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DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
HAUORA A TOI

22nd October 2008

Dietitians to support health workers

Health workers and practice nurses who take food and nutrition messages to the community will get extra support from two newly appointed primary health dietitians. Christine Cheong and Sarah Tuki say there are a lot of inconsistent messages out there about what's healthy and what's not.

"Our role is to build up the knowledge of our community health workers so that people are getting the right advice," says Christine.

Their back-to-basics approach will be delivered to health workers via interactive workshops.

"These are a great way for me to find out people's views and their current knowledge. For example, with rising fresh food prices, many people don't realise that frozen and canned vegetables are just as good as fresh," says Christine. "I see it as a two way relationship - I am learning about their community and they are learning about nutrition."

"We are keeping it simple and finding interesting and different ways to deliver the healthy messages," says Sarah.

Christine and Sarah are supporting the PHOs within the Western and Eastern Bay of Plenty respectively. They are currently visiting PHOs within their areas and developing training material and resources.

"We're just getting to know people at the moment so that we can develop material which is consistent, but tailored to suit their needs," says Christine. "We are letting the right people know that we are here and they can call upon us for advice and support."

Sarah and Christine are fully qualified dietitians with a Bachelor of Science and Post-Graduate Diploma in Dietetics from the University of Otago. They were supported by the BOPDHB and the PHOs at the beginning of the year to complete their practicums within a primary health environment. Both are excited about starting their careers with the PHOs.

“My reason for getting into health is to help people live better lives. I want to make a difference,” says Sarah.

For more information, contact either Christine on 07 579 4930 or Sarah on 07 307 0402.



Primary Health Dietitians Christine Cheong (left) and Sarah Tuki are spreading simple, consistent messages about nutrition throughout the BOP.

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