



## Greetings from the Chair

As I sit here writing this article, the radio is reminding me why I am appreciating the sunshine that is beaming in through the window. It is zero degrees outside and has climbed from a -2 degree frost. It is particularly important for some of our clients to look after their welfare in these cold spells. A walk into the sunshine to pick up the spirits can do wonders.

Just as the last issue went to press, the Trust Board received the resignation from one of our founding stalwarts. Dale Smith, one of three Honoured Life Members of DRCT, has retired as a trustee after twenty years of outstanding service to the disability sector. **We thank you Dale, for your dedication.**

Dale is one of the original group that had the vision and worked toward building the Disabilities Resource Centre into a viable Incorporated Society (which later became a Trust) in the old Allandale House and heralded the growth into the new building to where we are today. Dale was also the first Homecare Co-ordinator, and the brief then was limited to 12 clients. Today the client numbers served by Homecare at the Disabilities Resource Centre Trust is just over 500 and the number of support workers employed by DRCT in the community is in the hundreds.

The Homecare division has just lost one of the original clients who has moved out of the district to live with another family member following the death of his grandparents. All staff involved with this client over the years can be very proud of the service they have given which has resulted in stability and continuity in his life. We have also seen the retirement of one of our original employees. Likewise the dedication put in over 20 years from an employee has made a difference to countless lives. **We are proud of you all.**

I was asked a question the other day — “what does the Board do and how do we fit into the organisation?” Many of you may wonder the same thing. We are the Governance level of the organisation. We do not manage the operational aspects of the organisation – we employ a very capable General Manager to do that – but we are responsible for making sure all strategic, legal, financial and procedural planning is in place so she can do her job. The people who comprise the board bring a diverse range of skills and experience and this has resulted in strong, stable governance. Yes, it is a labour of love, as we all fall into the volunteer category.

We have put in submissions on all local council LTCCP's in the interest of our client groups. The sector keeps growing as the baby boomers are inching ever closer to our patch so we must be vigilant in looking forward to meeting this growth appropriately.

Keep Safe and Warm

**Glennis Wilson**  
Chairperson

## General Manager's Update

It is the time of the year when we are busy with submissions to the three local Councils and the Regional Council.

Each year we go through the process of submitting our thoughts on the Annual and Long Term plans of our Districts' managers and caretakers. Our client base stretches from Te Whanau o Apanui (East Coast) to Pikowai and back to Ruatahuna. This area encompasses three District Councils and Environment Bay of Plenty, so each year we are submitting on at least four plans. Then there are any other relevant ones from these and other organisations during the year (such as the Ambulance Strategy, Environment Bay of Plenty Transport Plan, and importantly, the Health and Disability Act and Code).

It is interesting to view the ways each of the District Councils form their plans, and the priorities and management plans for each of their areas. Each document is a large piece of work and our standard comments are always around accessibility, safety and inclusion for our ageing and disabled populations. It is great to see such plans as the upgrade of the Opotiki Library, but any alterations need to make the facility accessible for all.

Of interest this year too, was the Environment Bay of Plenty Regional Land Transport Plan submission. We applaud the Total Mobility scheme which grants half price taxi fares to its members, but we feel that such things as accessibility to the Hub shopping centre needs to be addressed. This district lacks a routine public transport system to address the needs of the wider urban area to access the main town centre and the Hub.

With the expected increase in the ageing population, access and mobility issues are only going to increase. Rest assured that we will continue to bring these areas of concern to the notice of the governing bodies as often as we can.

**Bronwen Foxx**  
General Manager

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## Home Care Services

### Tena Koe

As you may be aware our Support Workers have been participating in training. This essentially is the National Certificate in Community Support Services Level Two and Three. Alongside the Support Workers, the Home Care staff have also undertaken training. I have just completed Level Three, and after reflecting back on some of the learning objectives of the earlier modules, I felt compelled to put on paper some of my thoughts on aging and disability, with emphasis on 'ability' and celebrating what you can do.

We are encouraged to believe we live in a world where proper diet, exercise and the judicious use of Botox, plastic surgery, magic creams and potions can dramatically slow the aging process.

"Old age" is commonly seen as a time of entitlement. After long years of working, the Retiree is presumably entitled to leisure, "the Pension" and a "Gold Card". Yet all of these prerogatives are poor compensation for the diminishing status of health and physical ability. When we think about loss of freedom, we seldom focus on the ways in which we voluntarily impose constraints upon our lives. Everything we are afraid to try, all our unfilled dreams — usually it is fear preventing progression.

To lose the ability to make choices is a lesson in helplessness, courage, humility and Survival. There is a lesson for all of us to be learnt from people with disabilities in their sheer determination. It's not simply that we are fortunate, it is more that there are people whose burdens are greater than our own. Every person experiences loss; how we respond to it is what defines us.

As we examine the world around us to find evidence to support the belief that things will get better, bad news is inherently more interesting than good, so we are daily inundated by stories of tragedy, chaos and depravity. It sometimes seems surprising how anyone can be happy in such a world! If we choose to focus our awareness and energy on those things and people that bring us pleasure and satisfaction, we have a very good chance of being happy in a world full of happiness.

### Kerryn Smith

#### HOME CARE SERVICES MANAGER

Tutor, Catherine Tangiora, works on Level 2 Careworker Training booklets with careworker, Lillian Wharewera.





