

August 2019

# Asthma Link

Newsletter of Asthma Waikato | Te Ha Ora Huango

## What's Inside

From the Manager

What is the Stepwise Approach to Asthma Management?

News from the Asthma Waikato Board

Lachlan's Story

Lucus's Story

World Asthma Day

Use Your Preventer

News, views  
and home truths to  
encourage and inform people  
with breathing difficulties

## From the Manager

Where has this year gone? It is hard to believe it is the middle of the year already. It's getting chilly and we are seeing our usual spike in asthma referrals. We have also been busy with World Asthma Day and we have been very excited to welcome our new nurse Dee on board, as well as two new Board members. We have come up with a few new initiatives too – like our asthma jackets and our asthma sports bag.

We completed a talk recently to the lovely folk over at Diabetes Waikato. We talked all about asthma and what it is, how it can be managed, how the medications work, and much more. If you would like us to come and give a talk to your community group or school, please let us know and we will see what we can do.

Stay warm out there, and remember, if you have been prescribed a preventer please do take it as prescribed. It doesn't work well at all if it just sits in the cupboard...

Sheryl Long, Operational Manager



## Notice of Asthma Waikato AGM

**Date:** Thursday 26th September 2019 | **Time:** 11am

**Venue:** Asthma Waikato premises, 18 Claudelands Rd, Hamilton.

**Speaker:** TBC (Light snacks will be available)

**Please RSVP** to Sheryl 07 838 0851; 027 200 1911;  
sheryl.long@asthmawaikato.org.nz by September 16th 2019



## What is the Stepwise Approach to Asthma Management?



Steps in the stepwise approach

We explain to our clients that managing asthma is a bit like going up and down a ladder. You start on step 1 of the medications and see if that helps. If it doesn't you may be moved up and down the ladder as your health professional deems necessary.

For example, perhaps your current regime isn't working and you are still having break through symptoms. Your doctor may decide it's best to move you up the ladder to a new/different medicine or add one alongside the regime you already have.

Alternatively, you may have been stepped up the ladder a few months back during a bad patch, but now you are doing better. That is great! Go and visit your GP and perhaps you can be stepped back down.

The aim is to find the LEAST amount of medicine to achieve the BEST result. This is why the six month review (even better if it was 3 months) is so important, otherwise you could accidentally be sitting way up the ladder somewhere, when it is no longer necessary. Conversely you may be too low on the ladder and struggling needlessly.

If you'd like more advice on this, please do get in touch.

**Maybe it is time for a review?**

## News from the Asthma Waikato Board

The Board is excited to welcome Tahi Brown and Marian Ruri to the Board.

Both come with a range of expertise behind them and will provide valuable assistance with helping Asthma Waikato in the area of Māori health in particular. Both also have a personal experience with asthma and understand how important good management of asthma within the whānau is. Asthma Waikato now has a full Board with eight members. Over the last few months a lot of work has been completed by the Board on establishing the Strategic Plan for the next 3-5 years and we are looking forward to rolling this out.



### Welcome to Dee

Kia ora, my name is Dee and I have recently started with Asthma Waikato as the Asthma Nurse Educator.

I have just recently moved down here from Northland where I was a Public Health Nurse for 11 years. I have always had an interest in asthma and with my experience working with children in the community, I feel very excited about having a direct focus and being able to impart this knowledge and helping families with asthma.

## Huge Thanks Braemar Charitable Trust

Huge thanks for purchasing us two new pulse oximeters. Pulse oximeters are vital for us to be able to use during our consults to check and monitor oxygen saturation in the blood and pulse rate.



## Raising Awareness on the Sports Fields

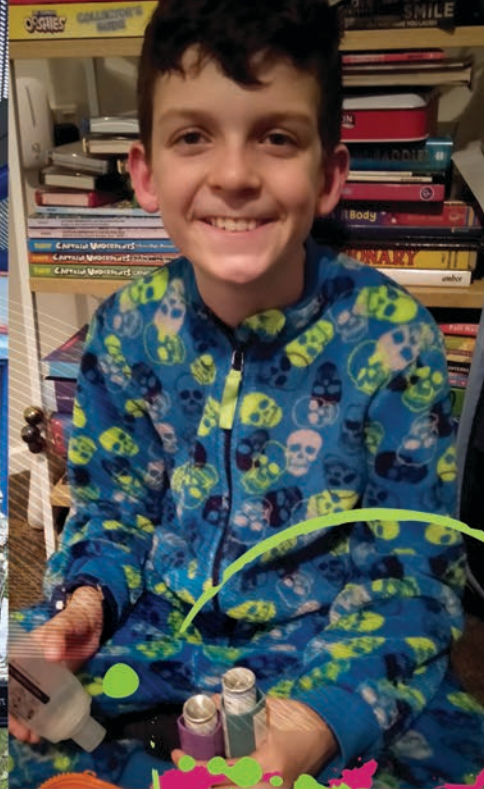
Winter sports are in full swing and so are the crowds at the sports grounds. So we thought we would do a bit of awareness raising with these stylish jackets – bright blue so we can be easily seen! We want to make sure that families out there know that we are here to help. We also have created some awesome bags for families to use – we give these to families after their consult, full of all the information and goodies they need to take home with them. Then the bag can be reused for sports or whatever in order to keep the promotion going.





# Lachlan's Story

Lachlan has always had asthma. He is now 11 and we honestly cannot remember a time where it was not a part of our life. The worst was when Lachlan ended up in ICU at Waikato Hospital which all started from a cough. As parents to a child who is a brittle asthmatic, we understand how heart-breaking and stressful it can be to watch your child struggle and feel like you have no control over it. The knowledge that we have gained from Asthma Waikato has been priceless. Asthma is scary but with the right support and with an up-to-date asthma plan it can be managed.



