takapuna Rotary Club for sponsoring me and The TalkLink Trust for supporting me to attend.

## THE GOALS OF RYLA ARE FOR DELEGATES TO:

- learn the beliefs, values and behaviours common among successful people and how they are developed
- enhance leadership skills through experiential learning and activities designed to challenge thinking skills
- enhance self-awareness and build self-confidence
- provide tools and skills to enable you to take ownership for behaviours and act wisely in any situation
- provide the opportunity to build relationships with other young leaders.



Rotary Youth Leadership Awards 2016.



## Obituary: Chris Justin

**WORDS: FAYE-NOEL BROWN,  
GILLIAN FLEMING, ADRIENNE  
TOMKINS, AND JUNE LAVERTY,  
WITH THANKS TO LOIS LAWN**

Chris Justin was a name well known in the community where she lived—Otago—and also by many throughout the Speech-language Therapy world, both here in New Zealand and internationally.

Chris had strong roots in Otago. As an only child, she enjoyed many of the simple outdoor pursuits her parents loved. She often talked of going shooting and fishing with her father, and of the motorcycle and sidecar they travelled in *en famille*. This love of life, her enthusiasm, and her sense of fun bubbled over to affect all who worked with her.

After leaving school, Chris worked for a few years in an office, and entered Dunedin Teachers' College as a slightly older student in 1943. Two years later, she was selected for Speech Therapy training and attended Christchurch Teachers' College to undertake the course in 1945. Following her training, Chris was appointed to one of the clinics at the Training School in Christchurch, where she also lectured. Chris was the first secretary of the New Zealand Speech Therapy Association (NZSTA) and the first publisher of the journal.

In May 1949, on the death of her father, Chris returned to Dunedin and took up the position of Senior Speech Therapist. The absence of therapy aids and the need for materials inspired Chris to call a meeting of parents and, from this, the Otago Speech Therapy Association was formed.

Chris was an active member of the NZSTA and convened the eighth conference of the association in 1953. In 1956, she represented New Zealand at the conference in Barcelona organised by the International Association of Logopaedics and Phoniatrics (IALP). This was followed by attendance at many overseas conferences where she followed her passion for all aspects of her profession. Chris travelled widely in Britain and

the United States where she trained with experts of the day, including Joan Reynell and Catherine Renfrew in Oxford.

Chris will long be remembered for the production of assessments that were standardised for New Zealand children. The first of these was the Dunedin Articulation Test, designed for the Ongoing Dunedin Multidisciplinary Study (the Dunedin Study), where Chris was the principal investigator for Speech. As well as working as the full time district therapist, Chris was very involved in the affairs of the NZSTA. In 1964, she convened the first conference to be held in Dunedin. At this conference, she was elected as President of the Association. In 1980, she was again elected to the National Executive as Secretary, and in 1986 undertook secretarial duties for the NZSTA Conference held in Dunedin. The logo of the Association, which remains today, was created at Chris's instigation.

Amongst other achievements, Chris gained her Fellowship of Trinity College, London (Speech & Drama) in 1967, writing a thesis concerning *Voice: A Reflection of Personality*. She set up special weekly clinics for therapists to meet with a neurologist to discuss cases, was co-organiser and co-writer of the script for the film *The Spoken Word*, continued to attend courses, and was a part-time therapist at the Dunedin Public Hospital.

In 1983, she made another visit to Britain where she attended the IALP Conference and once again presented a workshop. Chris was always vitally interested in anything and everything to do with Speech-language Therapy. She retired in 1986, but continued to work part-time for CCS after her retirement. She was made a Life Member of the NZSTA in 1986, and all agreed this was richly deserved.

Chris was greatly respected as a Speech-language Therapist in both the education and health arenas. Those who worked with her appreciated her encouragement and support to be innovative in their therapy. She always acknowledged and was proud of their success. She was loved and respected by the children and parents she worked with. She is remembered by many in Otago and beyond for her holistic view of children and her consistently positive approach.

Chris died recently in her 95th year, and in accordance with her wishes a private service was held.



