

NEWSLETTER

Winter
Quarter

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CEO'S REPORT CHRIS ADAMSON



In many ways April was a consolidation month with most of the activity coming at the end of the month. This is also relative to taking two weeks off this month. During my break I visited Arahura community on the West Coast with my Son Zac. Although we did not get to meet the heads of the community we did have a chat with a few people and took photos. I'm hoping that several photos will be able to be enlarged and displayed in our offices or houses. This can act as a link to span the distance and to also give some identity to the name.

We held a Vision Meeting and Staff Meeting in April. At both of these meetings time was spent on going over the last year's events and results of feedback. From my point of view both meetings have indicated to me the level of strength that now exists within Arahura after what has been a rather challenging year. We still have some issues to resolve relating to the merger but I believe we are well on track to really consolidating our growth and this is well ahead of my projected outcomes. In response to requests from Residents, we have approached the People's Centre to ask for brochures and updates on services at the moment.

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At this time it would appear that they are going through some form of structural change and cannot provide us with any further information at this time. Further updates about the Central Auckland People's Centre will be provided as it is available. If you have any more information regarding this, please contact me.

A meeting was held with Housing NZ June 4th the discussion was about the Housing Needs of the Trust, looking longer term rather than individual housing tasks that arise in annual operations. This raised issues about different configurations of housing, 2 or 4 bedrooms etc. Arahura's provision of housing, relative to our Trust Deed is about offering choices of accommodation and support. This continues to be a dominant issue for all of us in our current and continuing service development. The two main projects for us, submitting an application to the Housing New Zealand Innovation Fund for transitional houses by the end of July, and submitting another proposal for all private rentals to be replaced by Housing New Zealand houses (akin to what we have done with Kakariki and Onslow).

Yet again our telemarketing company (KEW) have provided Arahura with more opportunities to realise our goals. The staff at KEW were provided with lunch in the form of Subway for the day crew and Pizza for the evening staff. I believe this went along way to acknowledge the positive efforts of KEW's staff and the benefits Arahura gets in return. Funds raised will be put towards: - purchases, activities such as the Winter Trip and service development.

On the 24th of May we had an external audit by an authorised auditor contracted via the Ministry of Health. Several development needs were raised. All in all the meeting was very positive and the development necessary to reach compliance with the Health and disability sector standards is not insurmountable. We are definitely on the right track and simply need to continue to step up to our challenges as we have successfully done in the last year. The report will shortly be available with a draft update of the Service Development Plan that addresses any development reflective of the audit.

Reconfiguration of the level three staffing system has stepped up a notch with the imminent appointment of Karen Lockie to 'Level Three Team Leader'. Other changes in the coming months will include moving from the house in Onslow Ave to new houses in Cullen Ave, Mt Roskill. This move has been confirmed for the end of August. Karen's change in role creates a gap at level two (Team Leader) that will be filled by Vanessa Tait. I want to point out that this is acknowledgement of a currently unwritten policy to support internal promotion and career development. Another example of this is Ena who started as a student placement 12 months ago and will become a full time staff member. Regards, Chris

Arahura Trust has recently received assistance from the following people and organisations. All at Arahura should acknowledge those willing to support us in providing a quality service – much of what we do relies on our ability to fundraise for it!

Donations

Margaret Longlois

Keith Spence (chemist)

M McKenzie

Laura Rimmer

S McGeorge

K Mataora

Stephanie Marsh

Plopa Valerian

Grants

JR McKenzie
3000.00

For Kuratau Winter Trip

Auckland City Council
(Community Group
Assistance)
1800.00

Change Your Mind

Kew Telemarketing
34,962.50

LAWN MAINTENANCE UNIT UPDATE

The Lawn mowing crew, Mark, Karl and Ross are still working hard keeping the residents houses looking like manicured golf courses. Some resident's neighbours have been so impressed that we have been approached to maintain their sections also. With the winter on us now stunting grass growth we have reduced the cutting frequency to every three weeks. I'm pleased to say that the lawn mowing equipment is still running well as it should due to Arahura purchasing brand new quality machinery. Some residents have remarked on how meticulous and fast Karl and Mark are at doing their lawns, so it's much appreciated to hear positive feedback. We have also enjoyed touching base with all the houses on a regular basis and we have enjoyed some well earned cold drinks bought for us at the end of our mowing. Thank you for those. We are in the process of deciding whether to take on more lawns and we will keep you posted. Thanks Ross.

ARAHURA SOCIAL CLUB UP AND RUNNING

The first meeting of the newly-formed Arahura Staff Social Club took place on Tuesday 16 March 2004. The Committee brainstormed some ideas for future, fun events and asked all members of the social club to indicate their top-3 choices from that list.

The first official social event is to be a themed evening at Parnell Rose Gardens on Friday 2 July, which Arahura is kindly contributing money towards.

