

OTARA DIABETES AWARENESS EVENT 2001



Beautiful weather, excellent turn out, plenty of displays and information and entertainment ensured that 2001 Otara Diabetes Awareness Week was a significant and enjoyable health promotion event.

The project started with the recognition by community members in the Otara Network Forum that diabetes is a problem which is prevalent in Otara and has huge personal, social, and financial consequences.

The format of the event was 4 days of intensive activity. It not only focused on Diabetes and its consequences but also recognised the important fact that diabetes does not stand alone when looking at health outcomes, the whole person and their environment needs consideration, whether it is in the area of physical, financial, spiritual, cultural or psychological. The Planning Working Party used a brainstorming process using material generated at the November 2000 Otara network forum to look at taking positive action to help deal with the growing diabetes problem. The aim was to:

“Increase diabetes awareness in the Otara community with prevention activities designed and run by the community.”

SNAPSHOT OF A SPECIAL WEEK

In line with Otara values a Powhiri to welcome participants attending the week long event was provided by locals, and Mangere Kaumatua Aronia Ahmiro represented visitors. This was followed by a Prayer by Father Rae from local Catholic ministry and our local MP Ross Robertson lent his support with a short speech.

Kuini Mihaere was the MC for the 4 days and did an exceptional job of pulling things together and generating an air of excitement and fun.

Other high points of the first day included displays by South Auckland Health (Kids First, Renal services), CODA members (Community Organisations for Diabetes Action)

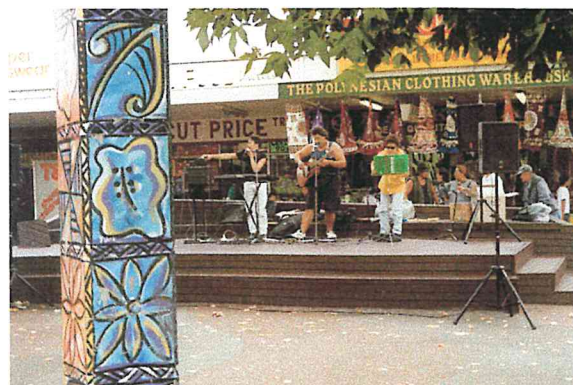


Screening for diabetes was carried out by nurses from a number of organisations and results showed a high incidence of abnormal elevated blood glucose levels. Kuini the MC shows getting tested wasn't such a big deal after all. (see page 4 for screening results)

A demonstration of healthy cooking on Tuesday and Friday was put on by Public Health Promotions A+ using a specially designed mobile kitchen from Mangere Community Health Trust.



Throughout the week a variety of entertainment was a great way to get people together and was much enjoyed by all. Real people showed how easy being active is and how much fun can be had during exercise demonstrations, line dancing, and dancing to the music created by entertainers "Footprints".



High points of other days included a wide variety of helpful displays on subjects other than diabetes but linked to living a lifestyle that encourages health. National Heart Foundation, Drug Free Ambassadors, Work and Income, Inland revenue, Health Advocates, local community services promoting healthy lifestyles were among those who were there to give friendly advice and answer questions.

Support was given by Manukau Maori Police Cultural Group, Otara Kohanga Reo, and Tangaroa College Cook Island group all provided exceptional entertainment for the large numbers of people attending.

As usual local ambassadors and wardens gave strong support and helped make the event the success it was, managing parking, security, setting up and minding displays when unattended.

Refreshments were served by Civil defence volunteers who were an integral of ensuring that participants were looked after in typical Otara fashion.

EVALUATION

So was it worth it??? Overwhelmingly YES!

The cost of the 4 day event was \$900. This money was donated by organisations and a substantial contribution was made by the Otara Community Board. It also has to be recognised that invaluable hours were donated by many organisations and participants to ensure the success of the week long event. Spot prizes were provided free by sponsors Roche, Johnson & Johnson, and Hubbards.

Attendance

The actual number of people who attended is impossible to calculate as there was continuous flow through the shopping centre of local and out of town people. Many hundreds each day were attracted by the entertainment and took advantage of the displays and information freely available to them. It was noted that as many leaflets as were put on display were collected by those attending.

Feedback

A feedback form was circulated to participants after the event. Feedback, both formal and informal has been overwhelmingly positive from those who attended and those who participated on the day.

Comments included:

- "Fantastic to see different resources or information available in different languages"
- "Venue was a good place to take the message to the public"
- "congratulations to the instigators and organisers, well done!"
- "Kuini is excellent...keep her on"
- "Very valuable to be able to inform and share with clients in the community"
- "The atmosphere was vibrant and enthusiastic"
- "Good to have exercise programme and entertainment included with promotion"
- "A strength of the promotion was the exercise programme"

Recommendations

- "More advanced marketing"
- "More advertising so we can get more people attending"
- "Diabetes screening every day"
- "Make it an annual event"

Diabetes Screening

Early identification of diabetes and those at risk of diabetes is recognised as being vital to management of the developing nation wide crisis.

The results of 3 hours of screening using current recommendations on the first day were a sobering reminder of the potential magnitude of the South Auckland diabetes Problem...

Number Tested without existing diagnosed diabetes	55
Percentage within expected range (<6mmol/l)	49%
Percentage of those without diagnosed diabetes referred to Doctor with blood sugar between 6 and 11mmol/l*	49%
Percentage of those without diagnosed diabetes referred to Doctor with blood sugar >11mmol/l	1.8%

* NZSSD 1997; WHO 1998,



Positive Otara Publicity

Otara received national publicity through Te Karere as a community actually taking things into its own hands and 'doing something', as well as local coverage through Manukau Courier and radio stations including 531 PI.

Working together/relationships

An opportunity for community groups and organisations to work together is recognised as being vital for increasing effectiveness. Valuable contacts were made and all organisations surveyed after the event indicated their desire to work together again.

THANKS TO THOSE WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE

Special thanks go to those who participated in the planning, carrying out and supporting of 2001 Otara Diabetes Awareness Week including:

Organising Committee
Otara Diabetes Support Group
Otara Leisure Centre
SAH Renal Services
SAH Kids First
National Advocacy service
Work & Income
IRD
Otara Health Inc
Enterprise Otara
National Heart Foundation
Drug free ambassadors
CODA – including – Diabetes Auckland,
South Seas Healthcare, Health
Promotion A+, Health Pacifica, Mangere
Diabetes Project, Mangere Peoples
Centre, Raukura Hauora Mobile Nurses,
Mangere Diabetes Integrated Care,
Diabetes Projects Trust.
Manukau Maori Police Kapa Haka Group
Otara Kohanga Reo (Purapura)
Tangaroa College Cook Island Group
Line Dancers
Footprints - entertainers

Epilepsy Association
Asthma Society
Otara Music & Arts Centre
Ambassadors
Mainstreet Association
Civil Defence
Te PupuhiTahi Tanga
Age Concern
Red Cross
IFAS
Evelyn Paul – exercise instructor
Patricia Harry – exercise instructor

Sponsors

Hubbards Food Products
Johnson & Johnson Pacific
Roche Diagnostics
Otara Community Board