



# Helen Mason

Healthy, thriving communities, Kia Momoho Te Hāpori Ōranga.



7 February 2019

## Introducing our new Executive Director for Allied Health Scientific and Technical, Dr Sarah Mitchell

The Bay of Plenty DHB is on an exciting journey of discovery with a real focus on integrated and person centred approaches with CARE values at its core and I believe Allied Health are central to ensuring the full realisation of our vision and commitment to Healthy Thriving Communities.

I'm excited to be a part of this journey and have been asked to write a few words by way of introduction to the organisation.



I qualified as a physiotherapist in 1988 from Queens College Glasgow, completed a Masters in Sports Science in 1994 and a PhD in 2002 from Glasgow University. My PhD focused on rehabilitation post proximal femoral fracture.

I began my tenure with the Scottish Government in 2006 and led on various Allied Health policy initiatives including the National Musculoskeletal Programme and National Falls Prevention Programme. In 2013 I undertook the Institute Healthcare Improvement IA programme in Boston.

I've been with the DHB for nine months as Professional Lead for Physiotherapy and, during that time, have tried to ensure our services have a wellbeing, person directed focus.

Taking over the role of Executive Director for Allied Health Scientific and Technical from Martin Chadwick I undoubtedly have big shoes to fill but am relishing the challenge.

## Rural Health Inter-professional Programme (RHIP) at Te Rewatu Marae

I recently accompanied a group of our RHIP students on a stay at the Te Rewatu Marae, near Whakatāne. We spent two days at the marae being taught about Māori protocol, learning waiata, discovering more about Te Ao Māori, the Māori world, and exploring issues which lie at the heart of Māori health inequities.

It was a rich and powerful experience from the very start, when we were so warmly welcomed onto the marae. I would strongly encourage anyone who hasn't had the privilege of experiencing a Noho Marae to take up the opportunity when you get it.

I really appreciated the opportunity to share this experience and spend

time with these young health professionals and to learn about their goals and aspirations. I came away extremely heartened and optimistic about the future of our health services. If this group was reflective of our next generation of healthcare professionals then our communities are in good hands. They spoke with a great deal of passion. The group included three 5th Year medical students, three pharmacists, a dietician and an optometrist.

The importance of the RHIP programme was there for all to see, with these young healthcare professionals being able to learn more about one another's work and the importance of it in the one health system we all serve.



## Problem-solving approaches and different ways of thinking

I have been doing some reading recently around problem-solving and the way people approach challenges in their professional lives. During this I have discovered three reflections which I am finding particularly useful. These are called the Power of Yet, the analogy of the ham omelette, and the Longest Walk in the World descriptor.

### The Power of Yet

Mindset is such a driving force in our lives, and the way we approach a problem can have a huge bearing on how successful or unsuccessful we are in resolving it. The Power of Yet describes the profound power of a simple three-letter word 'yet' when used in this context.

It essentially states that, when faced with an issue we can choose to say that we simply can't solve it or we can say that we haven't solved it 'yet'.

It changes the perspective from being unable to come to terms with an issue to being simply on the road to solving it, implying that you will get there in the end. Using 'yet' gives a sense of progress, a different

continued over

**“The world needs all the trained minds and bright futures it can get, and it needs them everywhere.”**

— Salman Khan, *The One World Schoolhouse: Education Reimagined*

perspective, and is ultimately a more positive approach. Worth giving it a go!

### Ham omelettes

When your team is facing a challenge you can use the analogy of the ham omelette to think about how committed you are to solving it

The ham omelette analogy is about commitment to a project or cause, using the chicken and the pig as the examples in this case. In making an ham omelette, the chicken is involved, by contributing its egg, but can still walk away, little impacted by the process. In comparison, the pig is fully committed. I've been reflecting on which role I play in solving problems. Am I sitting on the side lines, making some contribution but not really engaged. Or am I fully committed and prepared to do all it takes to get a solution/successful outcome?

So are you and your team members the pig or the chicken? Are you all in or are you involved but not fully committed?

### Differing viewpoints – the Longest Walk in the World

The longest walk in the world is from my point of view to your point of view. That's what it takes to bridge the gap between our points of view/perspective. To be part of the solution, you need to understand how you're part of the problem.

