



Diabetes

Foundation Aotearoa

Te Tumu Matehuka o Aotearoa

Annual Activity Report 2023

WHAKATAUKI

Ehara tāku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini.
“My success is not mine alone, it is the success of the
collective”.

CONTENTS

- About the Foundation
 - Aims
- Who are we
 - Board of Trustees
 - Our Team
- From the Board Chair
- Main Activities
- Manager Conclusion
- From the Team
- Acknowledgements
- Contact Details

About the Foundation

Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa is an Otara based Charitable Trust and has been in operation since 1993.

The Foundation aims to prevent and reverse diabetes - its prevalence and its damage - for Aotearoa New Zealand's most high risk communities

To prevent diabetes, we seek:

- To influence factors in our systems which increase the risk of diabetes
- To prevent or delay progression to diabetes for people at risk
- To prevent the worst manifestation of diabetes and risk of tissue damage for people with diabetes

To reverse diabetes we seek:

- To achieve significant long term improvement in insulin sensitivity and to normalise the levels of glucose in the blood for people with diabetes



Who we are

OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

John Baker (Chairperson)
Kate Vennell (Deputy Chair)
Graham King
Henry Kozak
Fale Lesa
Gerhard Sundborn

OUR TEAM

Diana Anderson - Co-ordinator Healthy Workplaces
Tania Bromley - Facilitator Gardens4Health
Patricia Harry - Lifestyle Programme/research support
Kime Esau - Co-ordinator GetWize2Health Schools
Jennifer Leatham - Administration Officer
Richard Main - Project Manager Gardens4Health
Hari Narayan - Facilitator Gardens4Health
Kanchana Perera - PhD Candidate
Karen Pickering - General Manager
Kate Smallman - Mātanga Tapuhi (Nurse Practitioner)/Clinical Projects Manager

The screenshot shows the website's header with the logo and navigation links: Home, Who we are, Our Programmes, Resources, Latest News, and Contact. Below the header is a grid of six news items:

- Our team at the ANZMOSS Auckland Bariatric Meeting** (September 27th 2022): A photo of three people. Text: "Congratulations to John Baker, Patricia Harry and Diana Anderson who had the opportunity to..."
- Our Whakatauki** (May 20th 2022): A green graphic with text: "Ta tatou whakatauki...". Text: "A whakatauki is a proverb, or saying of significance in Māori culture. Whakatauki have been..."
- In the News:** (May 26th 2022): A photo of a person. Text: "Article by Stephen Forbes, Local Democracy Reporter for Stuff, with the headline '100 new health..."
- Our Vision and values** (May 20th 2022): A silhouette of people. Text: "Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa has been in the community for over three decades now. But who are..."
- In the News:** (October 13th 2022): A photo of a person. Text: "There's a supply issue with Trulicity (dulaglutide) medication for people with diabetes, and the..."
- Announcing our Patron - Professor David Simmons** (August 17th 2022): A photo of a man. Text: "We are delighted that Distinguished Professor David Simmons has accepted the role of..."

From the Board Chair

Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa has had another good year. Our financial position is robust, and we continue to maintain good financial reserves. Our core businesses are thriving. The community projects including Healthy Workplaces, Cook'n Kiwi, GetWize2Health Schools, and the Gardens4Health project are currently funded by Te Whatu Ora/Ministry of Health, and Gardens4Health also has additional funding from Auckland Council.

Our research projects also continue to prosper. The Adolescent Bariatric Surgery study entered its third year. The first group of 6 participants who started in October 2020 are expected to complete follow-up later this year. All remain in the program, one of the six participants had a bariatric procedure with 40% weight loss and all at this point have stabilised their weight and in most cases lost weight. This all occurred during a period of social disruption with multiple COVID lockdowns. The outstanding outcomes reflect the quality of our team's work; personal nutrition advice from Diana Anderson, diabetes support from Nurse Practitioner Kate Smallman, and friendship and cultural support from Trish Harry. The team are grateful to the Freemason Foundation Potter Trust and Perpetual Guardian Trust for funding this project.