## Volunteering in Lima, Peru

**WORDS: MEGAN CHINNERY**

At the start of 2016, I was fortunate to be able to spend a month in a small orphanage in the middle of Lima, Peru volunteering as a Speech-language Therapist. Alongside the local team, I worked with 16 children with very complex needs, aged between 2 and 8 years old. The orphanage had a full-time local Speech-language Therapist on staff, a rarity in Peru. Although we had trained within a few years of each other, Speech-language Therapy training in Peru is in its infancy: Such things as evidence-based

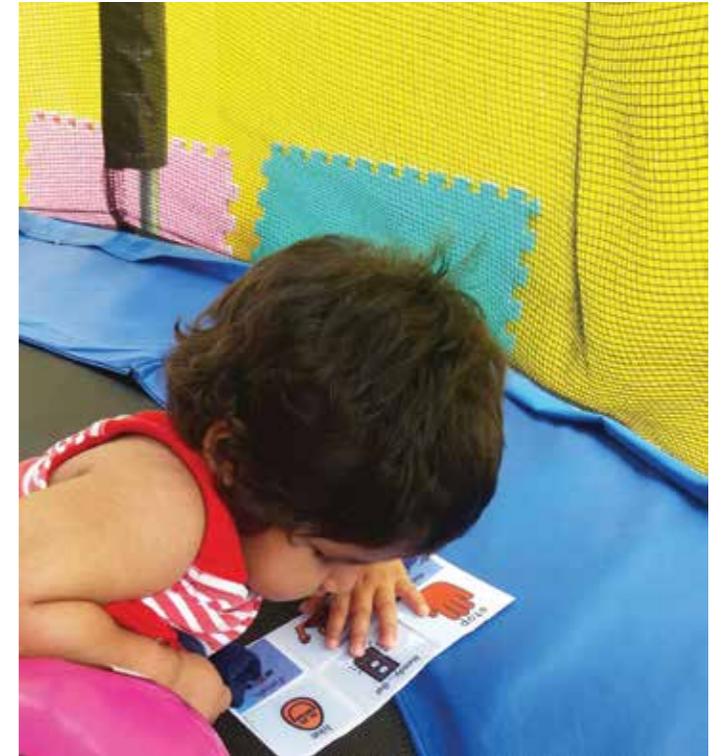
practise don't exist, and it is often isolating, as teams do not work collaboratively and there is no peer supervision. The local Speech-language Therapist was fantastic; she was interested in learning alternative ways to work with the children on her caseload, and we got creative communicating with each other using my (very) basic Spanish, a few English words, key signs, AAC core boards, and Google Translate. We spoke the same Speech-language Therapy talk in different languages.

I focused my time on two main areas. The first was to generalise the areas and goals worked on in therapy out of the clinic. The children had therapy sessions two to three times a week, but because the therapist worked in isolation, the children then went back to the orphanage where no-one knew what they were working on or how to communicate with them. A lot of my time was spent modelling communication strategies to the carers in the orphanage, teaching other volunteers to do the same, and brainstorming with the local Speech-language Therapist to come up with culturally appropriate ways she could carry her work over into the home and then trying these out.

Social structures and hierarchies of power are complicated in Peru, so working collaboratively across professions is very much a developing area. My second focus was to introduce different communication strategies, in particular key signs and simple core boards in Spanish (thanks to cut and paste!). Only two children at the orphanage had any spoken language. The rest were talked to—a few signs were also used in Speech-language Therapy sessions—even though some were totally deaf. They had no way of communicating themselves. A lot of the difficult behaviours exhibited by the children were a result of frustration or uncertainty, stemming from this lack of communication.

This work involved making lots of resources and training the coordinators of the volunteer organisation how to use these different modes of communication so that they can train future volunteers. I stock-piled Spanish core boards for the local Speech-language Therapist as she didn't have access to a computer or printer. I did lots of modelling, and then handing over to the carers to have a go, and pointing out simple communication opportunities throughout the day, for example pointing to stop on the core board or signing stop to a child who can't hear you when you say, "stop." The children started responding to the signs and communication boards within a few days. When I left, one five-year-old was using 13 new signs spontaneously. These kids have so much potential!

I volunteered through an organisation called International Volunteer HQ. The great thing about their programmes is that you can volunteer your time for as little as a week, so it can fit in with work, annual leave, and family. There is so much support



that Speech-language Therapists and other professions can contribute to their programmes, even though this is not well publicised.

I reflect on my time in Peru and feel so grateful for the experience. The orphanage was so grateful for the input I provided, but it was only a small drop in the ocean at one point in time. They, and so many other places like this, would love (and need) more Speech-language Therapists to visit! When I had to leave, I wished I could have passed the baton to the next fellow speechie. I feel that, individually, we can make some changes, but together we can really make a huge difference.

I am more than happy to provide more information to anyone who is interested. Please contact me at [meganchinnery@gmail.com](mailto:meganchinnery@gmail.com).



