



# MILLHOUSE INTEGRATIVE — MEDICAL CENTRE —

PARTNERING IN HEALTH AND HEALING

**JUNE 2019**

A warm welcome to the Millhouse Community and to other readers.

During the last couple of weeks the wind and rain has intensified so remember to take protective measures, which I have often spoken about, to decrease exposure to cold viruses and ensure your immune system actively responds to any infection. Eat wholesome food, avoid excessive stress, have quality sleep, arrange a vaccination if you are susceptible to colds and flu, and supplement with Vitamins D & C, zinc and turmeric.

On 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 the Millhouse Integrative Medical Centre will have given 25 years of service to the Howick and Pakuranga community, to others across Auckland and from more distant places. A big thank you to all who have journeyed with us, sharing your stories and life experiences, challenging us to learn and enriching the life of the clinic. More about the history and future of Millhouse follows.

Do have a healthy winter.



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## **MILLHOUSE NEWS**

**EAR SUCTION** for the removal of ear wax is now available at Millhouse and can be booked directly with reception. Practice Nurse Michael performs this procedure at 130 Millhouse 2-3 days each week and will ask a doctor for advice if he has any concerns.

**SCRIPT REQUESTS WHEN NEEDED TO BE SEEN** At the time script requests are received our practice nurses check whether screening recalls are due and the last consultation date seen, which should not be beyond one year for those with stable chronic conditions. Please don't be offended if we ask you to attend for a clinical review; we will provide an interim script, so this can be at a time of your convenience.

**OUR MEDTECH COMPUTER SOFTWARE SYSTEM** will be updated later this year to EVOLUTION. We will keep you informed of this change which includes a new online booking system and convenient online access to your investigation results. This change will ease the increasing non-clinical workload doctors face when all results are emailed, but we will continue to contact you immediately if we have any concerns.

**DOCTORS ON VACATION** Doctors Ric and Alet are on vacation during July and August. We have been unable to find locum cover and Dr Dan has agreed to increase his hours during this time. The Practice Nurses will actively triage patients when health concerns are present.

**PLANNED PROACTIVE CARE (PPC)** subsidised programme now only includes free practice nurse consultations for those needing complex medical general practice care, but continues to allow free doctor and nurse visits for those needing palliative care with advanced cancer and other life-limiting illnesses.

**DID NOT ARRIVE (DNA)** In the last newsletter I expressed concern about the increasing numbers who do not turn up for their appointments without notifying reception. We are now charging a DNA fee when doctor and nurse appointments are missed or not cancelled within two hours, but the fee will be waived if an untoward event has been experienced.

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## **MY MILLHOUSE STORY - 25 years of service**

### **A brief history**

Following the 1987 share market crash, New Zealand was plunged into the financial doldrums till the Government in the early 90's stimulated the domestic economy through migrant growth. North Park, Botany and later Dannemora benefited as immigrants arrived and purchased new houses. Infrastructure services that were established included the erection of a strip shopping complex on Millhouse Drive. Near completion, pharmacist Wilson Lau placed a conditional order to buy one unit provided a medical centre was established, which realtors advertised.



At about the same time, in 1994, my wife Viv was appointed Assistant Minister at St Andrews-Howick Presbyterian Church and we moved to Auckland. After 17 years in Dargaville, I was transitioning from being a rural GP to an urban medic, and began exploring opportunities for independent medical practice. I was introduced to Doctors Mark Denekamp and Serene Hu and we partnered together to create the Millhouse Medical Centre which opened on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 1994.

Mark already had a home-based general practice, with his wife Joanne as Practice Manager, Lorraine King as Receptionist and Lorraine Marshall as Practice Nurse. These wonderful people became the heart of the Millhouse operation. From Day One, I shared expenses equally with Mark. Having no patients, I needed to build a practice and so offered appointments each weekday till 6.30pm and on Saturday mornings. Millhouse was the first Howick GP practice to offer these extended hours to patients, an action that was not welcomed by the local GP's. To make long hours more tolerable, I took a long lunchbreak which I had experienced many years earlier in Bristol. Mark generously allowed his patients to see me in the evening and Saturday mornings, and as the new immigrants arrived, some elected to become patients at Millhouse.

