



April 28th, 2010

## **Cranford Hospice acts swiftly following Special Audit**

Cranford Hospice has accepted the findings of a special audit commissioned by the Hawke's Bay District Health Board and will move quickly to make organisational changes as recommended in the report.

Complaints to the Health and Disability Commissioner about standards of patient care were not upheld. The audit found that Cranford Hospice's clinical care is in-line with national standards for palliative care.

PSEC chief executive Shaun Robinson said today that the priority is to move forward to ensure sustainable, up-to-date, community based hospice care continues in Hawke's Bay.

The report undertaken by the Central Region Technical Advisory Service highlighted seven issues that need to be addressed including: improving change management, increasing nursing skills and qualifications, reducing the number of part-time staff and ensuring staff embrace new methods in palliative care.

"We are working closely with the Hawke's Bay District Health Board to ensure all the audit report findings are implemented," said Mr Robinson.

"We acknowledge that the hospice's change management to adopt modern practices has not been successful with all staff and this has caused considerable tensions.

"We deeply regret the damage this has done to staff morale and public confidence." Mr Robinson said.

PSEC has responded by appointing John Newland, a highly regarded local organisational leader to guide the change management process.

"I am heartened by the report as it affirms Cranford Hospice's direction and gives us a way forward to address the concerns with confidence.

“Cranford Hospice has an important role in the community as it touches so many people and we want to make sure we continue that good work,” Mr Newland said.

“Due to the range of issues highlighted in the audit, the best course of action is to complete the process of organisational change including an organisational restructure, as indicated in the report,” he added.

The changes will address the recommendations to increase the skills and post graduate qualifications of staff, consolidate our current position where part time staff account for 65 percent of staff to more full time positions, and complete the adoption of modern palliative care practices.

All staff have been notified and further consultation will take place with staff and unions before the final structure is decided.

In order to maintain continuity of service for more acute patients and in response to medical staff shortages, Cranford Hospice will temporarily transfer its inpatient services to the Hawke’s Bay Hospital for approximately six months. This takes effect from May 17 and is another reason why a restructure is necessary.

Cranford Hospice Executive Director Barry Keane says “the hospital already provides a palliative care service and with additional support by Cranford Hospice staff, patients in the temporary inpatient unit will continue to receive a high level of care.”

“The vast majority of Cranford Hospice patients (95 percent, 130 at any one time) receive care in the community and Cranford Hospice will continue to deliver this service,” said Mr Keane.

Presbyterian Support East Coast Chairman Ron Hall says Cranford Hospice is a vital asset for the people of Hawke’s Bay.

“It has gone through a difficult period of change as it adopts up-to-date clinical practices for the benefit of patients.

“PSEC are confident that our response to the audit will ensure that Cranford Hospice remains a community based service that delivers the highest quality of care,” Mr Hall said.

“PSEC regrets the tension caused for all parties during this time of change. The clinical changes we have made were supported in the audit and we are now moving forward working closely with all parties to support our community hospice,” Mr Hall added.

**For further information please contact**

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