Distinguished Professor David Simmons (University of West Sydney) agreed to be patron of the Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa in May 2022. David continues to analyse data from the 25-year DCSS audit of diabetes management in primary care in South Auckland and he has produced several new manuscripts throughout the year. These publications were prepared in collaboration with an international team of scientists and help achieve the aim of Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa to be an organisation providing useful research. To support this endeavour, the Foundation funded a 3-year PhD research scholarship through West Sydney University and Kanchana Perera was appointed in June 2022. We were proud to provide support for Kanchana and Dahai Yu (biostatistician) to attend and present at the International Diabetes Epidemiology Group meeting in Porto, Portugal in December 2022.

Karen Pickering has again led the team well though the year. We need to acknowledge Karen's more than 20 years' service and continuing support from a number of long-serving employees, Jennie Leatham, Trish Harry and Kate Smallman. It's hard to imagine where we would be without their amazing loyalty to the trust and what it represents.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the contribution of our Trustees to critical governance and strategic direction. Our Trustees bring passion and commitment to meetings and Foundation activities. Graham King (Ngāti Tai) provides patient perspective and acts as media spokesperson, Kate Vennell gives governance and finance expertise, Gerhard Sundborn provides Pacific perspective and academic support, Henry Kozak brings a patient perspective and extensive experience in marketing and communications and Fale Lesa contributes valuable Pacific perspective and strong governance experience. We were also sorry to accept the resignation of Pat Spellman after two years in the role of Trustee and wish him all the best.

John Baker - Board Chair

Main Activities

Research - In the 2022-23 year we have been carrying out the third year of the Adolescent Bariatric research project in conjunction with Counties Manukau Health. The last participant is expected to be finished in 2025. See Also 'Advocacy' and 'Student support' below.

Healthy Workplaces – This Te Whatu Ora funded programme delivers health promotion/education services into a range of workplaces. Face to face and online activity provides the workplace with practical guidance and support across Auckland. The nature of the workplaces recognising the importance of promoting the health of their employees varies widely, from industry to retail to health and community organisations.

Gardens4Health – Funded by Te Whatu Ora, Auckland Council, other funders with additional in-kind support. The Gardens4Health team continues to work alongside over 80 community gardens and food related enterprises to help them grow and provide fresh and healthy food to community members, beautify and protect the environment, promote increased physical activity, improved mental health, and healthy social context. We were delighted to welcome new team member Tania Bromley onboard to work in the West/North areas. The team have been challenged by the lingering impacts of Covid (closed gardens/restarts), inclement weather (flooding) and land usage change in Tamaki Makaurau.

GetWize2Health Schools – Schools have remained challenged over the 2022-23 year as teachers and school staff remained under pressure in the classroom. Telephone and online delivery of support and training to teachers has continued in the use of the GetWize2Health resource. Schools co-ordinator and much valued team member, Dietitian Kime Esau, has signalled her intention to leave to further her career in a more clinical direction and recruiting will be underway to fill this role for the new financial year.

Cook'nKiwi - Healthy Eating on a Budget. This Te Whatu Ora funded programme remains popular, and the flexibility developed over time to adapt to the needs of the groups being delivered to is one of its strongest points. It remains very complementary to other programmes, including Gardens4Health where growing healthy food is one thing, being able to use it to feed the whanau is quite another.

Resource & programme development – An audit of many of our most popular resources noted that they have been around, and continuing to be well used for in some cases over a decade. We continue to revise and use co-design principles to develop online versions in particular.

Student support and capacity building - Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa remain committed to providing support and encouragement to students from a range of disciplines and professions. Our train the trainer approach continues to be a valuable option to offer to help to increase capacity of other organisations working in the community, particularly where they work with high risk clients so as to deliver informed, research based and effective service.

PhD candidate Kanchana Perera commenced with Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa in June of 2022, she is well underway with her research work which includes analysis of DCSS data, the Bariatric project, and use of historical blood samples.

Advocacy - A new medications project was successfully undertaken where Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa worked with a PR company to run a project in South Auckland to increase the uptake of new medications among those most in need. A paper has been written and submitted for publication describing the outcome.

Manager Conclusion

What a busy year we've had. In some ways it looked nothing like we had envisaged when sitting down to plan, or when writing the all important budget, but in other ways, we've been able to pick up on some exciting opportunities to really make a difference.