## Area Updates

### NORTHLAND AREA

#### Lucy Schumacher

It's been a pretty quiet quarter up in Northland. We have continued to have steady turn-out for area meetings and are going to add professional development presentations to our meetings next year.

We had a really interesting discussion about our title 'Speech-language Therapist'. A member had the experience of a parent saying that they always thought the final outcome for their child would be speaking because of the 'speech' in our job title. We talked about the importance of not deleting 'language' from our title, emphasising communication, and making sure that both short and long-term goals are carefully discussed. And those of us who work in dysphagia will continue with our opening sentence of, "Hi, I'm Lucy, one of the Speech Language Therapists here, and we also look at swallowing problems."

### AUCKLAND AREA

#### Fern Maxwell

Auckland meetings continue to be well-attended via video conferencing, covering a number of areas. As we move into 2017, we are looking to have at least four hubs at each meeting to ensure we reach a wide range of people. Gina Davis from the United Kingdom will be visiting New Zealand at the beginning of next year and carrying out her Attention Autism training which is a must-do for paediatric Speech-language Therapists.

I will be heading off on parental leave in February 2017 and work is in place for someone to cover my role whilst I am on leave. Wishing everyone in the region a pleasant Summer and restful new year.

### WAIKATO / BAY OF PLENTY AREA

#### Annabelle Blue

Our final meeting for the year was another successful one, with great attendance from clinicians across the region. Billie

Hampton-Edwards provided us with an update on the Paediatric Dysphagia working party, and encouraged members to contribute ideas.

- Sally Diamond has recently joined the MOE Rotorua team.
- Paula Shennan from TalkLink is about to go on maternity leave. Members wish to express how valuable her input has been, and wish her all the best.
- Victoria Lougher from Whakatane Hospital is now also on maternity leave. We wish her all the best.
- Waikato Hospital welcomes two new staff members: Teddie Mateo, acute medical and surgical wards, and Katherine Lim, rehab wards. Waikato also farewells Sara Jodache who has been doing some much appreciated locum work.
- MOE Tauranga is moving into a different building in December. The new premises will be on on Cameron Road. We hope all members have a fantastic Christmas, and look forward to catching up again in the new year.

### CENTRAL AREA

#### Emma Horsburgh

- A fairly quiet quarter in the Central Area and a fairly quick meeting also.
- Taranaki Hospital currently has a fourth-year student. They are looking to do the dysphagia training for nurses again soon, as well as getting the cough reflex testing up and going.
- Hawkes Bay DHB is just finishing up with its locum Speech-language Therapist and have had Anna Jerebine join their team.
- Michelle from Kowhai Special School reports that a successful autism spectrum disorder education session was held recently, with great feedback from the community.
- Whanganui Hospital reports that it is due to do more dysphagia training for nurses and is looking to add cough reflex testing into this.
- Gisborne MOE is continuing to run Hanen workshops and has teamed up with the Kindergarten Association to do the Learning Language and Loving It program.
- Palmerston North Hospital has the cough reflex testing up and running as of mid October.

### CANTERBURY / WESTLAND AREA

#### Ruth Ramsay and Kate Cook

We had another excellent turnout for the spring meeting. Burwood Hospital has welcomed Jessica Blanken, who is taking over Louise's role while she is away in Australia. Katrina is on maternity leave with her son Deegan. The Christchurch Hospital Speech-language Therapy team attended the Allied Health Awards. Emma Daly won the Graduate of the Year award; Caroline Lambert, Christchurch Hospital Speech-language Therapy manager, won a Leadership award; Inez Palmer was recognised for her excellence in teamwork; and Alexandra Smedley won a Service Recognition award. Nicki Mason was also nominated for a Service Recognition award.

### OTAGO / SOUTHLAND

#### Eleanor Jackson

Wow, I can't believe we are nearing Christmas already! There has been a fair bit of action in the Otago Southland area recently:

- Alison Zani has recently taken on the role of Aphasia Advisor for the Dunedin area.
- The Dunedin Aphasia Support Group has recently increased in size and a transport grant has been secured. Several group members are making use of this to get to and from the fortnightly group.
- Dunedin Public Hospital has recently had two full-time therapists (Jess Batty and Antonia Haynes) leave the hospital to move home to Christchurch. Their two vacancies have now been filled.
- Maria Ryan is going on maternity leave in December from Shout SLT.
- Sarah Tay is leaving MOE Invercargill in December. Lastly, I am standing down from the Otago / Southland Area Representative position. I would like to thank all who have supported me in this role and I'm sure we will all warmly welcome Kathryn Palmer into this position.