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**"Assisting people with disabilities to achieve their goals"**

## BRAIN INJURY

The brain is an amazing, intricate organ that man is now only beginning to unravel and understand. In the process old beliefs and myths, that are comfortable for us to continue accepting as truth, are being shattered by Scientists who are using new technology to understand the brain. Moving these new understandings into everyday thinking is still an ongoing challenge. Here is the second myth about our brain that science is redefining for us.

**Brain Myth #2: A person's personality displays a right-brain or left-brain dominance.**

**Fact: The two sides are intricately co-dependent.**

This myth holds that a right-brain person is generally creative, intuitive, arty, while a left-brain person is more of a problem-solver, more linear, logical. The myth arose from genuine science, but new imaging technology has shown that the brain is more interdependent than once thought.

The myth probably took root in the 1800s, when scientists discovered that an injury to one side of the brain often caused a loss of specific abilities. For example, spatial abilities seemed to reside in the right side of the brain, with language in the left. The myth gained ground in the 1960s, when scientists studied epilepsy patients who had surgery to sever the connection between the two hemispheres. These researchers showed that when they couldn't communicate, the two sides of the brain could be unaware of one another — and even respond differently to stimuli. For example, when one patient was asked what he wanted to do, his left brain responded with “draftsman” but his right brain with “racing car driver.”

But more recently, brain scan technology has revealed that the hemispheres' roles are not quite as cut-and-dried as once thought. The two hemispheres are in fact highly complementary. For example, language processing, once believed to be left-hemisphere only, is now understood to take place in both hemispheres. Similarly, experiments have shown that the right hemisphere does not work in isolation with regard to spatial ability: the right hemisphere seems to deal with a general sense of space, while the left hemisphere deals with objects in specific locations.

What remains true is that the right side of the brain controls the left side of the body and vice versa. What this means is that an injury to the left side of the brain (such as a left-hemisphere stroke) can cause damage to the other side of the body (such as right-leg paralysis).

Source: *Neurological Foundation News, “Headlines” Articles, Volume 77*

**Catherine Tangiora**

Brain Injury Liaison Officer

## VOCATIONAL VOICE

Hello and welcome to winter and lovely cold but clear and sunny days.

At the beginning of this year we started a **Gardening Group**. The people who attend range in gardening knowledge and ability but share the enjoyment. So far we have planted bulbs for spring, learnt a bit about how plants work and we have each created our own potager garden with a mix of vegetables. Growing your own food is fast coming back into vogue, especially with things being a little bit tighter at the moment. If you share an interest, need some advice or would like to learn about gardening, then please give me a ring and join us on Friday afternoons at 1:00 p.m.

**Armchair Travel Club** meets on the last Friday of the month. We have a guest speaker who presents a talk about their travels. Coming up we will be hearing people talk about Turkey; Mount Kilimanjaro; the Whirinaki track, which is totally accessible to wheelchairs, mobility scooters etc; Cruises and Chile. It does not matter if you have never left home. All you need is an interest in hearing about different places, either near or far. We always finish with a cup of tea or coffee and a chat. If you would like to come, we would love to see you and feel free to bring a friend. Listen out to the 1XX Bulletin Board during the last week of the month or ring me for the meetings details.

### Alison Baker

Community Programmes Co-ordinator



**NZFDIC Executive:** Phil Beilby, Christine Bongiovanni, Noel Mathews, Vicki Coddington, Tanya Wishart, Bronwen Foxx and Sallyjane Canfield in theme for the Conference dinner

### FOR SALE

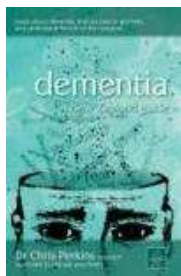
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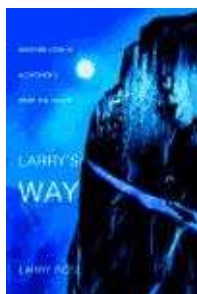
## ***BOOK CORNER***

With Alzheimers Awareness Week in July and the purchase of some new and refreshed books in our Library on Dementia, I thought they would be appropriate to feature. The forecast figures for those suffering from Alzheimers or related dementia are astounding — around 50,000 by 2051.

The first is the reprinted version of the Dr Chris Perkins *Dementia: A New Zealand Guide*.



First published in 2004, this version is the 2006 edition. Many books that are available are based on American or English health systems. This book is valuable because it looks at the issue of Demetia from the New Zealand context. Subjects covered range from Diagnosis to Legal and Ethical Issues. We have two copies of this edition, and one of the earlier edition for loan.



The second book is *Larry's Way* and is a biography of Larry Rose whom has been diagnosed with Alzheimers. It follows on from *Show Me the Way to Go Home* (on order). Unfortunately it is based in America, but biographies by casualties of Dementia are scarce. It is interesting to follow the course of the disease through the eyes of the sufferer.

On order too, are two books on Multiple Sclerosis—again one information based book *The MS Workbook* and one biography *Why not ME: My Journey with MS*. Please do not hesitate to phone me to request a book, or to suggest other purchases. I look forward to hearing from you.

**Dale Hikuroa**  
Information Services Co-ordinator

## **THE RESOURCEFUL DIGEST**

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