

MEDIA RELEASE

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2018 Health Innovation Awards: Celebrating the people who make our healthcare system more skilled, more compassionate and more equitable

A project that helps Colombian refugees to settle into Nelson and cope with the change is the overall winner in the 2018 Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH) Health Innovation Awards (HIA).

‘Stressbusters – supporting Colombian refugees to Nelson’ won the ‘Darcy Christopher Excellence Award’ at the Health Innovation Awards ceremony on 29 November at The Rutherford Hotel.

Project lead Deb Moore, professional psychology leader for Nelson Marlborough Health Mental Health and Addiction Services, says that the course was established in recognition that stress is a normal human response to the situation refugees are in, rather than mental illness.

“It has been a really exciting project supporting former Colombian refugees in our community,” she says. “I’ve had fantastic support from the Victory Community Centre, Red Cross, volunteer psychologists, mental health colleagues, and particularly from Fernando Hurtado who provided interpreter support for the groups.”

Mrs Moore says she also got great support from the McKee Trust who provided funding for the groups to put their anxiety management skills in practice at Whenua Iti Outdoor Education centre.

Speaking on behalf of the judges, Nelson Marlborough District Health Board Chair Jenny Black says the diversity of the entries made choosing award winners extremely difficult.

“It was wonderful to see so many entries to the awards this year, representing secondary and primary care services across the health sector, and across the Nelson Marlborough region.

“The desire to improve patient safety, experience and care drives innovation in healthcare, and the depth of the projects entered in the Health Innovation Awards this year is testament to that commitment to deliver quality care to our communities.

“The judges were impressed by the innovative thinking and commitment to quality improvement shown by our healthcare professionals.

“I would also like to acknowledge the fact that the people behind these projects are busy and often stretched in their daily jobs, yet when they notice something that could be improved, they are curious enough to ask questions and then work on a solution.

“We applaud them all for their innovation and commitment to improving the patient experience.”

Nelson Marlborough Health Chief Executive Peter Bramley paid tribute to the nominees of the ‘Emerging Leaders’ category.

“Leaders help others to be their best and make a difference. We are celebrating those people tonight.”

Dr Bramley says ‘Emerging Leader’ nominees were people who make our healthcare system more skilled, more compassionate and more equitable through their leadership. The quality of the nominees was so high the judges opted to award three entries in this category.

Guest speaker Dr Robyn Whittaker, public health physician and health researcher, spoke about her work for the Institute for Innovation and Improvement at Waitemata DHB and particularly the use of mobile technology in the health sector.

Dr Whittaker was impressed with the calibre of the projects in the Nelson Marlborough region and said she had learned a lot with ‘things to take home’ to Auckland.

Health Innovation Award winners

Darcy Christopher Excellence Award: Deb Moore, for her ‘Stressbusters: Supporting Colombian refugees to Nelson’ initiative

Emerging Leader Awards (x 3):

- Cam Loveridge-Easther, ophthalmology registrar, Nelson Hospital
- Rachael Kingsbury, charge midwife manager, Motueka Maternity Unit
- Kylie Fenwick, registered nurse, ICCU, Nelson Hospital

Best Poster Award: The Plan, an initiative to reduce parental supply of alcohol to under-18s

People’s Choice Award: Highway to HELP, an ICCU critical care outreach service

HIA category winners:

Aged care: Dance Exercises, Ashwood Park Retirement Village, Blenheim

Child and Adolescent: Murchison Well Child Facebook group

Clinical: A smart team keeps people walking, vascular team.

Equity: Cancer pathways for Maori, He Huarahi Mate Pukupuku

Mental Health: Cultural Field Trip, Marlborough Community Mental Health team.

Sustainability: Giving birth to change, Motueka Maternity Unit.

The Medical Admissions and Planning Unit (MAPU) at Nelson Hospital was also acknowledged.

Award winners receive trophies and prize money to use towards their work. The Emerging Leader category winners receive professional development opportunities.

About the Health Innovation Awards

The awards are designed to inspire innovation and showcase quality improvements, initiatives or programmes in health service and delivery. They are open to any employee of Nelson Marlborough Health or other healthcare related providers in the region.

There were a record number of entries this year with 33 projects submitted for judging and 23 nominations received for the 'Emerging Leader' award.

The Darcy Christopher Award (overall winner):

The winner of the overall excellence award recognising innovation across Nelson Marlborough Health will receive the Darcy Christopher Award.

This award has been made possible by funds from the Darcy Christopher Trust, distributed through the Nelson Marlborough Health Care Foundation.

Flight Lieutenant Darcy Christopher worked as a training instructor for the RNZAF at Harewood, Christchurch, during the war. After spending much of his life in the top of the South Island, he created the Darcy Christopher Trust to allocate his estate to a number of public and community organisations; Nelson Marlborough Health is one of the recipients.

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