

# Supporter news

## New NICU Flight Transport Incubator Needed to Help Save Precious Lives

Local hospitals around our region are not equipped to provide the specialist care needed to help very premature or critically sick babies, and many families are suddenly faced with the terrifying reality that their precious baby's life hangs in the balance.

**Wellington Regional Hospital's Neonatal Flight Service** plays a crucial role in providing specialist care to premature and critically ill babies from across our region. While our friends at Lifelight provide the aircraft, **it is the skilled team of doctors and nurses from Wellington Regional Hospital who are on-board with the expertise and equipment** necessary to deliver the immediate help these infants require after birth and during their emergency dash to Wellington for lifesaving neonatal care.

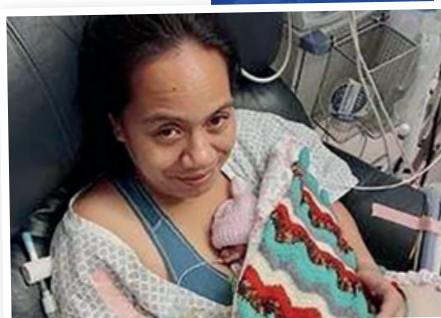
Baby Koko is a tiny but mighty kiwi battler, and was born in Gisborne Hospital a staggering three months early! Despite her petite size at just 736 grams, she's a bundle of joy, and when we meet her she's having a kangaroo 'skin to skin' cuddle with Mum, Waimarie. You can't quite see until she wriggles under the tiny Hospi blanket that's helping keep her warm (lovingly made by a Foundation volunteer), but she's also hooked up to machines that constantly monitor her vital signs and help her fragile lungs receive the extra support they need to grow and develop.

For Waimarie and Gian, Koko's arrival was a much anticipated addition to their family. A routine 20 week scan had hinted at complications, but everyone believed medication had stabilised the risk. However, three months before

her due date, Waimarie found herself in excruciating pain and was rushed to Gisborne Hospital by ambulance. What was initially thought to be acute appendicitis turned out to be the imminent arrival of their precious daughter. Waimarie explained that it was incredibly scary to deliver such a tiny baby, **"I've never known anyone to have a baby so early and survive, so I was really scared. I was afraid to look at her as I thought she'd be born dead."**

Wellington Regional Hospital is a part of the national specialist hospital network and serves a population of 900,000 people from as far north as Gisborne and Taranaki, down to Nelson and Marlborough, and everywhere in between.

When a baby is born too early, time is critical, and the Foundation sponsored NICU Flight Team is on call 24/7, responding to emergency calls from around the country to airlift babies to Wellington; and at only hours old, wee Koko faced just such a precarious journey.



Waimarie & Koko

Every year **1,000**

babies cared for by Wellington Hospital's NICU

Almost half of those flown in from around our region

**\$700k** needed



Flight Transport Incubator

Taken by separate flights, Wai told us, **"It was terrifying, I'd just had a baby and I had no idea how she was, it's only a one hour flight from Gisborne to Wellington, but it really felt like forever. I didn't even know if she'd survive the flight. I'm really thankful to the NICU Flight Team's doctors and nurses for looking after her."**

### NICU Flight Transport Incubator Appeal

**With an aging fleet**, we urgently need our community's support to fund a new state-of-the-art Flight Transport Incubator, that acts as a mobile Intensive Care Unit. Whether through a one-time donation or ongoing monthly





contributions, every dollar counts towards reaching the goal of \$700,000.

Every baby deserves access to timely, quality healthcare, regardless of where they are born. Koko's story isn't just about beating the odds - it's about the real power of our wider community to help save and transform lives, and we're incredibly grateful for your support.

Thanks to Wellington's amazing NICU Flight Transport Team, Koko is now receiving the round the clock care that she needs to grow and thrive. Waimarie told us that while it was hard being separated from Gian and her other children, Koko's surprising everyone and each day brings new progress.

We thank Waimarie for sharing her story with us and we wish Koko and her family all the very best; and look forward to when she is well enough to return home.



*NICU Flight Team*

“If an infant is born unexpectedly early, or becomes very unwell at the smaller regional hospitals, it is vital they receive Intensive care as soon as possible. That care starts as soon as our flight team arrives”

SARAH CODY, CLINICAL NURSE COORDINATOR - FLIGHT



# Bill Day: Transforming Healthcare Across our Region

Established in 2005, the Wellington Hospitals Foundation is not just a Wellington institution, it's a living testament to Bill Day's extraordinary vision and commitment to improving the health and well-being of the wider Wellington community.