# Allenvale Students: From Consumers to Creators

MICHELLE KING, SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPIST AT ALLENVALE SCHOOL, TALKS TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TEACHER JENNY GOSNEY AND STUDENT JAYDEN BLACK.

Technology is continuing to change the way students are taught and how they are learning in school. At Allenvale School in Christchurch, staff are looking at ways to use digital technology to build on student's strengths and interests. Jenny Gosney, Information Technology Teacher at Allenvale School, shares with us Allenvale's journey towards developing students' skills in digital technology, and Jayden Black, a student, shares his thoughts about coding.

## Jenny, what made you move the digital technology curriculum in a new direction for Allenvale students?

As a school we are constantly looking at options outside of the box that will engage and motivate our students. We have noticed that many of our students have splinter skills in digital technology but often end up as passive consumers of technology, rather than creators and innovators.

In special education, we are very 'teched up'; our students use technology to communicate and to access the curriculum, but have very little opportunity to be creative with it.

As well as interacting with technology, the Computer Science Unplugged website (<http://csunplugged.org/>) gave us a huge variety of non-device-based activities that help students understand how computers work. It provides a range of cross-curricular activities for all abilities.

This made us question where to head in the future and how we can actually capture these students and give them a pathway to develop skills. Could our students code? Could we develop programmers and movie makers?

## How did you get started with the initiative?

It was quite a process to sort out where to head with developing digital technology. We initially looked at Code Club. Code Club Aotearoa gave us great support and we visited a code club at a local school. Although the content of the session was pitched at a higher level than what a lot of our students could cope with, it wasn't out of reach. With a modified programme, this really was a possibility. Code Club then came and spent some time at school and met our

students. It was then we really began to look at the bigger picture of what's available and what we need to do.

Code Club Aotearoa put us in touch with Professor Tim Bell and Tracy Henderson of the University of Canterbury and representatives from the University of Alabama. From there, our small idea of giving opportunities to our students with splinter skills became a plan to develop a digital technology curriculum for all our students, from emergent consumers through to creators and innovators.

## How are students involved currently?

We began the process slowly, initially so that we could ourselves learn the information we needed to teach, and also to give the students the opportunity to choose a direction to move in. Quite often we were—and still are—learning hand-in-hand with the students, which is incredibly empowering for them. It is awesome having a student show you how they solved the problem or teach another staff member how to complete a task!

Currently, we have small groups working around the school in a variety

of areas of digital technology. We have one class that are right into Bee-Bots and learning to write algorithms and then programming the Bee-Bots to get around tracks, mazes, and stories. We have some students who have moved more in the robotics direction and are working with Sphero robots and the numerous *apps* available to control the robot. We have other students who are at different levels of coding and are working independently through Hour of Code activities.

Recently, a group of new entrants successfully took part in a 'Buzz Off' where they competed against 60 other students from mainstream schools in Christchurch. The Google representatives could not identify the students from Allenvale amongst the teams; it was a fantastic example of inclusion!

One student, Jayden, wants to program games when he is older, and understands that this is a valid pathway for him. Jayden competently completes Hour of Code activities and now is programming at home. Jayden has moved along the pathway from consumer to creator. The next challenge for us is to ensure that we have integrated digital technology across the school, making sure that all students have the opportunity to interact with technology on a pathway to become creative and innovative.

With the help of the University of Canterbury, we now have a school-wide draft curriculum document for digital technology that will be used in 2017. The Allenvale School Strategic Plan directly



Jayden Coding.



Staff training session with Bee-Bots.

links to the digital technology curriculum. The innovative Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees at Allenvale have ensured that support and resources are readily available.

## What does the future look like?

The future looks exciting, and with technology we really don't know the path we are walking down! We will be constantly on the look-out for engaging equipment like Makey Makey and Sphero, and for robotics programmes

that engage and motivate students and follow their interests.

As a school we would like to develop industry relationships in the digital technology area. We'd like our students to develop direct connections with role models in a variety of digital technology fields. Community connections, especially with activities that mainstream peers are involved in, will be vital, as will bringing industry volunteers into the school.

