

Healthcare Improvement Champion Heads to New Zealand

Counties Manukau District Health Board and The University of Auckland are very pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Jonathon Gray as the Stevenson Professor of Health Innovation and Improvement. Professor Gray will be the Director of the new Centre for Health Services Innovation at CMDHB and also Director of the National Institute for Health Innovation at The University of Auckland. The new Chair is funded thanks to the generosity of the Stevenson Foundation and is the first post of its kind in Australasia. Professor Gray will take up his post in the Spring.

Professor Gray is currently director of Healthcare Improvement at Public Health Wales and a co-director of 1000 Lives Plus, the programme to improve patient safety across NHS Wales. He is also the Chair for Healthcare Improvement at Cardiff University.

With more than twenty years experience in the field of health care and health quality, Professor Gray is a leading expert in healthcare improvement and innovative service development. He graduated in Medicine from Dundee University, following with a PhD in Clinical and Molecular Genetics.

A former Clinical Director for the All-Wales Medical Genetics Service, Professor Gray completed a fellowship at The Institute for Healthcare Improvement in Boston, Massachusetts working closely with Professor Don Berwick (soon to be President Obama's Chief Advisor running the US Medicare and Medicaid programmes) and completed his Masters of Public Health degree from Harvard. He also gained an Advanced Medical Leader Award from the British Association of Medical Managers.

About the National Institute for Health Innovation at The University of Auckland

The National Institute for Health Innovation (NIHI) was established in 2006 as part of the Tertiary Education Commission 'Partnerships for Excellence' programme. The initial objective was for NIHI to provide a nexus for health research centred on, or at least significantly involving, health technology. A second stage was anticipated which would see the Institute's role expand into many other areas of health innovation and to a wider national and international audience.

This appointment is a key component of moving to that second stage. The expanded NIHI will focus on addressing the major opportunities for innovation research in the healthcare sector as result of the accelerating pace of change throughout the sector, with a goal of addressing the pressing systemic issues facing healthcare in the 21st century.

The core capabilities of the Institute focus on innovation: in health systems, new models of care, quality improvement, leadership, workforce development, technology enablement, evaluation and trials. Strong linkages with clinical communities and healthcare provider organisations will be vital to the success of the Institute.

NIHI's health innovation research profile will build on the strengths, capabilities and reputation of its individual units, and enable extensive collaboration across the sector. The Institute will support innovation and development in healthcare by linking clinical perspectives and, technological advances with the rigor of measurement,

evaluation and trials, plus health systems and policy research in leadership, workforce development and quality improvement.

Professor Iain Martin, Dean of the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences says “This appointment is one of the most exciting new academic developments for the University. The potential for the partnership between the DHB and the University to lead effective evidence based health care innovation is very significant indeed. The support of the Stevenson Foundation in enabling this appointment has been fantastic and is testament to the power of philanthropic funding enabling research to make real differences.”

About the Centre for Health Services Innovation

Counties Manukau DHB is not alone in facing the challenge of continuing to improve the quality and accessibility of health services in tandem with an ageing population and workforce shortages. The Counties Manukau situation is particularly acute as the district's population is growing at double the national average, there are high incidences of long-term conditions and issues associated with socio-economic deprivation, plus current ratios of health professionals to patients (particularly GPs) are well below national averages.

Based on forecast growth in demand and current ratios of health workers to patients, Counties Manukau will need to double the size of its associate workforce within 15-20 years. The challenge ahead has been similarly identified by three major tertiary education organisations in the Auckland region – The University of Auckland, Manukau Institute of Technology and AUT University - who together account for the majority of new health professionals and workers placed and employed in the district.

Collectively, CMDHB and its tertiary education partners have proposed a coordinated, integrated solution to the challenge which spans current and future workforce development, the development of clinical leadership, patient care quality improvement and research and innovation.

The Centre will be housed in a new building on CMDHB's Middlemore Campus. This complex will also house The University of Auckland's South Auckland Clinical School, and will be completed in March 2011.

Mr Geraint Martin, Chief Executive Officer of Counties Manukau District Health Board says: “Jonathon's leadership and expertise in engaging clinical frontline staff and bringing about significant change is demonstrated by his Directorship of the National Patient Safety Campaign in Wales (“1000 Lives Campaign”). This campaign has significantly improved clinical standards and patient outcomes by linking the best practice with engaging clinical leaders.

“Through this innovative partnership between the DHB and tertiary education, we aim to build a centre of excellence in improving patient care, and Jonathon's appointment and international expertise is a key part in achieving it. We can't wait for him to start”

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For further information, please contact Lauren Young on 021 823 590