After an impressive 19 year journey as the Executive Chair of the Foundation, Bill is now retiring from day to day operations of the Foundation. Bill leaves behind a long legacy of achievements, represented by an investment of more than \$160 million in our region's hospitals. Te Wao Nui Regional Children's Hospital, the most ambitious project under his stewardship, became a reality through the support of Sir Mark Dunajtschik, Dorothy Spotswood, and the generous contributions of our community. But it was Bill's role as the mastermind behind this much needed new facility, which highlights his profound impact on the Foundation and our community.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Bill for his passion, boundless energy, his extraordinary leadership and his incredible service to our community. Bill has elevated healthcare in our region, leaving an indelible mark on countless patients, their families and the dedicated hospital staff.

Bill will be staying on as Chair of the Foundation. We caught up with him as he reflected on his time in the CEO chair.

## Q&A

### What is your background?

I hail from Nelson, where I attended Nelson College for Boys before embarking on a career that led me to the Commercial Bank of Australia in 1966. It was a different era then - tellers wielded revolvers to protect the bank's cash! My banking career spanned 33 years, culminating in my retirement

from Westpac. During my time as Senior Marketing and PR Manager, I was responsible for setting up Westpac's sponsorship of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter services in NZ, and served as a Trustee of the Life Flight Trust for an incredible 38 years, with 15 of those years as Chair.

### What inspired you to set up Wellington Hospitals Foundation?

Hospitals throughout the world have Charitable Trusts, and the late Chair of the Capital Coast District Health Board, Bob Henare, approached me in 2004 about establishing a charity for Wellington's Hospitals. Health has always been close to my heart, ever since my youngest brother spent 2.5 years in hospital when he was only six years old. Also, seeing the invaluable work of rescue helicopters and air ambulances, I saw an opportunity to further enhance healthcare in our region, and this was a challenge I couldn't resist.



*Simulation Medical Manikins*

### What were some of the early challenges you faced?

Launching the Wellington Hospitals Foundation in 2005, amidst an already crowded fundraising landscape, was no easy feat. I was told it would take seven years to establish the Foundation, and indeed, that was right. Working with the hospitals to address so many needs was quite daunting.

Initially the goal was to assist the DHB to administer some of the community funds they had accumulated over many years. That changed very early on and we began to formulate the Foundation into what it has become today. The Government cannot fund everything

and Health is insatiable, so we fill a gap and make a significant difference in people's lives.

### Are there any particular success stories that stand out in your mind?

The establishment of Hospi, the former beloved children's hospital mascot, was hugely successful and brought so much joy to many young patients. Establishing the Foundation's hospital volunteer service was also a highlight,



and by consolidating five existing volunteer services under one roof, we revitalised hospital volunteering.

Witnessing the joy on the faces of our dedicated staff when we could provide funding

for essential medical equipment - filling gaps where Government support fell short - also remains a highlight of our journey. Key projects include funding a new MRI Scanner, establishing the world's only Air Ambulance Simulator to train medical flight staff onsite; and while also on the board of Wellington Free Ambulance, I facilitated the establishment of a new Wellington Free Ambulance base within the hospital grounds.



Regional children's hospital

And of course, the realisation of a dream - a new regional children's hospital - is nothing short of a modern-day fairy tale. In 2010, it was clearly obvious to me that Wellington needed a new children's hospital but it was not on the Government or DHB's radar. So we did something about it. Thanks to the visionary generosity of Sir Mark Dunajtschik and partner Dorothy Spotswood, who embraced my proposal to build a new children's hospital (\$50M) we were able to turn this dream into a stunning reality. The community's support was also overwhelming, and the Foundation raised a further \$10 million to outfit and equip Te Wao Nui. This new children's hospital is truly a community funded hospital, just as it was in 1913 when New Zealand's first children's hospital was built here in Wellington.

Being able to resource the many smaller things across our hospitals, that improves the overall patient experience, has also given me great joy and fulfilment.

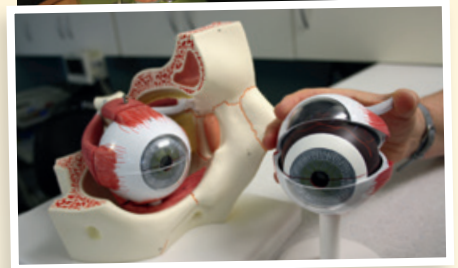
### What did you love most about your job?