## Allenvale student Jayden Black is more than happy to talk about the programming he does at school.

Jayden says his favourite part of learning to code is the Hour of Code, where he can use Java and, "fiddle around with the blocks [of code]" to make a game. He explains, "I made a fish game where you push the spacebar to shoot a bubble. You have to get the shark with the bubbles. . . I made a bunch of bubbles but the computer lagged." He explained why he likes coding: "Because, I'm more into game making. Before I learned about coding I played games, and I was wondering if you can make your own game. Now I know how to make a game by doing coding." He added, "If you want to see the Hour of Code go to [code.org](http://code.org)." When asked, "What sort of jobs might be at the end of school for you?" Jayden said, "Maybe technology jobs. Maybe making a computer. In the future, apparently, there's going to be like robots and you have to control them from the computer. The future is always going to be coding."

# Myasthenia Gravis and Speech-language Therapy: An Unpredictable Journey

WORDS: MERETI HOWE AND MARIE JARDINE

MERETI HOWE (PATIENT) AND MARIE JARDINE (SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPIST AT MIDCENTRAL DHB) SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE DURING 2016 AT PALMERSTON NORTH HOSPITAL.

## Day 1

MJ: Mereti was admitted to hospital with myasthenic crisis. Doctors suspected progressive deterioration in respiratory condition and noted ocular symptoms.

MH: *It was a confusing time because the extent and cause of respiratory deterioration were not known. Myasthenia gravis is still a rare disease in New Zealand, and presentations in emergency departments, such as mine, are not common. I was very short of breath, losing my appetite, and becoming very fatigued.*

*I met with Marie in the ward. I wasn't sure why I was seeing a Speech-language Therapist. Once she talked about safe swallowing, I realised it could be quite serious.*

## Day 23

Neurologist requested a swallow assessment in ICU.

## Day 24

In ICU for respiratory support. Optiflow and nasogastric tube (NGT) in situ. Recommended to rely on NGT to meet nutritional needs and repeat FEES as appropriate.

## Day 29

Tracheostomy inserted electively.

## Day 78

FEES in ICU. Tracheostomy and NGT in situ. Severe oropharyngeal dysphagia.

MH: *By this time I was in respiratory failure. It was a terrible time.*

## Day 107

Trial tracheostomy decannulation. No cough response to secretions in airway. Tracheostomy reinserted.

## Day 108

Daily oromotor exercise programme commenced to improve oral phase. Mereti was vigilant and diligently completed practise.

## Day 121

Tracheostomy removed, NGT in situ. Voice therapy. Recommended steam inhalation.

MH: *The steam inhalation was helpful for my throat and mouth—important as I had not had any food or drink for months.*

## Day 123

Saliva management assessed via endoscopy; significant improvement.

## Day 134

FEES. No aspiration observed on puree texture, recommended pureed snacks.

## Day 135

VFSS. Stasis observed in upper oesophageal region, resulting in medical team's referral for Barium Swallow.

## Day 136

Collaborating with dietician, NGT removed. Oral medications commenced.

MH: *It was wonderful to be able to eat and drink again. I had to take my meds 4x a day and by late afternoon I was too exhausted to swallow. I was told to take them by the nurse, who had limited knowledge of myasthenia gravis, but I wouldn't, for fear of choking. I deteriorated rapidly, and ended up in ICU.*

## Day 137

Readmitted to ICU overnight, due to respiratory distress and stridor. NGT reinserted.

## Day 141

Family meeting. Future of oral intake vs. enteral feeding discussed.

## Day 142

Swallow review requested. Mereti had finished two cups of coffee against advice. Discussion with lead consultant; concluded that Mereti is competent to make decisions about her care. Free fluid diet commenced until Barium Swallow.

MH: *I was advised not to drink (other than clear fluids) or eat until everything was assessed. But I felt I could. I tried at first swallowing my saliva, then small amounts of water, then sucking on lollies, and I thought, well, if I can swallow that I can try coffee!*

## Day 143

Breathing relaxation exercises introduced.

## Day 149

Barium Swallow indicated normal oesophageal motility. FEES demonstrated prompt swallow initiation, nil residue post swallow.

## Day 150

Recommended puree meal at breakfast due to oromotor fatigue in mornings. NGT removed.

MH: *It was wonderful to have the NGT removed for the final time. I felt free; I had achieved one of my main goals.*

## Day 162

Discharged home.

MH: *Over the moon that I had met all my goals, especially the removal of the NGT and tracheostomy. Happy to be able to see my home again and settle into normal routines, but sad too, to leave people I now consider friends, who helped me over a really challenging five months in hospital.*



Marie Jardine (left) and Mereti Howe.

