

Prof. Rhiannon Braund, President, Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand

Saturday 9.30am – Welcome/Introduction

Rhiannon Braund is a Professor at the New Zealand Pharmacovigilance Centre, University of Otago.

Her research centres on access equity and the safe use of medications. She has published widely on adherence, and "Medicines Use Reviews" and has studied the reclassification of trimethoprim and sildenafil as well as the introduction and evaluation of Pharmacy Accuracy Checking Technicians.



Dr Ayesha Verrall, Minister of Health

Saturday 10.00am – Official Address

Dr Ayesha Verrall is an infectious diseases doctor and Labour list MP from Wellington. She is passionate about preventing illness so that every New Zealander can enjoy good health and live a free and full life. She is an expert on vaccines, tuberculosis and COVID-19. During the COVID-19 pandemic response, Ayesha was instrumental in efforts to improve New Zealand's contact tracing.



Letitia Harding, Chief Executive Officer, Asthma and Respiratory Foundation New Zealand

Saturday 11.00am and 2.00pm – Session 1 – The Ins and Outs of Vaping

Letitia has spent 30 years in the health sector. Prior to moving into the not-for-profit space Letitia held senior roles in the pharmaceutical, nuclear medicine and laboratory diagnostic arena. These roles included the introduction of new health technologies, improving access to medicines, and initiating imaging and diagnostic trials. Letitia is Chief Executive of Asthma and Respiratory Foundation NZ and a strong advocate for greater regulation of vaping products to protect youth in NZ. Recent appointments: GINA 2020 advocate, Chair of the Patient Focal Group Planning Committee and Co-Chair of the Western-Pacific Region Global Alliance Against Chronic Respiratory Diseases (GARD).



Vanessa Brown, Clinical Pharmacist, Hawkes Bay DHB

Saturday 11.00am and 2.00pm – Session 2 – Managing Medicines in the Elderly

Vanessa has been a Registered Pharmacist since 1999, with a variety of clinical pharmacy experience in Hawke's Bay and UK. Previously a specialist palliative care pharmacist, Vanessa joined the Clinical Facilitator team at Hawke's Bay District Health Board in 2012. Vanessa's role is focused on appropriate prescribing of long-term medicines, in primary care, for complex and elderly patients.

Vanessa also works as a specialist pain pharmacist as part of the Te Whatu Ora chronic pain team and also contracts to ACC to complete medication reviews for pain patients.

Vanessa has completed post-graduate qualifications in Palliative Care, Clinical Pharmacy, and Pain Management.

She enjoys being fully integrated in the many multidisciplinary teams in which she works and helping with the complex medicine challenges that primary care faces every day.



Diane May and Jan Howarth, Mindfulness Aotearoa

Saturday 11.00am and 2.0pm – Session 3 – Mindfulness - A Prescription for Wellbeing: using the breath for stress management

Together, Dianne and Jan bring over 40 years of experience in practicing and teaching mindfulness to people from all walks of life. Mindfulness Aotearoa work with staff in a range of organisations in the public and private sector, including various District Health Boards and corporate organisations, as well as offering the highly regarded 8-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course for the public.

Both fully Certified and experienced, Dianne and Jan are authorised by the Mindfulness Training Institute of Australia and New Zealand (MTI-ANZ) to deliver internationally recognised, evidence-based Mindfulness courses.

Diane May, Director and Teacher

Dianne is a Director and Certified MBSR Teacher at Mindfulness Aotearoa. She is also Co-director of the Mindfulness Training Institute of Australia and New Zealand (MTI-ANZ) – a not-for-profit established to ensure the professional and rigorous training of individuals to deliver Mindfulness Based Interventions across Australia and New Zealand.

Dianne, also a trained counsellor, was one of the first teachers to offer the 8-week MBSR course in New Zealand, and her personal practice and love of mindfulness meditation spans a period of over 30 years.



