

June 2020



## Heart Healthcare Newsletter

Welcome to the June 2020 Health Professional newsletter. This month we feature the Heart Foundation's new 0800 nurse-run helpline and new translations of some of our popular resources. We have a collection of Covid-19 and cardiology articles and some research papers focussing on the use of ACE inhibitors and ARBs during the current outbreak. We also profile Heart Foundation GP liaison Dr Joan Leighton.

1. Heart Foundation launches new nurse-run phonenumber
2. Nutrition and the older adult
3. Health professional profile
4. New Heart Foundation translated resources
5. Covid-19 and cardiology
6. Research articles
7. Journeys story
8. Heart Help groups for your patients
9. Conference schedule
10. Free community engagement sessions

Happy reading,

The Heart Healthcare Team

---

## Heart Foundation launches new nurse-run phonenumber



The Heart Foundation recently launched a free nurse-run helpline for people with questions about heart health and cardiac conditions and treatments.

This initiative came in response to a 2020 Heart Healthcare survey of people living with a heart condition, more than half of whom reported they would use a heart helpline when they needed advice outside of a GP or pharmacy visit.

It is hoped the service will provide extra support to people and their families in high needs communities and where equity is a focus.

Many callers were grateful to speak to a nurse and appreciated clarification and education about their diagnosis and or/treatment or intervention. Some callers who didn't want to bother their GP during the Covid-19 lockdown were reassured that their health concerns were valid and encouraged to see their doctor. We also received several calls from people experiencing chest pain and on at least three occasions we immediately recommended they call 111.

More recently the calls have been around returning to work in Level 2. These links may be helpful when discussing a patient's return to work:

- [WorkSafe information for workers](#)
- [Covid-19, Level 2 advice for at-risk people](#)

From 6 April to 20 May, we had a total of 143 enquiries. The majority of calls came from people living with heart disease in the Auckland, Wellington, Waikato and Canterbury areas.

**Please share the details with your patients.**

**Phone 0800 863 375 or (09) 571 9191 between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday.**

**We're here to help**

---

## How does good nutrition help us stay healthy as we age?

Nutrition and ageing are topics in the spotlight in New Zealand as people aged 65 and over make up a large and growing proportion of the population. Maintaining good nutrition is essential to prevent malnutrition, reduce the risk of chronic disease, support physical and mental health and, ultimately, preserve independence. Ageing brings changes to both our body and mind, as well as our social life and daily routine. All these things affect how we eat and therefore both our nutrition and overall health can change. Good nutrition not only helps support heart health, it also reduces the risk of chronic disease, which increases with age. Read on to find out what good nutrition means and how to support those over 65 in your line of work.

[Read the blog](#)

---

### Profile the Health Professional

**Dr Joan Leighton, GP Liaison, Heart Foundation, shares her views on heart health in New Zealand**

“I have a part-time role with the Heart Foundation as a GP liaison. This involves giving a primary care perspective on clinical aspects of our work, helping to develop resources, and giving presentations. Along with my Heart Foundation role, I work part-time as a GP in Christchurch and Cardiology GP Liaison in Christchurch. I also present to GPs and practice nurses at primary care conferences.



I enjoy being part of the bigger picture in heart health, beyond my direct interaction with patients. Education both of fellow health professionals and the general public is an area I particularly enjoy, allowing me to contribute to the prevention and improved treatment of heart disease across New Zealand.

I would like to see New Zealanders better informed and more engaged in their own heart health, as the biggest improvements come from changes made in the home. I'd like people to be able and willing to self-manage their heart health, with healthcare professionals taking a supportive rather than directive role. Putting the patients' views and personal values at the centre of decision-making is the way to achieve lasting improvements.

Addressing the inequalities in heart health is also a prime objective, particularly with regard to Māori and Pacific peoples, and across geographical areas within New Zealand.

During the current Covid-19 emergency, we've had to adapt to a new way of working in primary care.

Fortunately, most of our clinical decisions are based on the history from the patient, so we can safely give advice or treatment by phone or arrange a face-to-face consultation if needed. We're concerned some people aren't seeking help when they should. As we move down the alert levels, we hope more people will feel comfortable presenting to us. The changes we've made give us the capacity to see people safely and provide the same high level of care as prior to Covid-19."

## New and updated Heart Foundation resources

### Updated medications web pages

Information on medications commonly used by people with heart conditions can be accessed on our website. It has been updated for consumers so they can understand their medication, and the things they need to be aware of while taking it. [Visit the pages here.](#)

### Translated resources

The Heart Foundation secured grant funding from the Milestone Foundation to update and release new versions of our resources in a range of languages.