It is the people, the people, the people. None of this would have been possible without the dedicated hospital staff, as well as our passionate Trustees and Foundation team. They are all committed to making a meaningful difference in our hospitals. I am going to miss them terribly, but the time does come to pass on the baton. New ideas are needed and new ways of doing things. I will watch from afar - but not too far.

I also want to thank you, our donors, partners and volunteers for your incredible support. Countless organisations and individuals have joined hands with us.

### On a more personal note, how has your journey with the Foundation influenced your perspective on life?

Three key lessons have emerged - the power of perseverance in realising your dreams, the profound impact of collective action, and the enduring value of community service. If you have the skills, time and enthusiasm to give back to your community you should absolutely do it. It is so rewarding.



Training models

### Looking ahead to the future, what are your hopes and aspirations for the Foundation?

As the public health system evolves the Foundation's role will become increasingly vital. Not everyone can afford medical insurance to go private. We have a great product - Health and Hospitals - we just need to be the doorway for community support.

My trustees and I are delighted to welcome Guy Ryan to the Foundation. Guy brings a strong background in fundraising and community engagement and his passion and commitment aligns seamlessly with our mission. Guy will lead the Foundation into a new era of strategic growth that will leave a lasting imprint on the community we serve.

**My journey has been a privilege. Thank you for the opportunity.**

A blue ink signature of Bill Day.

Bill Day, MNZM, JP  
Chair, Wellington Hospitals Foundation



Flight Simulator



Electric cars for children heading to surgery

# Introducing our New CEO

**K**ia ora! It's hard to put into words the huge sense of gratitude, pride, and responsibility I feel stepping into the role as the Chief Executive for the Foundation. I want to acknowledge the incredible work that Bill and the team have done over the past 20 years. I'd also like to acknowledge you – our incredible community of staff, healthcare professionals, volunteers, and supporters. If it wasn't for your support, we simply wouldn't be able to do the work we do. Thank you.

By way of brief background – I'm a father with two young boys, aged 4 and 6, and call Wellington home where I've now lived for the past 13 years. I grew up in a tiny village called Granity - on the West Coast of the South Island. Mum is a nurse, and in some way or another, the healthcare system has always been part of my life. I studied at Otago University, completing a double degree in Design and Marketing, and then a Masters in Science Communication. I've always been fascinated by the intersection between entrepreneurship, innovation, and social impact.

In a professional context, I've founded and built various organisations both for-profit and charitable, and recently stepped back from a 12-year tenure as the Chief Executive of a national youth leadership organisation that supported thousands of young New Zealanders to connect, build capability, and make a difference in their communities nationwide. I was lucky enough to be awarded Young New Zealander of the Year in 2015, and have been fortunate to work alongside some incredible people and organisations.

Being able to access good healthcare and support is a critical need in our community. Now three weeks into the

role, I've been exposed to the hardship and deprivation that exists in our communities. I've heard heart-breaking stories of people and families who are significantly impacted by the cost of living and can't access healthcare or be with their loved ones, to stories from staff and medical professionals of the much-needed medical equipment and resources. The need is huge.

Perhaps like many people, before stepping into this role I had assumed that the government paid for everything. As I'm quickly learning, the reality is very different. The difference that this Foundation – our Foundation – makes is significant, and often flies completely under the radar.

At the Foundation, we manage and support more than 400 people who generously volunteer their time across our respective hospitals in the Hutt, Kenepuru, and Wellington City. Thanks to the generous donations from our supporters and regular givers we've been able to fund things like world class medical training equipment and simulators, life-saving technology being used in areas ranging from children and women's health to emergency and intensive care, right through to little things like buzzy bee ice packs that help take the scariness away for young children who need injections.

In terms of where I'd love to take the Foundation – I think our core purpose to raise funds to help our hospitals improve healthcare and the patient experience, as well as providing a world class volunteer service, is spot on. Our biggest challenge now is how we take that to a whole new level, in order to help our hospitals meet the urgent needs in our community.

While this is the start of an exciting



*Bill Day welcomes Guy Ryan*

new chapter for the Foundation, I am acutely aware that we stand on the shoulders of giants, and an incredible community of supporters that have enabled us to get to where we are today.

