

**NZX Release
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New Clinical Advisory Committee to focus on primary care provision for older people

Third Age Health Services Limited (NZX: TAH), primary care provider for older people's health, has bought together healthcare experts and sector leaders to establish its first Clinical Advisory Committee.

The Third Age Health Clinical Advisory Committee met for the first time on Monday evening 7 March via Teams for a lively discussion. The group were introduced to the 'wicked' problem to be solved whereby there is a disconnect between the health needs of older people and the 'what, when and how' healthcare is provided for them, what that care costs and is there a balance to be found in providing the right care at the right time in the right way.

The Clinical Advisory Committee brings together thought leaders and experts from clinical and academic backgrounds in general practice, nursing, older people's health, psychiatry, palliative care as well as innovation, user experience and solution design. Members of the group were selected for not only their expertise but their diversity of thought and willingness to come together with a provider to find solutions to bridge the gap between the resources currently available and the healthcare that's needed for older people to improve their quality of life.

The Third Age Health inaugural Clinical Advisory Committee members are:

- Professor Ngaire Kerse, Joyce Cook Chair in Ageing Well and General Practitioner
- Professor Jenny Carryer, Massey University Professor and Head of NZ College of Nurses
- Dr Jane Casey, Psychogeriatric specialist
- Emily Preston, Senior Project Lead, Innovation Unit
- Dr Carol McCullum, Clinical Director for Mercy Hospice
- Dr Peter Zink, GP and Third Age Health Medical Director



CEO Tony Wai said, "We recognise there is not likely to be a one single answer to the many challenges being faced across the sector but ultimately we want to 'take the bull by the horns' and focus on finding solutions which enhance the Third Age Health model of care to improve healthcare for older people.



“We’re keen to share what we learn along the way in the hope that it contributes to some of the macro level issues. Our intention is to be action orientated and the drivers of change.”

“We are grateful to have brought together such a knowledgeable and experienced group for our first Clinical Advisory Committee. This is an important step in not only improving the healthcare we are delivering but also a way of increasing collaboration across the sector.”

The group shared many stories during the first meeting and in particular the challenge some older people have when they transfer into a care facility and must leave their GP of many years or if their existing GP retires. It was noted that people often attend the same general practice for many years and so transferring to a new practitioner in a care home can feel like a ‘break-up’ and it can be hard for them to build trust in their new clinician relationship.

Dr Peter Zink says, “There is a whole piece of work to do to try to bridge the gap between someone leaving their existing general practice relationship when they enter a care facility. We need to explore what ‘excellent’ looks like in terms of a warm handover and designing a process so new care home residents can build trust in a new practitioner relationship rather than feeling like they’ve been abandoned or handed over to someone who doesn’t know them well.”

The new Clinical Advisory Committee will meet six times a year and has a programme of work which covers clinical services and outcomes, quality assurance and improvement, workforce development, education, risk management and advocacy. The group will be expanded to include additional expertise as needed including input from a Geriatrician and consumers.

Chair of the Clinical Advisory Committee, Third Age Health Medical Director Dr Peter Zink comments “It’s really motivating to be working with a great group of people who bring to the table ideas which will help us tackle the challenge of providing great healthcare for people at a time when we are experiencing the collision of increasing clinical complexity, workforce pressures and stagnant funding.”

Third Age Health’s Clinical Change Advisor, Lucy Wu, has been the driving force behind the establishment of the Clinical Advisory Committee and says “Healthcare for people living in aged care is really fragmented and as a provider with national reach we have a good view on the variation in service provision and delivery across New Zealand. It’s important to occasionally step back from the day-to-day delivery of healthcare and with the help of experts give time and thought to how we can change the way we are doing things to get better outcomes.”

For more information, please contact:

Ruth Morse, Head of Communications, Marketing and Engagement

Third Age Health

+64 21 263 1415

ruthm@thirdagehealth.co.nz