



New Zealanders for
HEALTH RESEARCH
Ngā Tāngata o Aotearoa mō
te Rangahau Hauora

Ka Whakarauoratia te Hunga e te Rangahau Hauora Health Research Saves Lives!

Newsletter of New Zealanders for Health Research (NZHR)
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“New Zealand’s peak body representing the entire health and medical research pipeline”



Message from outgoing Chair Graham Malaghan and former Chief Executive Chris Higgins

As announced in our previous newsletter, after over six and a half years in the position Chris Higgins has now stepped away from his role as NZHR’s Chief Executive, while NZHR’s founding Chair Graham Malaghan concludes his tenure after nearly eight years in the role, with effect from 30th June. Chris moves to a new role as Rare Disorders NZ Chief Executive and Graham intends to remain on the Board as a Trustee representing the Malaghan Institute.

Financially it's been a difficult year for NZHR and it is with much regret that the Board has had to make the difficult decision for the organisation to go into recess, at least for the time being. The current Board will remain as is through to the October AGM, with the exception that Chris will take on the role of interim Chair following the conclusion of Graham’s tenure. Between now and the AGM the Board will consider alternative resourcing models which involve less reliance on organisational memberships.

This means that this will be NZHR’s last newsletter until we are in a position to recruit a new Chief Executive.

Given that three of the current Trustees have indicated that they will be stepping down from the Board at the AGM we are now seeking to identify replacement Trustees at large and expressions of interest are invited by emailing ceo@nz4healthresearch.org.nz.

Over the nearly eight years that NZHR has been in existence much has been achieved in amplifying the value of health research to both the health system and to New Zealanders’ health and wellbeing. We’re particularly pleased that our advocacy (no doubt along with others’) has resulted in the Pae Ora health reforms

legislation identifying for the first time health research as a key health sector function, including both Te Whata Ora and Te Aka Whai Ora.

However this is just the start and health research will not become fully embedded as an essential component of the health system until:

- Treasury’s Wellbeing Framework (which provides the context for annual government budgets) recognises premature mortality as a key health and wellbeing indicator;
- Dedicated government investment in health research is substantially increased from the current 0.75% of government health service costs to at least 2.4%; and
- There are clear systemic mechanisms for rapidly translating the results of health research into best practice policies, programmes and clinical and individual decision making.

We hope that in the future NZHR will be in a position to continue to advocate for progress on these critical issues. Our Budget 2023 [media release](#), noted among other things that “we had hoped that in an election year the government would have heeded the results of NZHR’s 2022 Kantar [opinion poll](#) where there was very clear public support for NZHR’s messaging

In closing we’d like to thank those who came on the journey with us and supported our work as co-collaborators. The financial and in-kind support we’ve received over the last eight years has been critical to our mission and successes and we pay special tribute to all those organisations for their material support as set out below.

