



Wellington People's Centre

Te Rauhitanga o te Whanganui-a-Tara

Winter Newsletter June 2010

Medical Service Open for Business

Over recent months your Management Committee has been reviewing the viability of the Medical Services provided by Wellington People's Centre.

In the past, the Sisters of Compassion have provided the Centre with a generous annual grant to assist running this service. Last October the Sisters advised that they would be unable to provide this grant from April this year.

The Management Committee has therefore needed to seriously consider the financial implications of continuing a much needed and valued service to its members, against the obligations it

as a whole runs within budget.

The decision from the review was to continue the Medical Service. As a result of this process we have had to increase patient consultation fees to \$16.50 and we have developed strategies designed to improve the financial aspects of the medical service whilst retaining the priority of low cost access provision. This includes opening our books to new enrollees (including non-members), targeting new patients and shifting from SECPHO to Capital PHO in order to access the greater support and medical links the latter PHO offers.

part time fixed term Health Coordinator to review the processes around the medical service, and undertake recruitment of additional clinical staff where possible.

Despite rumours, we are not intending to close our medical services and we encourage you all to promote the Centre for its unique low cost, by member-for member services, and its willingness to speak out on behalf of its members.

Current medical patients please contact reception for Capital PHO enrolment form
Please fill in and return.



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Inside this issue

- News from BRS - Social Security (Future Focus) Amendment Bill
- Need some help to quit smoking - we have the course for you
- Ever thought about Volunteering?
- WPC Counselling Service
- The Last Word... - a contribution from a member

Whose Future is the Focus? News from Benefit Rights Service

It is a very busy time at Benefit Rights with some big changes to Welfare system on the horizon. Many of you will have seen some of the media around Paula Bennett's "Future Focus" amendment to the Social Security Act, and you may also be aware that the government has assembled a Welfare Working Group to look at the issue of long term welfare dependency. BRS is involved in actively challenging both of these moves and the assumptions which underlie them.

The "Future Focus" amendment bill, which is still before select committee is **NOT YET LAW**

"Future Focus" has an *unrelenting focus on work*; we have already found that overzealous case managers are trying to send DPB clients to work telling them "the rules have changed didn't you see it on TV?" The "Future Focus" amendment bill, which is still before select committee, is **NOT YET**

LAW.

It proposes to:

- Cancel the Unemployment Benefit after a year and require people to reapply and prove that they have been actively seeking work, while removing the negotiated Job Seeker Agreement
- Work test some people on the Sickness Benefit requiring them to find part time work
- Work test sole parents on DPB whose youngest child is 6 or older requiring them to find part time work while removing the Personal development part of the planning process
- Changing the Sanction process for people who fail the work test, and also encouraging case managers to impose sanctions

The BRS team made a submission on behalf of the Wellington People's Centre, as well as several individual submissions, opposing these changes. We hope to have some impact on at least some of the proposed changes. Work & Income plan to begin calling sole parents in July to discuss their

changes are not yet law and if they do come into force it will not be until 27 September 2010.

Finally the Welfare Working Group is looking at the "problem of welfare dependency". We intend to present the argument that Welfare is in fact a solution to a long standing problem relating to valuing roles and social participation.

If you want to join us in the fight to maintain a decent Welfare system in NZ please visit the Centre and offer your time.

Kay Brereton

Quit Smoking Course

Acupuncture for addiction treatments are offered every Tuesday and Thursday at the Wellington People's Centre. The sessions begin at 4.30pm.

Treatments are provided by members of the NZ Register of Acupuncturists, Gareth Powdrell & Diana Hilgert.

Cost: WPC members & unwaged—\$10 per

From the Chairperson

Hello folks, while not a central issue I did notice that John Key is doing the same as Helen Clark. Remember she "signed" a painting she did not paint that was later sold at some charity auction. Well John put wine from a different winery in bottles labelled as if coming from one he owned and then gave them away to favoured friends. Tut, tut.

The WPC has been very busy. We have been sorting out the future of

the medical centre and coping with nutty decisions from over-worked or mean-spirited Work and Income case managers. We have had quite a lot of media exposure in response to the Government's attacks on beneficiaries.