David Breen is the Co-ordinator, Mike Haslam the Treasurer and Alison Chapman the Secretary. Staff contribute \$1 per week with Arahura matching this.

ADVOCACY: FREE TRAINING AND INFORMATION

We have information on workshops and education sessions around...

- Complaints, ways of resolving complaints and the value of exercising one's rights
- Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer Rights. Discussion of the code in detail and helps participants recognise potential breaches
- Empowerment Advocacy. Helping those who assist people in empowering themselves to resolve areas of conflict.
- The Rights. First of series of workshops that looks at each of the rights in the context of health and disability services.

This training is free and offered in July, August and September. Please call the Portage Office if you would like further information. Ph: 826 4466

NEW HOUSES AT DOMINION RD

Residents and Staff at the New Houses were asked for feedback as to how they feel about the move from Kakariki to the two houses at Dominion rd, these are their comments....

Gabriel: I like the new houses because they are well kept, comfortable and fun. I like the meals, shopping and popping out for coffee. I appreciate the domestic appliances and the carpet, kitchen and our privacy. I love my bedroom and my family and friends here in the community. I really like Chris Adamson and David Breen. And I love the evenings and morning and happy fun times during the day. I like the furniture and stereo sonic equipment. And the windows weather and garden. Yes, this is a lovely home and I am very happy being here. Thanks for your time.

Anne: The house I am living in now is easier for me to live in. I don't have skin complaints that I did at Kakariki. The atmosphere is much better. My mental health is better. The house is done up better. A lot more pleasant for me to live in. Even the furniture is much better. The house next door is better to. The bathrooms are nicely made. I enjoy living here because it's about 95% much better than Kakariki. It isn't even cold this place. A big improvement.

Susana: How I found the change from Kakariki to being here.

"Yes, the change was very nice. I find this house much more private and more comfortable. Catching the bus, there are a lot of places one can go to. I love my new room...it's comfortable. The house in itself is beautiful – nice lovely furniture etc. I've found the change to be a good one, plus we have lovely meals all the time, and we all pitch in to keep the house nice and tidy"

Harley: As a staff member I am very chuffed by the decision made by Arahura Trust and especially our CEO in choosing to have an immaculate concept of making available very comfortable living accommodation for level 3 homes at Dominion rd Extn. Arahura Trust has made possible that both the units are very well furnished with good taste. As a staff member this has been made evident, the reason being that the new houses have bought a total positive perspective towards the physical and mental status of the residents well being and also a pleasure for staff to work in a good fresh environment.

LABOUR GOVERNMENT BUDGET 2004: KEY ITEMS OF INTEREST TO OUR SECTOR

**HIGHLIGHTS REPRODUCED FROM THE SUMMARY PROVIDED BY
JAN SCOWN, DIRECTOR, OFFICE FOR DISABILITY ISSUES.
*SOME EDITING***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government released its Budget 2004 on 27 May 2004. The Office has received requests from many groups for more information about the budget and what is in it of particular interest to consumers. As a budget that focused on families, and particularly lower income families, there are a number of initiatives of benefit to disabled people and their families/whanau.

In the Office's view, the ten initiatives that most directly impact on consumers are:

- Changes to Invalids Benefit which will see the 15 hour rule and the stand-down period changed to make it easier for disabled people to make work pay
- Changes to funding of vocational services which will mean people will no longer have their Disability Allowance taken up by vocational service fees
- Funding to enable the Disability Survey to be repeated in 2006
- An extra \$250 million for mental health services
- An extra \$23.15 million for four Special Education projects to improve support for disabled students
- Increased support for the community and voluntary sector through three initiatives totalling \$11.2 million aimed at investing in and strengthening communities
- More funding for primary health care, including an initiative called Care Plus which includes people under 65 years with high health care needs
- Money to improve access to government services over the internet
- Legislation change and funding to extend the Residential Tenancies Act to people in boarding houses, providing better protection for tenants. This is of particular benefit to some people with mental health issues. There is also a wider review of the Residential Tenancies Act being funded. This will consider protection of the rights of people in supported accommodation. The Office sees it as a positive move in the direction of the National Health Committee recommendation that all adults living in residential accommodation, irrespective of their landlord, have the same tenancy protection as other New Zealanders
- And last but not least, extra funding for the Office for Disability Issues to establish a reference group of disabled people, to help consult with the disability sector, and to employ two additional senior staff to meet increased demand for policy advice.

Details of these and all other budget announcements can be accessed at the Beehive website: <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/budget/>.

RAINBOWS END

Thanks to Southern Trusts, Residents have been able to visit theme park, Rainbows End. Staff have collected the following comments from some of the people who have attended. The following comments came from residents of the Level Three houses, Dominion rd Extn and Onslow Houses.