Here's our top tips:

1. Make sure you give copies to everyone who needs them including school, sports teams, family and always have one in your child's medication bag.
2. Consistency is the key so if your child needs to take an inhaler daily, do not miss a dose even if you don't think they need it!
3. Always have spare inhalers and spacers in every car, handbag or school bag for those rushing out the door moments.
4. Lastly talk about it, get your child to talk about it to friends and teachers so that those around him know the triggers and can help when needed.

Lachlan tries everything. He plays soccer, does 17km bike rides with his Dad, climbs the Hakarimata's and has competed in the last 5 Weetbix triathlons. He also does swimming, which is great for asthmatic children. I know to some people this may seem normal as this is what most kiwi kids do, but for Lachlan these things are treasured because of his asthma and as his Mum it's awesome to watch him complete these things.

We know the more active Lachlan can be the better it is for his health and all of this is possible because we follow his treatment plan and know his triggers and how to try prevent them. It's not always easy, but having some great doctors, Asthma Waikato support and an up-to-date plan and medication, Lachlan has had a really good run. Having the awesome support from Asthma Waikato has helped us tremendously and we are happy to say that there have been no more ICU admissions. Lachlan, recently won the 2018 Waikato Asthma and Respiratory Trust Award which recognises achievements of young people with asthma who do well in any sphere, be it academic, sport, social or community activities. The chats for us parents, the encouraging talks with Lachlan and the regular follow up phone calls to check in from Asthma Waikato are always a great support.

If you'd like more advice, get in touch with Asthma Waikato.

**Janice, Lachlan's Mum.**

[www.asthmawaikato.org.nz](http://www.asthmawaikato.org.nz)

## Lucas's Story

Lucas (7 years old) always struggled with colds through winter, ever since he was small. Most of our winter was spent in A&E and he was often on prednisone! My sick leave was non-existent due to having so much time off with a sick child. I'd had enough, so I took things into my own hands and contacted Asthma Waikato and asked if we could come and see them. We saw a fabulous nurse and she made the recommendation that we change from Flixotide to Seretide. The change was exactly what he needed. We got through winter without needing prednisone! His asthma is now manageable, and I am more educated than I was before. Thank you, Asthma Waikato!

**Erin, Lucas's Mum.**







### Please Use Your Preventer!

Please, use your preventer. We say it every day. Over and over. But still we hear 'he/she was doing great so we stopped it.' The reason they are doing great is most likely BECAUSE IT'S WORKING. Maybe something visual will provide a little motivation. If you/your child do not use your preventer regularly look at the airway on the right. Maybe this will help you realise how important it is.

Too many kids ending up in hospital again and again, many to ICU purely because they are not taking their preventer. This is heart-breaking.

May the 7th was World Asthma Day. We celebrated with a competition on Facebook and Jessie Rushton was our winner of a fabulous velour towel and asthma bag. We want to extend a huge thank you to all the cafés, pharmacies, schools and other places who helped us with our awareness campaign on this day. Remember, if you are having trouble with your child's asthma we are here to help and you can self-refer to us on our website - [www.asthmawaikato.org.nz](http://www.asthmawaikato.org.nz)

Roberts pharmacy Ngaruawahia, Ngaruawahia pharmacy, Waikato hospital: - Three cafés and Pharmacy on Meade, Hillcrest pharmacy, Nga Hua pharmacy, Unichem Dinsdale, Glenview pharmacy, Home Sweet Home, Pharmacy 547, Fairfield pharmacy, Tui Medical Davies Corner, Chartwell pharmacy, Jam on Queenwood, Five Crossroads pharmacy, Jack's Coffee Place, Countdown Café Chartwell, Coffee Culture Chartwell, Z Ngaruawahia, BP Ngaruawahia, Ngaruawahia primary school, Hillcrest Medical Centre, Nga miro Health Centre Ngaruawahia, Active Explorers Preschool, South City Christian School, Deanwell Primary School, Te Rengarenga Medical Centre, Te Kohao Health, Tui Medical Victoria Street, Chartwell Health Care, Fairfield primary, Fairfield Intermediate, Bankwood primary, Woodstock school, Vardon School, Fairfield kindergarten, Forest Lake school, Te Kohao Kohungahunga, Te Puna o te Kohao, Kindercare learning centre.

### Thank you to our all our supporters and sponsors

Without the generous support of these organisations throughout the year, Asthma Waikato would not be able to function. We are so grateful! Thank you!

plus...

The Warehouse, Gallaghers Charitable Trust, Sir John Logan Campbell Residuary Estate, John Illott Charitable Trust, Braemar Charitable Trust, Norah Howell Charitable Trust, Waikato WDFC Karamu Trust, Dr Noel Karalus, Jumble Around.

Normal Clear Airway

Uncontrolled Asthmatic Airway

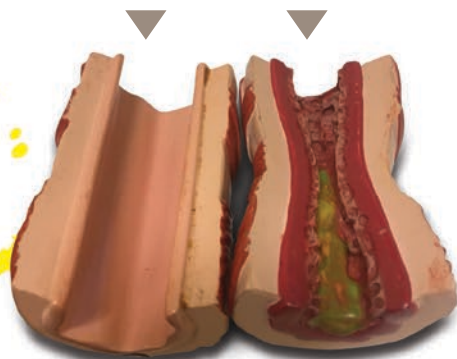


Photo Credit: HMR Children's Respiratory Specialists

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Kiwis of all ages are dying from asthma each year!  
You can help save their lives by supporting us to educate and prevent this happening...



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