## Book Review:

## Talking Baby: Helping your Child Discover Language

REVIEW BY DEAN SUTHERLAND, PHD

If you are passionate about helping babies, infants, and young children learn the art of communication, then *Talking Baby* is essential reading! This easy-to-read, highly informative book is for any parent, grandparent, early childhood teacher, Plunket nurse, doctor, or Speech-language Therapist who spends time with young children. Written by two New Zealanders who know first-hand the importance of the early years for communication learning, *Talking Baby* covers all the key information about how and why young children learn how to talk.

The book takes readers through the stages of language and speech development from birth to three years and beyond. Tips to support and understand budding communicators are included throughout the book. Some examples include information on the importance of talking with babies both before and after birth despite the challenges of tiredness and minimal responses from your baby, a great summary of the meanings associated with early language development, and a reminder that children think that they speak correctly—even from a young age—so adults must take care in how we respond when we don't understand what a child is trying to tell us.

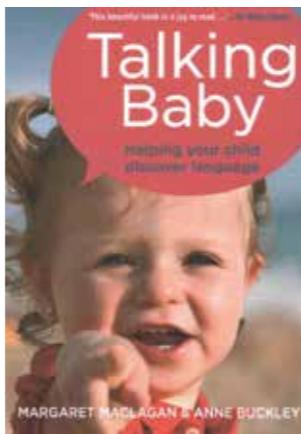
All information in the book is highly

accessible, with each chapter including features such as 'Talking Points' which provide examples of communication exchanges between adults and infants (e.g., when changing nappies). 'Talking and Reading Times' contain tips for joint book-reading, such as talking more about the pictures in the book to help children's understanding of concepts and highlighting links between written words, speech, and concepts. Examples of the delightful and colourful early language used by young children are also included throughout. My personal favourite was the description of a young child's attempts at the word "truck" while articulating /f/ for /t/. Thankfully, there are also suggestions on how to cope when a 4-year-old child demonstrates newly heard swear words!

The book concludes with two important chapters. Chapter 19 asks and answers common questions about young children's speech and language (e.g., My child is repeating lots of words—particularly when he is excited. Does this mean he is stuttering?). Chapter 20 then answers the question "Is there a problem?" and guides readers through the indicators that might suggest a need for input from a Speech-language Therapist. *Talking Baby* is also a great reminder of the amazing power of

the human mind and the complex challenges that a majority of children overcome. Putting the suggested tips into practice will undoubtedly support children's communication as well as their thinking and learning. I recommend all professionals working with children have copies on hand for sharing with parents and caregivers. Available online or from your local bookstore.

*Declaration: The author of this article received a complimentary copy of Talking Baby to support the preparation of this review.*



Maclagan, M. & Buckley, A. (2016). *Talking baby: Helping your child discover language*. Sydney, Australia: Finch.

## New Zealand Sign Language Assessment Toolkit

WORDS: ROSIE LAMB, VAN ASCH  
DEAF EDUCATION CENTRE

Earlier this year, Kelston Deaf Education Centre and van Asch Deaf Education Centre successfully applied for funding from the New Zealand Sign Language Board to create a New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Assessment Toolkit for learners 3 to 11 years old. This assessment is the first NZSL assessment that will follow natural language development rather than second language learning and be standardised and norm-referenced. The NZSL Toolkit will be an adaptation of the British Sign Language (BSL) Receptive Skills Test and Productive Skills Test.

In August, the NZSL Assessment Toolkit Project Team had their first planning meeting at Kelston Deaf Education Centre. The meeting was a great success, and the first stage of a development process that will ensure we create an assessment that is parallel to the BSL assessment and valid for New Zealand Sign Language.



## Speech Pathology in Sydney: Different Approaches

WORDS: SHING YEE CHAI

In 2014, I started working in a public hospital that provides inpatient, outpatient, and community services, specialising in rehabilitation, palliative care, and older persons' mental health. I enjoyed working with a multidisciplinary approach which was familiar to me. In 2015, I took on another role working with children with disabilities from 0 to 8 years old in a not-for-profit organization. It took some training and time to familiarize myself with the transdisciplinary key worker model. A key component of the transdisciplinary model is that one health professional is responsible for integrating information and advice from the team and presenting it to family, instead of professionals from each discipline meeting with the family independently. The key worker becomes the primary contact person working with the family using a family-centred and strengths-based approach. The positive feedback given by families has highlighted how they appreciate building a good relationship with the key worker and how this approach has been less intrusive into the family home. There are also opportunities to call in other professional disciplines when required. With the New Disability Insurance Scheme rolling out in parts of New South Wales, this approach has, and will continue to change the model of service delivery across Australia.