First up, I need to acknowledge our amazing team members. When I sit down to prepare for the 6 monthly reporting for some of our contracts, I am tempted to complain at the sheer amount of words needed to create what can be a 70 page document. Then I remember that as a manager I couldn't be more fortunate than to feel like I have too much to report on. So to all of our amazing team members, you do the most amazing mahi, and for many, have done for a long time.

When I say 'long time' in relation to our team sticking power, as mentioned by our Board Chair, some people have been around for quite a while. The average time with the organisation is 14 years. The maximum is over 30 years (Trish). Jennie comes in second at 25 years, followed by Kate and myself both over 23. Three quarters of the team have been with us for more than 10 years. And we can't forget Board membership, our Board Chair John Baker has been with the organisation since the 1990's.

Speaking of our Board of Trustees, after an extensive consultation led by Board member Graham King, a new Whakatauki and Te Reo translation of our name have been confirmed to go with the changes to the Trust deed, which now are reflected in a new mission and values. These are now on our website. Pat Spellman was strongly influential in driving the changes to our online presence, and he was reluctantly farewelled as he went off to new challenges in 2022. He will be a hard act to follow, however our Trustees have demonstrated their ongoing commitment to the mahi that Pat started. A lot of progress has been made with the support in particular of Claire and team at The Renew Room who gifted our new website. We also have to mention the support of Rocketspark for the website hosting. I can honestly say that in relation to our movement into the online space, where we are at the moment feels very much like we're climbing rather than maintaining, and that there is a groundswell of excitement as we consider the possibilities ahead of us.

It was decided not to run a Diabetes Summit in 2022. This was a pragmatic decision, while the three that have been run so far were very well received and provided value at the time in terms of advocacy and information sharing, it was decided to take a little longer to consider next steps. This will be reviewed as part of the Foundation's strategy in 2024. All has not been quiet on the advocacy front however. There have been major efforts in this direction, particularly around the drive to improve medication access for type 2 diabetes. Dr John Baker and Graham King in particular have been very active in this space, having been tireless in their efforts to raise awareness of issues. There is more information in the 'Latest news/blog' section on our website.

So at the end of the 2022-2023 Financial year, I can only say thank you to everyone who helped make it such a success. And wish everyone an excellent 2023.

Karen Pickering - General Manager

From the team

Diana Anderson - Lifestyle Coordinator/Workplaces

Working in the workplace space has been challenging with many workplaces still remaining closed post Covid. There has been some opportunity to do health screening which has been useful to staff not getting to see their GP with the long waiting lists. The increased cost of food and in particular vegetables impacts on vegetable intake and staff health. Other eating patterns such as grazing throughout the day with no set meal times and an increased reliance on fast food is challenging. Updating our budgeting resources has been helpful for workplaces with clients struggling with the increased cost of food. Decreasing vegetable waste at home is helpful for encouraging people to continue to buy vegetables and eat them while they are still fresh.



Patricia Harry - Lifestyle Facilitator/Research Assistant

Well 2023 has been a busy start for me personally! Well where do I start, Lifestyle Facilitator in the Lifestyle Team, has been busy and enjoyable as well. From the Cook'n Kiwi program being out in the community, working alongside my team and sharing knowledge to our community has been awesome.

Meeting lots of new people on their health journey has been awesome and to share life experiences is a bonus.

Our Adolescent study is still going strong with our young teens. Still keeping that connection with the teens and whanau has certainly been a journey, working together and gaining trust from all. Certainly has helped me to learn from them and share life experiences.

My roles always varies, this gives me more room to learn more and skills which is also a bonus to keep myself updated.

Still on track with social media, keeping our Facebook pages running, sharing information, ideas and also what we do in the community.

On a personal note, my family is well, my daughter started college and that is a whole lot of learning too, but it is life and we will keep on going. We are blessed with the best.

Fakaue lahi for all the support and love that has been given to me and as always very grateful.



Trish in action, cooking demonstration

Jennifer Leatham - Administration

Every year this report seems like such a challenge. I don't know why – my year is certainly busy and full – and when I look back to some of the reports written over the years, it makes interesting reading for me. I started with the Diabetes Projects Trust in December 1998, where I worked briefly at Middlemore Hospital until we moved to Otara in March 2000 and joined Diabetes Services in their clinic rooms.