Millhouse became busier. Dr Serene's vision was to care for the growing Chinese community, but the stress of operating a busy Northcote practice, caring for two teenagers and commuting across Auckland for afternoon clinics took its toll, and she soon resigned. However, on her recommendation we approached Dr Kooi Chean, who was working in Howick and spoke five Asian languages. She readily joined us, and within months had a flourishing practice. A few years passed and Kooi sadly returned to Malaysia with her cardiologist husband. Dr Rose Phan was her replacement followed by Dr Hong Duan, and finally Dr Aileen Wong in 2006. Dr Stephanie Nam arrived in 2012



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and both Aileen and Steph are with us today providing comprehensive care for the local Asian community in their own language.

One afternoon, shortly after we began, Dr Christine Morgan, a caring and confident medic who lived locally, introduced herself to me and asked if she could join Millhouse. I informed her there were no surplus patients but a room was available for consulting which she was welcome to use. Christine quickly built her practice, working diligently with us till her passing from malignant melanoma in 2012. This was a sorrowful time as we watched a beloved colleague, who gave so much for others, have her life taken away.

Mark developed an interest in appearance medicine and sold his practice to Dr Else Seligman in 1999. Other doctors who came included Dr Christine Hutton, Dr Lyndsey Kabat and later Dr Heather MacDonald. Egyptian-trained and Arabic-speaking Dr Therese Khella, with a special interest in women's health, joined in 2007, and apart from a short break, has continued with us.

At about this time Else was afflicted with bowel cancer and for her health's sake sold her practice to Dr Andrew Grobler, who stayed for a brief period. These were unsettling times but a highlight before Else left was the purchase of 130 Millhouse, which we needed for additional clinic space, as we had outgrown 128 Millhouse.

Dr Scott McLaren joined Millhouse in 2010 and enriched the team with his surgical expertise, and Dr Alet Stoltz became an associate in 2013, bringing her patients and extending the Afrikaan influence. Shortly afterwards Scott resigned to purchase his own practice, but the disappointment faded when Dr Daniel Quistorff, who had an interest in nutritional medicine, arrived to begin training in family medicine.

### **A successful organisation is more than the sum of its parts.**

Millhouse's success is not just due to wonderful doctors who have shared their skills and cared for the patient community, but is also attributable to our Nurse-Reception team who have been the glue enabling this to happen. To them all I am immensely grateful. Special thanks to Maree Bullus, who now leads the nurse team, for 20 years of outstanding service, and to Noreen Cooper for 18 years of loyal service at reception as well as providing financial and audit expertise. Lorraine King deserves mention for 23 years of dedicated service from the very beginning.

To the Coleman, Channing, Cooper, Walsh and Schulz teenagers, and a few others, who covered Reception from late afternoon into the evening: it has been a delight working with you all. A highlight is knowing that Michael and Abby went on to complete registered nurse training, and that Taine has just commenced his health science degree.

Finally special thanks for your dedication to all our current medical-nurse-reception personnel, and especially to Lisa Leat, who came as Practice Nurse and now leads the practice. Thank you Lisa for your willingness to step up, accepting the difficulties you have experienced, but also realising the possibilities for Millhouse to become a more effective, caring and leading primary-care centre.

### **Our future**

My hope is that Millhouse continues to treat all with respect and dignity. That our medical team members listen carefully to the patient's story, understand their life's critical events and beliefs, are attentive in examination and investigation, and work together in partnership to develop strategies that improve health and treat disease. This will include lifestyle advice on diet, exercise, sleep, stress management and maintaining a clean and protective environment. Medication will be combined with natural therapies and we will refer patients to the appropriate medical services and be an advocate for their best health outcome.

Practice Nurses, within the scope of their experience, will triage, perform examination, treat and write prescriptions as well as acting as health coaches on the patient's journey. Technology advances will allow instant access to medical files, e-consultations, and remote monitoring of disease, as well as greater understanding of genetic code-disease connections, the importance of gut microorganisms and cellular chemistry in treating illness.

The public health systems increasingly will be stressed by the burden of chronic disease (especially the complications of diabetes and aging baby boomers) and be limited financially in the provision of innovative cancer and other therapies. Euthanasia will be available in terminal illness where there is no hope.

General Practices will be expected to do 'more for less,' and increasing GP frustration which will accelerate corporatized ownership. However I do hope that despite these pressures Millhouse will remain an independent entity, providing quality integrative medical care to the community.

Yours in good health,  
Dr Richard J Coleman



Missing from the Team Photograph are Dr Stephanie & Dr Daniel



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