Anthony....Very Good
Lorraine....I loved it
David...Excellent
Robyn...Felt Anxious
Mike...Good place to spend time with clients
John Mac...Brilliant day out
Yukiko...Great!! Thank you so much "Arigato"
Anne...I found it quite a bit of Fun. I particularly liked the mini gold. I actually did quite well at it. The Roller Coaster looked rather scary. The guys had a lot of fun. People should go to Rainbows End because even if you walk around it is a lot of fun. You even have good food. Thank you Arahura for the day of fun.
Gabe...I enjoyed the Golf

And Karen Lockie, Level One and Two Team Leader provided the following account,

Karen Here, Level 1 & 2 went to Rainbow's End in April & had a great day. We all "felt the fear and did it in anyway" on a few of the rides. Attendance was great - 15 people turned out for a bit of excitement. The weather was perfect, and we had the park practically to ourselves as we went on a week day. Hotdogs, burgers & fries for lunch, and then off round the park to work it off having fun. Some of the comments were as follows:

"Best day I've had in years"

"Loved the rollercoaster"

"went on the fearfall 7 times!"

"Aaaaaaah!"

"When can we go again?"

All in all a great day with lots of smiles, a few yells, and yet again thumbs up to Arahura for letting us all stretch our wings again. :-)

RESIDENTIAL CARE NEW ZEALAND

Chris Adamson attended the annual conference of Residential Care NZ Inc (RCNZ) in June. Back in the early 90's a group was formed called the 'Boarding House Association'. Later that turned into the 'Northern Region Mental Health Association' 'NORMHA'. In the past few years with some local political changes in the Auckland area it became very difficult for Normha to continue operating. In the past year Normha has been devolved to RCNZ. It was considered that this organisation would be able to support our issues on our behalf (Arahura was a member of Normha. RCNZ has historically been involved solely in the Rest Home industry. Their CEO has been actively looking at the common issues between Rest Homes and Mental Health Residential Services. This conference was the first where dedicated Mental Health Residential Services were represented. The Mental Health Delegation was small (^ out of 320) but vocal. We spent time talking with RCNZ reps regarding our presence and how our sector could benefit by continued membership with RCNZ. Chris found the conference very different from Mental Health Conferences. He is pleased to say that as a group he considers Mental Health to be far more sophisticated. In the way people consider speakers and others, including articulation by delegates within sessions. Their focus seems to be more on business than the service user. This was indicated further by the lack of service users or family members. Within the next 12 months we will see whether they can truly represent our sector.

DRIVING SKILLS APPRAISAL

With funding from Community Trusts, we were able to contract a driving instructor to assess and appraise staff driving skills. The prime reason for doing this was to ensure all aspects of service provision is provided in as safe as possible manner. There were no safety issues of significance. Staff members highlighted will get some specialised training to address any weak area's. In line with the general area of Health and Safety, Risk Management and OSH Compliance, Ross Pilcher will be completing the final aspects of his audit of Arahura sites, that is the updating of House Civil Defence Kits. Thanks to all those who have been patient with this process.

PROPERTY UPDATE

- Peary rd, due to a house fire has been replaced by a much better quality home in Dominion rd (Yes, we have three in Dominion rd now!). Residents are settling into their new home after quite a period in the Blue Star Lodge.

- Onslow will be moving into Cullen Ave end of August. We are very much looking forward to repeating what was done with Kakariki and given the positive comments, it can't happen too soon!

- The Portage rd Office is now on a month to month lease, with prospective new tenants looking through it regularly. For that reason we are moving to a much nicer office in St Lukes, 7a Wagner Place July 14th.,

- Having had success in finding a good quality replacement for Peary, we are now looking to do the same for Don Croots. Private rentals are being checked daily.

HIGHLIGHTED STAFF MEMBER, LUCY

Lucy has been employed as a mental health support worker since February this year working at the Level 1 & 2 office. To follow is the interview we had with Lucy after she had started.

“Lucy, what brought you to Arahura Charitable Trust?”

“I wanted to work for a medium sized organisation, basically working with people who have a mental illness with drug and alcohol issues.”

“Lucy, what skills and attributes do you bring to this work?”

“Communication skills, and extensive experience in violence and trauma which I feel is very much related to mental health issues. Also life experience and work experience.”

“Lucy if you had one wish in the world what would it be?”

“Total peace in the world.”

“Lucy, what movie has most impressed you that you can recall right now?”

“Planet of the Apes.”

“And what is your favourite food?”

“Italian – because that includes Pizza.”

“What is your favourite TV programme?”

“Shortland Street!”

“Where would your ideal holiday be?”

“The Caribbean – Jamaica.”

“Lucy, what would you see as an important contribution by a family of someone using mental health services?”

“Understanding and acceptance of the Consumers illness. Availability to take opportunity to be involved in forums that enable support and interest to be expressed. – eg family therapy.”

Thanks Lucy!

WEBSITE: WWW.ARAHURA.ORG.NZ IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION – UP AND RUNNING BY MID JULY!