In 2001 I got my own desk, then my own office, and in 2002 I upgraded to a laptop. In 2003 I did an accounting course and we started using an MYOB accounting package – with reports at the press of a button! 2005 saw us filing twice monthly with the IRD – we now do it every payday - and we began processing our PAYE and GST online. Broadband internet came to us in 2007 and it was 'so fast'. We started using MYOB Payroll software and Kiwisaver was introduced as a form of retirement savings for us all. In April 2011 the Middlemore Diabetes services moved to MIT and we took the premises over for ourselves.

'We' had reached a milestone and turned 21. So, in December 2013, along with many old work friends, we had a great celebration.

The DIA introduced new reporting standards for the Charities commission. This involved changing the format of our end of year Financial Report, and preparation and training was done for this over the 2015/16 years. Online banking started for us in 2017 and it was goodbye to written cheques.

2019 was a big year for the team. Funding was stopped for the DCSS Audit, and we said goodbye to some of the wonderful Audit people. We became the Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa and we held our first summit in July at the Waipuna Conference Centre.

Our world – like, the WHOLE world – came to a standstill in 2020 with the arrival of the Covid19 pandemic and worldwide lockdowns. We worked from home. We managed everything online, and we had Zoom meetings to stay connected with each other. Over the next year we were finding our new 'normal' and then, in August 2021, Auckland went back into another level 4 lockdown.

So, here we are now in March 2023. As I looked back, I noticed one thing in particular that stood out. I noticed what has made my time working here so enjoyable. 25 years of enjoyable in December! It is the people. It is the day-to-day support, the laughs we have, and the kindness shown. It was a tough year for me personally – and words cannot express the gratitude I feel for the support given me from the whole team. It is your encouragement that has helped me through. Thank you.



Richard Main - Gardens4Health Project Manager

Community gardens in the current economic downturn are the go to place to grow affordable food to feed families if only the rain would stop to allow water logged soils to dry out for plants to grow! The Auckland rains of recent times have done one thing though, they've added yet another benefit to the long list of good things community gardens do, local authority planners are now extolling the benefits of community garden land as sponges in heavy rain events where water can permeate through the plant landscape.

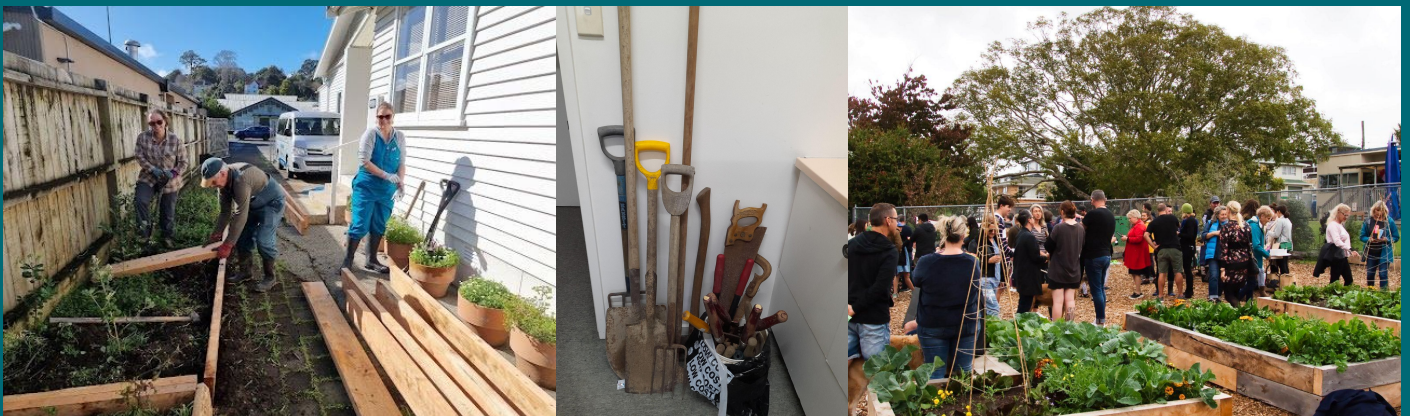
For the dedicated Gardens4Health team of Hari Narayan and Tania Bromley, the drought conditions followed by flooding events and ongoing impact of Covid has required the team to pivot, to keep off the land, concentrating on advisory support and running workshops indoors. Timber raised gardens have largely avoided flood damage.