Jan Howarth, Director and Teacher

Jan is a Director and Certified MBSR Teacher at Mindfulness Aotearoa. Jan first came to mindfulness when undergoing cancer treatment. She was offered mindfulness tools to help her cope with the physical, emotional, and psychological stress and pain that comes with a serious illness. Jan found the benefits extended way beyond simply a coping strategy and found it so life changing that she was inspired to become a teacher and share mindfulness with others.

Jan holds a psychology degree and has extensive knowledge and qualifications in positive psychology and preventive health.



Dr Ngaire Kerse, Auckland GP

Saturday 1.00pm Plenary – Optimising Medicines Outcomes in care of the Elderly

Ngaire is a GP academic and Joyce Cook Chair in Ageing Well at the University of Auckland. She has clinical and research expertise in care of older people and prescribing is a favourite subject. She has led large projects about wellbeing in older people and medication use is a key aspect. With David Wood she convenes online courses about optimising medications with older people.



Danny Wu, Regional Wayfinder, Commissioning (Interim), Northern Region, Te Whatu Ora

Saturday 3.30pm Plenary – Public Health Service and the Pharmacists Role

Former pharmacist Danny Wu was appointed in January as the interim regional “wayfinder” for the northern region by Te Whatu Ora.

In a media release from Te Whatu Ora, Ms Abbe Anderson explained that regional wayfinders will lead commissioning teams for healthcare services in their communities.

“The job of the regional wayfinder is to find a way through, to remove barriers and to shine the light on possible paths forward,” Ms Anderson says in the media release. “Regional wayfinders are custodians of the Pae Ora vision and the holders of regional relationships.”

Danny began his career as a pharmacist and has since worked in strategic planning, change management and clinical service improvement in the healthcare sector. He's also worked in planning and funding, in provider roles in former District Health Boards and at the Ministry of Health.



Prof. Bob Hancox, Department of Preventive and Social Medicine, Dunedin School of Medicine, University of Otago

Sunday 9.15am Plenary – Breathing Easy Respiratory Health

Bob Hancox is a respiratory specialist who combines epidemiological and clinical research to investigate why people develop diseases such as asthma, allergies, and chronic lung disease and to find better ways to assess and treat these disorders. Much of his research is based on the long-running Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study, which has followed 1,037 children since their birth in Dunedin in the early 1970s into adult life. Important findings from this research reveal how childhood experiences and lifestyle affect lung health in adulthood.

He also leads the Next Generation Study, which assesses the children of the Dunedin Study members to understand how health and well-being transfer across generations. Other research has included investigations into the long-term effects of television viewing on children's health, social, and educational development, and into the early-life origins of obesity,



Shirena Vasan, Pharmacist, Michael Hamond, Pharmacist and Samantha Burgess, Technician

Sunday 11.00am and 2.00pm – Session 4 – Pharmacy Careers – Realising the Opportunities

Shirena Vasan, Business Development Manager, Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand

Kia ora, I am the Business Development Manager at the Pharmaceutical Society. I am a pharmacist with a post graduate qualification in Public Health. I worked in community pharmacy in NZ, Australia, the UK, and the Republic of Ireland early in my career. I then moved into education, teaching the pharmacy technician qualification before managing the education and training division at the Pharmaceutical Society. I am a mum of two little children and have an interest in providing support for parents, so recently started the [Parental Well-Being Podcast](#).



Michael Hammond, Pharmacist and Senior Advisor, Primary Care, Primary Health Care System Improvement and Innovation, Commissioning, Te Whatu Ora

After graduating from the University of Auckland, Michael started his career at North Shore Hospital before moving to develop and implement a clinical pharmacist facilitator service for the Primary Health Organisation (PHO) in Rotorua. He has recently finished leading COVID-19 Pharmacy Establishment Team in the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine in community pharmacy across the three Auckland districts and is now looking at projects in the childhood immunisation space.