It also feels fitting that my first fundraising campaign for the Foundation is to secure a new Transport Incubator for the NICU Flight Team. This cause hits close to home, as my family directly benefited from their assistance when my youngest son was born prematurely and we were hundreds of miles from specialist care. Seeing the vital work of Wellington Hospital's NICU Flight Team first-hand underscores just how critical the Foundation's work is to ensuring that people can access timely, high quality healthcare when they need it most. Please get behind this important appeal.

Ten years ago when Bill and the team had a crazy idea to build a brand new children's hospital – people said it was impossible, that it would never happen. Now, Te Wao Nui, the brand new regional children's hospital exists as a world class facility and a powerful example of what's possible through generosity, collaboration and partnership.

Imagine what we can achieve together over the next decade.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Guy Ryan'.

Guy Ryan  
CEO, Wellington Hospitals Foundation



*ED staff with Buzzy Bee Diversional Devices*

# Our community makes a difference

It is a privilege to partner with Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora | Capital, Coast and Hutt Valley to represent our donors within the hospitals we serve. Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support of our hospitals. Your donations, whether one-time or regular, enable us to offer crucial support across all areas of our hospitals allowing us to invest in life-saving equipment, create comfortable patient spaces, and fund items that improve the hospital experience for everyone. Featured below are just a few of the remarkable ways your donations have positively impacted our hospitals in this period.

## Foundation donors bring hope for people affected by Breast Cancer

Every year breast cancer results in over 600 deaths of women and men across Aotearoa New Zealand. Recent advancements in medical imaging technology have been remarkable, particularly with the introduction of the 3D Mammogram, capable of producing images in 1mm slices, thereby reducing the likelihood of abnormalities being obscured by dense breast tissue.

Our donors have enabled us, in collaboration with HealthNZ Capital Coast and Hutt Valley; to fund a new state-of-the-art Digital 3D Mammogram for Wellington Regional Hospital. This new machine is also equipped to perform contrast-enhanced biopsies, making us the sole site in New Zealand with this capability. Your donations represent a significant advancement in the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer through cutting-edge medical technology.



3D Mammogram

“The entire breast imaging service at Wellington Regional Hospital is grateful beyond words because of the generous donation that has made this new machine a reality for us. Our staff are so excited every time they get to work on the new machine and we are so thrilled to continue to provide an excellent service to our patients now with the latest in breast imaging technology!”

DR SARAH SPARKS (Subspecialist Breast Radiologist), Jasmine Redman (Co-Unit Charge Mammography) & Stephanie Lammas (Co-Unit Charge Mammography)

## Cutting Edge Surgical Equipment Enhances Paediatric Theatre Capabilities

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors, the Foundation has been able to fund new state-of-the-art Laparoscopic and Endoscopy equipment for Wellington Regional Hospital's Paediatric Theatre Service. This includes a 3D/4K Operative Laparoscopy System and a 4K upgrade of the Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Imaging System. These advancements will significantly improve health outcomes for our youngest patients by enabling better disease diagnosis, less invasive surgeries, fewer repeat operations, and shorter hospital stays. The upgraded laparoscopic equipment offers clearer



Bill Day, Chair WHF with Mr Prabal Mishra, Paediatric Surgeon

and more detailed visualisation of delicate structures within a child's body, while the enhanced endoscopy system allows for faster and more accurate detection of conditions like coeliac disease and gastroesophageal reflux.

## Buddle Findlay Child Health

Buddle Findlay Child Health Foundation has been a valuable partner of Wellington Hospitals Foundation for many years. We were delighted to welcome Buddle Findlay staff to Te Wao Nui to see the OPMI Pico Microscope for the Paediatric Ear, Nose & Throat Service that was purchased under year two of our three year agreement. This partnership reflects our joint commitment to improving the experience for children in hospital care.

“The microscope is a critical piece of equipment that we use frequently in our outpatient clinic. We use it to examine in detail the ear and eardrum, which allows us to diagnose different conditions, as well as plan and administer treatment. Without this we would not be able to run our clinic. We are enormously grateful to have it as it has enabled us to run dedicated paediatric ENT clinics in our new children's hospital.”