## Giving Voice Aotearoa

Our key message for Giving Voice Aotearoa is to promote Communication Accessible and Communication Friendly Environments.

Get involved by contacting your local Giving Voice Champion!

OUR KEY FOCUS:  
COMMUNICATION FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS

TOP TIPS FOR COMMUNICATION ACCESS  
COLLECT THE FIVE TOP TIPS FROM YOUR ORGANISATION

DESIGN A COMMUNICATION ACCESS SYMBOL  
TO BE USED IN ACCREDITED COMMUNICATION ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENTS

To find your local Giving Voice Champion, please contact [communications@speechtherapy.org.nz](mailto:communications@speechtherapy.org.nz).

## Patient Safety Week 2016

The New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association showed its support for Patient Safety Week 2016: Let's Talk, October 30 to November 5.

Communication breakdown is behind more than 80% of complaints and errors that occur in our health system. For those patients who live with a communication disability, this presents an increased risk. Communication access is a simple concept that looks at reducing barriers to communication and avoiding communication breakdown.

You can improve your patients' healthcare experience by following these ten communication tips:

- Introduce yourself—show your name on your name badge
- Speak to the patient directly, not always to their support person
- Speak a little slower
- Allow the patient more time to get their message across
- Give one piece of information at a time
- Write down key information
- Utilise pictures and communication aids a person may have with them
- Ask questions that can be answered with a yes or no
- Draw a diagram
- Clarify you have understood their message

For more information, please contact [communications@speechtherapy.org.nz](mailto:communications@speechtherapy.org.nz) or ask your local Speech-language Therapist.



## Claire Winward – Professional Development

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KIA ORA KOUTOU,

If, like me, you've been flat out busy this term and not had a minute to prioritise your own learning, then it might be an idea to consider this over the Christmas break.

Here's a timely reminder of the online courses offered by our partner Collaborative Learning & Development (CLAD):

- Radiation training
- Constructing and delivering a team plan
- Introduction to palliative care
- Oesophageal screening
- Speech acoustics and auditory learning

These courses have all been written by NZSTA members with the needs of members in mind, and are very reasonably priced, from \$25 for an hour-long course to \$86.25 for a three-hour course. Feedback from members indicates that they love this self-directed style of learning and would value more. I will be following up with our Expert Advisors this year to support them with planning online courses in the areas of aphasia, voice, and AAC, so watch this space!

A call out to my colleagues working in education and other paediatric-focused roles—we need your expertise! If you would be interested in developing an online course in your specialist area, please let me know. CLAD do all the tricky technical work; all you need to do is provide the content. I'm sure that some of you already have workshops that you have developed for other fora that could be adapted for a wider audience with minimal effort. All profits made go straight back to the NZSTA, so, by providing a course today, you'll be helping keep membership fees down in the future.

And on that note—I'm off to shoulder-tap some of you right now. Be warned.

Ngā mihi o te Kirihimete me te Tau Hou,  
Claire

**Here is some feedback from therapists who have completed the CLAD courses:**

*"Online training is great. We can do it in our own time without disruption of patient work. I'm always keen to upskill—if the material is prepared well with quizzes along the way to check our understanding then I personally find them really useful.*

*. . . For those of us based away from main centres they provide us with opportunities we may have previously missed out on. . . I'm certainly keen to do more this year if topics are relevant to my work."*

*--Sally Hagglow*

*"As a private practitioner with 2 small children it was especially convenient to be able to access the course online from home and have the ability to work through either a lot or a little of the material depending on what time I had each evening.*

*The technical support to set up the course was excellent and efficient."*

*--Sarah Paewai*



## Annette Rotherham – Communications

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Kia ora all from the Shaky Isles. I hope everyone has stayed safe and has prepared their emergency supplies after the whopper 7.8 earthquake.

Since the conference in September, I have kept busy with the Giving Voice Aotearoa Campaign and we have had two successful teleconferences. The first was with the strategic group made up of myself, Philippa Friary, Sally Kedge, Helen Mclachlan, and Ann Smaill. We have decided to focus on Communication Access in our advocacy stream of the campaign. We are planning to partner with some organisations that already focus on disability access in organisations and government policy to bring *communication access* and *communication friendly* environments to more attention. We will also be campaigning to bring this into the NZ Disability Strategy and our key request of government will be to support the development of communication accessible environments in society by having a symbol, standards, and an accreditation process for New Zealand.

