

## Notes from forum held 11 June 2018

River Lounge, Celebrating Age Centre 30 Victoria Street, Hamilton

**Present:** Sarah Gibb (Community Waikato), Nigel King (Waikato Regional Council), Dianne Burgess, Marnie Goodman and Peter Carverhill (Tairua Care & Friendship Club), Desiree McKenzie (Te Kuiti Community House), Sybil Woolmore, Bill Reed, Val Sparks and Graham Stewart (Paeroa Volunteer Drivers), Bridget Burdett (Stantec), Laura Hopkins, Kay Kristensen and Dallas Honey (Waikato DHB), Regina Mandos, Marjorie Roberts and Richard Heslop (Putaruru Red Cross), Alicia Leef and Wayne Thomson (North Waikato Transport Trust), Tricia Dawson (Thames Health Shuttle), Norm Barker and Dennis Turton (Trust Waikato), Julie Taverner (St John), Jo Mako (Te Kauwhata Community House and Waikato DHB Consumer Council), Brent Nielsen (Age Concern, Hamilton)

**Apologies:** Kim Linklater, Jan Meredith and Wendy Entwistle

**Note taker:** Laura Hopkins

### Background

- The Waikato Rural Transport Forum (Forum) was started due to concerns from transport providers picking up patients from Waikato Hospital.
- Forums are held four times a year.
- A survey was sent out to the 74 members of the Waikato Community Transport Forum and 24 people participated. Questions were oriented around Waikato Hospital.
- Waikato DHB's Consumer Council are seen as a way to get the forum's concerns to the DHB for action.

### Review of Survey Responses and Further Thoughts to Add

- 1. When picking up passengers from Waikato Hospital, have you ever had any issues with the discharge process?**
    - Often the Hospital calls and they state that the patient is ready to be picked up now. However, patients aren't ready for discharge when transport arrives.
    - Often patients are moved to the transit lounge and don't have discharge papers. A lack of readiness for discharge is a concern. For example, patients still in gown, no prescription or discharge papers, highly contagious. Could there be clothing available for people to wear on discharge?
  - 2. What information would you like the Waikato DHB to know about your experience providing transport to and from Waikato Hospital?**
    - Staff making the requests for transport sometimes don't have an appreciation for how far away some communities are, e.g. Whangamata. They also don't comprehend that people are volunteers.
    - Hoping to draft a factsheet for Waikato DHB staff – The Forum can create a template and decide what information we need to have to ensure that staff have the right information. It was noted that it will be important to keep the information up to date on the website.
    - Different areas have different challenges, for example, Thames has several vehicles, whereas other communities only have one. It can be more challenging for people running one shuttle a day.
    - Shuttle services have limited funding and often don't get paid by passengers. Services are saving the DHB a significant amount of money and this needs to be recognised. It was discussed that often patients aren't prepared to give a donation, e.g. they do not have cash on them. Some providers do not have internet banking and it can be a challenge reconciling payments.
  - 3. If you have had any issues regarding appointment times set for your passengers, please describe them here.**
    - There is a significant issue regarding appointment times at the Eye Clinic. There are lengthy delays with people having to wait up to 6.45pm.
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- An example was given of a patient aged over 80 who attended an appointment at 9.30am and was told to come back at 1.30pm. She waited and was told that the Specialist wasn't coming. Was told to administer eye drops and go home. Another example given was of a patient who had a 10 hour day. These experiences are exhausting.
- Have had cancellations after people have set off for their appointments.
- People can be unprepared for what will happen at the appointment, for example, often people don't realise that they are having a procedure done.