DR KATHERINE BAGULEY, Otolaryngologist & ENT Surgeon



Olwin Kleve, Buddle Findlay National Marketing Manager & Charlotte von Dazelszen, Buddle Findlay Partner & Wellington Trustee of BFCHF with Desmond Low, Operations Manager, ENT & Audiology

**The gift of a lifetime** After remembering loved ones in their Wills, many people want to leave something to help make a difference. Leaving a bequest to Wellington Hospitals Foundation is a lasting gift that will ensure our hospitals can continue to provide world-class treatment and care today, tomorrow and forever. Every gift, no matter how big or small, has a significant impact on the lives of our hospitals' patients and their families. Thank you. Email [admin@whf.org.nz](mailto:admin@whf.org.nz) to find out more.



# Thank you to all our volunteers

Our compassionate and hardworking Hospital Volunteers make such a positive difference in the lives of patients, their families, and hospital staff. Whether it's guiding, providing comfort, a cuppa or companionship, supporting staff, entertaining, knitting and sewing, serving in the shop, enriching medical training, or aiding our fundraising efforts - our incredible team of volunteers help build a sense of community and well-being within the hospital environment.

We are thrilled to introduce Paula Richards, our new Volunteer Service Manager in Wellington. With her wealth of management experience, Paula will grow our volunteer capacity and capabilities across the service, enhancing the care and support we provide to patients, their families and hospital staff.

Please also join us in welcoming Nicole Barker, who leads our volunteer service at Hutt Hospital. Nicole brings huge experience, enthusiasm and dedication to supporting our hospitals, marking an exciting new chapter for the Foundation in Hutt Hospital.

We also say (a final!) farewell to Trish Lee, who is retiring (again!) mid-year. Trish has been an amazing volunteer manager, friend and colleague and we wish her well in this next chapter.

We extend a warm welcome to Amanda Taii to the Kenepuru Volunteer Manager role.

Rounding out the team, Wendy Challis, continues her good work co-ordinating and mentoring the ED volunteers.

## We need you!

We are growing and looking for friendly people, with great communication skills, to join our Volunteer Teams in Wellington, Kenepuru and Hutt Hospitals. If you can spare 2-3 hours a week between 9am and 3pm, we'd love to hear from you at [whf.org.nz](http://whf.org.nz).

It is reassuring to know that our hospitals are here for us when we need them most.

The Foundation is privileged to offer a way for families who may have experienced exceptional care from our hospital teams, to express their gratitude. To support all areas of your hospitals please donate at [whf.org.nz/donate](http://whf.org.nz/donate)

Did you know that if you have donated to us in the past 4 years you may be eligible for a donation rebate of 33.33%. For more information or to make a claim, head to IRD's website: [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz)

We are also pleased to be partnering with Supergenous to supercharge your kind gifts. The Supergenous online platform makes it easy to claim your donation rebates back and they give you the option to regift your rebate back to us as a new donation. See more at <https://www.supergenous.co.nz/superpartners/wellington-hospitals-foundation>

Special thanks to Capital City Motors who continue to provide generous sponsorship of the Foundation's cars. [capitalcitymotors.co.nz](http://capitalcitymotors.co.nz)



Paula Richards



Nicole Barker



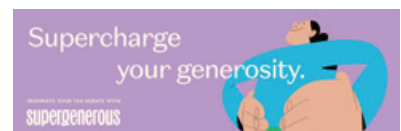
Amanda Taii



Wendy Challis

## When you support Wellington Hospitals Foundation you are supporting excellence in healthcare

- Become a Regular Giver for an area in your hospital that means something special to you. To find out more email: [donations@whf.org.nz](mailto:donations@whf.org.nz)
- Make a regular or one-off donation online at [whf.org.nz/donate](http://whf.org.nz/donate)
- Leave a Bequest. Make an important contribution in the future, without affecting your current circumstances. Email: [admin@whf.org.nz](mailto:admin@whf.org.nz) to find out more.
- Volunteer in one of Wellington's hospitals. For more information, visit [whf.org.nz/volunteer](http://whf.org.nz/volunteer), or email: [volunteer@whf.org.nz](mailto:volunteer@whf.org.nz)
- Hold a fundraiser to raise money for an area in the hospital of your choice. Visit [whf.org.nz/fundraise](http://whf.org.nz/fundraise) for ideas!
- Become a Charity Partner and collaborate with us in support of your hospitals. Email: [Shona.Brunton@whf.org.nz](mailto:Shona.Brunton@whf.org.nz) to find out more.



## Thank you to all our Charity Partners and Major Supporters

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