Michael is also the project manager for the quality improvement programme Safety in Practice, as well as a number of other primary care initiatives for Waitematā and Auckland districts. To support him in this role, he also works casually as a pharmacist at Waitematā's North Shore Hospital. He is enthusiastic about learning and continuing education; being the first New Zealand pharmacist to complete the Diploma of Leadership and Management through the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia. He is currently also on the Auckland Branch of PSNZ. Michael is passionate about patient safety and expanding the roles and services for pharmacy.



Pharmacy Accuracy Checking Technician (PACT), Samantha Burgess, Technician Life Pharmacy Coastlands

Samantha is the 2020 New Zealand Primary Healthcare Awards – Pharmacy Technician of the Year winner.

Samantha has been working “on the ground floor” in New Zealand Pharmacy as a Pharmacy Technician Level 5 and 6 and a Pharmacy Accuracy Checking Technician (PACT) for over 10 years. Samantha completed her training while working on the front line for Green Cross Health at Life Pharmacy Coastlands where she has also been Dispensary Manager for the last 3 years.

Samantha has been at the forefront of change for pharmacy technicians and is honoured to be the first Pharmacy Technician on the National Executive for the Society. Being the first represented Technician Samantha brings a unique voice to the National Executive, she is passionate about supporting the technician position and pathways in which we can grow the profession to help colleagues and our communities.



Jonny Mah, Manager EVOLVE Intern Training Programme, Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand

Sunday 11.00am and 2.00pm – Session 5 – EVOLVE Intern Training Programme and Assessment Centre

Jonny is the current Manager of the EVOLVE Intern Pharmacist Programme at the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand. Previously, he worked as a community pharmacist and has been an intern pharmacist preceptor and trainee technician supervisor. Jonny is enthusiastic about helping young pharmacists to develop into excellent, independent practitioners.



Chris Jay, Manager Practice and Policy, Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand

Sunday 11.00am and 2.00pm – Session 6 – Current Hot Topics in Pharmacy Practice

Chris is currently employed as Manager Practice and Policy at the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand. He is an experienced and future-focused registered Pharmacist with a demonstrated history of working in the health care industry for the last 32 years. With his passion for practice focused pharmacy, healthcare management, strategy and system wide thinking, Chris articulates a positive future view and contributes to a multi-disciplinary sector processes to deliver favourable outcomes for pharmacy.



Teei Kaiaruna, General Manager of Iwi Māori Relationships in the Mātauranga Māori Directorate at Te Aka Whai Ora – Māori Health Authority and Pharmacist, Auckland

Sunday 1.00pm Plenary – The new Health and Disability System – progressive Implementation

Nō Tainui, Kuki Airani. Teei Kaiaruna is the newly appointed General Manager of Iwi Māori Relationships in the Mātauranga Māori Directorate at Te Aka Whai Ora – Māori Health Authority. Starting her health reform journey at the interim Māori Health Authority in February 2023, Teei is also the Principal Advisor – Design, in the National Localities Team at Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand. Prior to the reform, she called former Counties Manukau District Health Board home and her time was largely spent advocating for Māori and Pacific Health equity. This advocacy extended into the COVID-19 testing and vaccination response for Māori and Pacific in the Northern Region where she contributed in both a clinical and commissioning capacity. Teei holds a current APC, locuming when required at Middlemore Hospital in the outpatient pharmacy and is working towards completing a Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Pharmacy in Prescribing this year.



Brooke McKay, Pharmacist and Pharmacy Owner, Wellington

Sunday 3.00pm Plenary – The Reality of Pharmacy Consultation Services from the Front-Line

Brooke is an enthusiastic community pharmacist who has already been successful in her 10-year career. She became a community pharmacy owner in Upper Hutt at the age of 25. Her pharmacy employs 22 staff, so she understands the challenges facing pharmacy owners.

Brooke has been a past Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand branch president for three years and a branch committee member for eight years. She is a board member for the Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand and A national executive member for The Pharmaceutical society, she has been both an intern and PACT preceptor. She is passionate about pharmacist consultation services, vaccinations and embracing tikanga Māori and te reo Māori and enabling all pharmacists and pharmacy staff to provide culturally safe pharmacy practice.