New gardens have opened while a few gardens have struggled to operate due to low participation numbers, in part due to Covid, unfavorable weather and people moving out of the area for more affordable housing. New gardens include a cluster of projects in collaboration with Auckland City Mission eg.Homeground roof top hot house garden, six community gardens on the North Shore and a Fletcher Living Drury garden where an additional 15,000 people are likely to live in the next 10 years.

Engaging with the diverse ethnic community has been rewarding for the Gardens4Health team-

- Garden resources were provided to the Burmese Ratanadipa Temple Community Garden in New Lynn,
- Delivering a workshop and timber for garden edging for Refugee Education for Adults and Families at their Selwyn College garden
- Supporting the Fijian Early Childhood garden in Mangere.

Demand for Gardens4Health service delivery has never been greater as more people seek guidance to grow food for health and wellbeing. See our Gardens4Health Facebook page for more information and photos

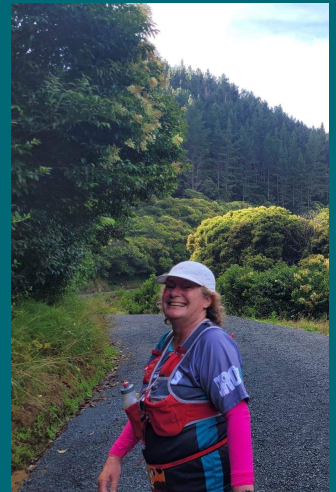


Kate Smallman - Clinical Projects Manager/Nurse Practitioner/Researcher

Big focus this year has been the youth weight loss study. Keeping track of 21 young people has been a great effort for myself and the team - Diana, Trish and John. Trish has been especially busy as she is the person on the phone and with the most contact.

I passed my Nurse Practitioner exams at the end of 2022 and can now work in that scope of practice. The Nurse Practitioner group were gifted a Māori name - Mātanga Tapuhi and I'm honoured to use the name.

In my role with Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa consulting with Pharmac I have been able to support some of the great deal of work being done to improve access to insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitoring devices. I also am kept busy working with NZSSD (New Zealand Society for the Study of Diabetes) as honorary Secretary.



Kate at Clevedon half marathon

Kanchana Perera - PhD Candidate

I graduated from University of Auckland with a M.Sc. in medical statistics exactly TWENTY years ago! Since then, I have worked as a biostatistician in Perth, Auckland and am currently working remotely with the US Uniformed Services University for the Health Sciences located in Maryland, USA. I am based in Auckland and working with Diabetes Foundation Aotearoa on my exciting (and eye opening!) PhD journey with Western Sydney University from July 2022.

I anticipate that my research topic: "Ethnic differences in diabetes in New Zealand" will provide a deeper understanding of the ethnic differences in type 2 diabetes (T2D) in New Zealand by identifying the characteristics and/or biomarkers that are most closely associated with an increased risk of diabetic kidney disease (DKD). This knowledge will not only highlight the current T2D and diabetic nephropathy epidemic amongst those of Māori and Pasifika descent, but could inform strategies to help mitigate DKD.

In December 2022, I presented at the International Diabetes Epidemiology Group (IDEG), which took place in the gorgeous city of Porto in Portugal - what a valuable academic and networking experience that was! In the time leading up to March 2023, I have regularly met with my immediate supervisor, Professor David Simmons, as well as hold a group meeting on research progress for my panel of amazing supervisors: Dr. John Baker, Ms. Karen Pickering, Dr. Dahai Yu, Dr. Anandwardhan Hardikar and Dr. Gerhard Sundborn, whilst juggling work and being a mum - definitely challenging, but also a remarkable experience that I look forward to providing more interesting information about as my research unfolds.



Kanchana and her poster with David Simmons at IDEG in 2022.

Acknowledgements

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The Renew Room (website design)
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