Planning is underway for the AGM – to be held hopefully in August, check our website or visit us for details. Send in any remits you want discussed.

AND finally, please promote membership of the Centre and involve yourself as a volunteer. Ideas

about fund-raising and help with tasks about the place all help make us more effective and efficient. We are a by member-for member organisation, and our kaupapa is about speaking out about how things affect people on low incomes. We are only as strong as you allow us to be.

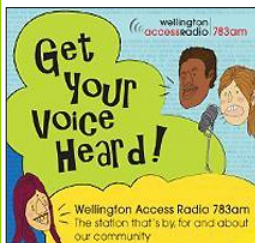
Keep warm friends.

Graham Howell

The People's Centre Speaks **radio show**

10am every second Saturday on Access Radio 783am or streamed on accessradio.org.nz. Discussing news and issues important to our members.

On air June 19, July 3, 17 & 31.



Is it Time to Talk? WPC Counselling Service

The Centre offers counselling aimed at helping you move towards a more satisfying life. It can help you face your situation - and often get beyond it.

Counselling can help us work out what we cannot control and how to live with that. And it can help us work out how to take

charge of the things that can be changed

Counselling involves confidential discussion with someone who has training and experience. A counsellor will not make your decisions, but can help clarify issues so it is easier to make decisions for yourself.

Counselling is available to

Volunteering at WPC

We are always looking for volunteers to support the work of the Centre. When the Centre began in 1992 there were a large number of volunteers. We now can afford to have a number of paid staff but we still really need volunteers. Whether it's helping keep our gardens tidy or donating your professional services we would be thrilled to hear from you. If you can help please contact Rhonda on 04 3858596 or email volunteer@wpc.net.nz

members for just \$5 per session and non-members for \$35 per session.

Contact reception and they will pass your details on to the Counselling Service Coordinator.

Wellington People's Centre

Opening hours
Mon—Fri 9am-5pm
Closed weekends and
public holidays

Ph: 04 385 8596
Fax: 04 385 2520
reception@wpc.net.nz

2 Lukes Lane
PO Box 9491
Wellington 6141

We're on the web
wellingtonpeoplescentre.org.nz



Join us on facebook

Become a Member

The Wellington People's Centre is a 'by members-for members' not-for-profit organisation that has been working since 1992 to provide affordable health services and free advocacy services. We believe that everyone should have access to services that meet their basic human needs.

For a membership fee (\$10 every four weeks by automatic payment) you can access our wide range of high quality low cost health and wellbeing services at reduced rates.

Your membership fee helps cover our basic running costs and keeps our charges as low as possible. There are no limits to who can become a member.

Dependents are included in your membership: children under 16 and other family members who depend on you for support.

WPC Dental Service has 2 bright and modern dental surgeries where friendly staff will help you make informed choices about your dental needs. Providing care that is ethical, affordable, and as pain free as possible—an examination is only \$45 including x-rays. Open to non-members, call 385-8596 to book. Members enjoy a 10-15% discount. WINZ quotes available.

The Last Word...

Wellington People's Centre
By Rose Ahem, aged 8 years

Most people think that the People's Centre is just a dentist or a doctor, but it is more than that. In 1992 it was just an idea... In the beginning it was a doctor's centre, benefit rights and a crèche.

Then they added on hairdressing and massage services, counselling and other complementary health services. Apart from the crèche [and hairdressing] all the other services are still available

at the People's Centre as well as an awesome cheap dental service.

The People's Centre is really special because it is a collective and means people who do not have lots of money can get access to wonderful medical services & other fun things.

My Dad goes to the dentist here, because they help him to look after his teeth and he can afford it. If there wasn't a People's Centre lots of people would not get the dental care when they need it.

My mum works at the

People's Centre as an advocate for benefit rights. She helps people get the money they are entitled to.

I think the People's Centre is great because it helps my community.

If you would like to contribute to the next The Last Word... email wpc@wpc.net.nz



The Centre has "other fun things" like a Social English Class