This led to the second teleconference with our Giving Voice Aotearoa Champions around the country. They now have a set of goals to get started on—the first being to set up working groups of enthusiastic Speech-language Therapy activists around the country. We want to ask consumers and Speech-language Therapists for their five top tips for creating communication friendly environments in their sectors, and we

will roll out a competition to design a communication symbol for New Zealand in 2017. That is just a taste to get the ball rolling.

I also took the opportunity to wave the communication access flag in November at Patient Safety Week, the theme of which was communication. Did you know that over 80% of patient complaints are the result of communication breakdown? I can only imagine this is even larger if you have a communication disability. Do you even get to make a complaint? See the Giving Voice Aotearoa page (p. 16) for info from the week's flyer.

My other project has been the redevelopment of the NZSTA website. I have discovered that, like cheese, many good things take time. We are nearly there, so do bear with me as we get the final touches to the new site done. It is going to be a massive improvement, adding a range of functionality and responsive capability to all devices.

As we count down to the end of 2016 and look towards the new year, I hope all of you have had time to celebrate your successes and reflect on your challenges. Enjoy some Summer and Christmas festivities with family and friends, and may we all be recharged and ready for rolling out Giving Voice Aotearoa in 2017.

Ka kite,  
Ngā mihi mahana,  
Annette



## Anna Miles – Professional Standards

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Christmas is coming and another academic year is complete, sending more enthusiastic, skilled new graduates into the workforce!

It's been a busy year with the conference, the IALP bid, Massey accreditation, a variety of Parliamentary Submissions, new policies and clinical guidelines, and a good number of qualification approval applications from experienced international Speech-language Therapists keen to move to New Zealand.

### PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE (PAC)

The PAC and heads of each of the New Zealand Speech-language Therapy programmes (Auckland, Canterbury, and Massey) meet next week. This is an opportunity to reflect and celebrate successful achievements and accreditations from 2016. This year, Massey was successful in gaining accreditation of their new Bachelor (Honours) programme. Well done Massey!

Over 2016-2017, the Programme Accreditation Framework is being revised. The current framework was written in 2011 and a number of areas require updating. A revised New Zealand Standard has already been written and endorsed by the NZSTA Executive Committee. Thank you to the working party: Karen Brewer and Linda Hand, with additional assistance

provided by He Kete Whanaungatanga and significant contributions gratefully received from Waimirangi Andrews, Anneka Anderson, Sharon Farao, and Margaret Dudley. This new standard provides the university programmes with clear expectations and guidelines from the NZSTA regarding a programme's incorporation of Tiriti o Waitangi Principles, Equity, Diversity, Cultural Competence, and adherence to the New Zealand Disability Strategy.

### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

I participated in an extremely productive teleconference with Speech Pathology Australia, the Dietitians Association, and key industry members regarding the implementation of the new International Dysphagia Diet Standardization Initiative. All parties are in favour of implementation and there was positive assurance from the industry regarding changing product packaging to match the new standards. A working group is currently developing resources to support implementation.

I'm looking forward to 2017. Enjoy your summer break!

Anna Miles, PhD  
Professional Standards Portfolio



## Jodi White – Member Networks

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HI EVERYONE,

Firstly, I would like to extend my best wishes to all those affected by the recent earthquakes in Kaikoura, Wellington, and the surrounding regions. I hope you were all able to stay safe and are receiving the support you need.

It has been a quiet quarter for this portfolio. I would like to extend my thanks to Eleanor Jackson who has been the Otago / Southland Area Rep for the past couple of years. Her hard work has been much appreciated by the EC and also by members in that region. I am very pleased to announce that Kathryn Palmer has taken over this role and she will be an excellent addition to the team.

We have continued to have excellent attendance at recent area meetings and I would encourage all of you who attend to add your opinions, comments, and questions. The EC is happy to receive all queries, and we try to provide full responses to include as part of the national collated meeting minutes. The

minutes, with EC responses included, are now available on the NZSTA website (<http://www.speechtherapy.org.nz/pages-after-login/exec-documents/exec-minutes> or <http://tx0.org/ax>).

The tip for this issue for members looking to achieve their CPD points is to attend area meetings either in person or via teleconference or video conference if you are able. Even if you are not able to make it to a meeting, you can still gain CPD points by providing feedback about the queries raised and sending these to your Area Rep.

Please continue to engage with your Area Reps and area meetings; it really does help the whole association. I wish you all the best for the festive season and hope the Summer is filled with sun and fun and quality time spent with your families.

Ngā mihi,  
Jodi

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### SUBMISSION DEADLINES FOR COMMUNICATION MATTERS

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