**4. If you have had challenges transporting people with disabilities, mobility challenges or with issues associated with illness, please describe them here.**

- An example was given of a 'disability' car park at Auckland Hospital. There was no ramp to get onto the pavement, forcing the person to go onto the road. Unfortunately, situations like this are not uncommon.
- Where can you access wheelchairs at Waikato Hospital? There is a phone on the wall outside the parking area, however you have to wait for an orderly to come. Can there be a bank of wheelchairs available? Can be stressful trying to find one.
- Suggestion to draft a document for all transport providers containing tips compiled from experience.
- It is impossible to drop people off at the Emergency Department - there is nowhere for us to park. Shuttles cannot even get through due to their height. A shuttle driver had an elderly couple whose son was in ICU – access is difficult.
- How many shuttle spaces are available? Is this adequate? There is a huge area for campervan parking. Could this be better utilised?
- Acting Chief Executive is aware that parking on the Waikato Hospital site is an important issue. Waikato DHB is about to embark on a transport strategy to address the issues that have been raised.

**5. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience with the Waikato DHB?**

- A patient leaving without a prescription shouldn't happen. Examples were given of shuttle drivers needing to help patients to pick up medications. It was discussed that Thames drivers cannot collect medications on behalf of the patient.
- There are disparities of resources within the community. Some communities have lots of volunteers, yet others struggle to recruit volunteers. There is no equity around the Waikato region.
- Funding for community providers will become easier if we can provide evidence that there is inequity. This information is critical to help shape the system going forward particularly due to the centralisation of services and an ageing demographic. Waikato DHB have also analysed feedback received from Community Health Forums and from complaints. The comments from these Forums will also need to be fed into the Waikato DHB's Health Systems Plan.
- Some time ago, Dallas Honey presented an outline of the criteria for the funding of community transport providers. Perhaps this should go on the website?

Update from Nigel King - Waikato Regional Council)

- The Regional Land Transport Plan sets out how the Council intends to develop the region's land transport system over the next 30 years and reflects the Government's intentions for transport. There is a much greater focus on access, with a longer term strategic view. The plan aims to accelerate the funding from the National Land Transport Fund.
- The Plan provides regional guidance on what we are seeking as a region. Access/mobility and changing social demographics have been identified as key issues.
- A Regional Public Transport Plan is currently being developed. Will look to public/private partnerships to achieve greater value for money.
- Regional Council does not directly provide funding to Community Transport Providers, however they can facilitate this and provide support.
- It was noted that there are no public transport services in Te Kuiti, and there is no Council intention to provide this service. This is isolating for the community. How do we get equity of access across the region?

Update from Bridget Burdett – Stantec – Work with Waikato Regional Council on transport and wellbeing

- We are closer to achieving a direct funding model – a new way of funding community providers. The aim is for communities to be supported to respond to the need in a way that best suits them.
- A case study has been completed in South Waikato. This area was chosen due to its remote location and high rate of deprivation. A literature review was undertaken, a questionnaire and focus groups were held. The aim was to query what is the link between having access to transport and well-being? benefit/cost ratios are favourable and it is clear that the benefits of community transport are enormous.
- Bridget is due to present the study shortly. A change in policy is needed. Bridget will report back on this at the next Forum.

#### Further Discussion

- It was noted that it is also important to capture what is working well.
- Staff need to ensure that they are communicating with both the patient and the community transport provider. Often there is miscommunication.
- What happens if a patient leaves without paperwork? Papers follow by post to them, and a copy is sent to the GP.
- Noted that drivers are not social workers but often are called to perform this role. It is critical that staff ensure that the appropriate supports are in place for the patient.
- It is important to tie staff down to a specific time. Make sure that the dots are connected.
- Want to approach solutions by using a co-design model.

#### Next Steps & Actions

- The information discussed today will be added into the information to be presented to Waikato DHB. Following this, a letter will be sent to the Consumer Council requesting an opportunity to present the results to them – possibly at their August meeting.
- There was agreement to ask Denise from NTA to attend the Forum in December.
- Bridget will circulate standards/guidelines that have been developed to assist Councils with disability access.
- Sarah offered support to community transport providers for health and safety matters. Any attendees interested can meet prior to the next meeting in September.

**Next meeting:** September 25, 2018. Please email through any agenda item suggestions to Sarah Gibb. [sarah@communitywaikato.org.nz](mailto:sarah@communitywaikato.org.nz)