Topic	Pamphlet	Poster
<a href="#">High Blood Pressure</a>	<a href="#">Hindi</a> , <a href="#">Chinese</a> , <a href="#">Korean</a>	<a href="#">Hindi</a> , <a href="#">Chinese</a> , <a href="#">Korean</a>
<a href="#">Cholesterol</a>	<a href="#">Hindi</a>	<a href="#">Hindi</a> , <a href="#">Chinese</a> , <a href="#">Korean</a> , <a href="#">Samoan</a> , <a href="#">Tongan</a>
<a href="#">Smoking</a>	<a href="#">Hindi</a> , <a href="#">Chinese</a> , <a href="#">Korean</a> , <a href="#">Samoan</a> , <a href="#">Tongan</a>	<a href="#">Hindi</a> , <a href="#">Chinese</a> , <a href="#">Korean</a> , <a href="#">Samoan</a> , <a href="#">Tongan</a>
<a href="#">Angina</a>	<a href="#">Hindi</a> , <a href="#">Chinese</a> , <a href="#">Korean</a> , <a href="#">Samoan</a> , <a href="#">Tongan</a>	<a href="#">Hindi</a> , <a href="#">Chinese</a> , <a href="#">Korean</a> , <a href="#">Samoan</a> , <a href="#">Tongan</a>

To see all available options for translated and English resources please visit our [resources page](#).

[Get resources](#)

## Resources on Covid-19 and cardiovascular disease

We continue to update our [Covid-19 page for health professionals](#) with relevant information for your practice and your patients. Recent releases from CSANZ include:

- a. [Rural and remote cardiology during the Covid-19 pandemic – CSANZ consensus statement](#)
- b. [Consensus statement for patients with genetic heart disease and Covid-19](#)
- c. [Covid-19 and acute heart failure: screening the critically ill](#)
- d. [Echocardiography services during the Covid-19 pandemic](#)

- e. [Guidelines for interventional cardiology services delivery during Covid-19 pandemic in Australia and New Zealand](#)
  - f. [Management of cardiac electrophysiology and cardiac implantable electronic devices during Covid-19](#)
- 

## Research articles

### Cardiac medication and Covid-19

Recent studies strongly support the ongoing use of ACE inhibitors or ARBs, despite previous concerns associated with Covid-19.

#### **Inhibitors of the Renin–Angiotensin–Aldosterone System and Covid-19**

Professional scientific societies and experts have spoken with one voice in advising that patients should not discontinue ACE inhibitor or ARB therapy out of a concern that they are at increased risk for infection, severe illness, or death during the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Read research](#)

#### **Renin–Angiotensin–Aldosterone System Blockers and the Risk of Covid-19**

This study does not provide evidence that the use of ACE inhibitors or ARBs is independently associated with the risk of Covid-19.

[Find out more](#)

#### **Renin–Angiotensin–Aldosterone System Inhibitors and Risk of Covid-19**

This study found no substantial increase in the likelihood of a positive test for Covid-19 or in the risk of severe Covid-19 among patients who tested positive in association with five common classes of anti-hypertensive medications.

[Find out more](#)

#### **Cardiovascular Disease, Drug Therapy, and Mortality in Covid-19**

This study confirmed previous observations suggesting that underlying CVD is associated with an increased risk of in-hospital death among patients hospitalised with Covid-19. The results dismissed concerns regarding a potential harmful association of ACE inhibitors or ARBs with in-hospital death.

[Read the study](#)

---

## Women and heart attack symptoms

### Sex Differences in Symptom Phenotypes Among Patients With Acute Myocardial Infarction

A recent article in the AHA journal highlights the ongoing issue that diagnosis of acute myocardial infarction (AMI) is missed more frequently in young women than men, this may be related to the cognitive psychology of the diagnostic process.

[Read article](#)

### Sex Differences in Symptom Presentation in Acute Coronary Syndromes: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

A new study published in the Journal of the American Heart Association concluded women with ACS do have different symptoms at presentation than men with ACS, but there is also considerable overlap. Since these differences have been shown for years, symptoms should no longer be labelled as “atypical” or “typical.” The top three heart attack symptoms in both women and men are chest pain, sweating, and shortness of breath.

[Read the study](#)

---

## Journeys story

This month’s patient story comes from Aylene, who cared for her brother during his final years living with heart disease.

Supporting a person with a deteriorating heart condition, is often difficult and deeply saddening. Aylene shares some valuable insight on how she walked alongside her brother, respecting and supporting him in his journey.



[Read story](#)

---

## Heart Help Directory

**We encourage you to contact local groups directly to find out what services they are offering during lockdown.**

The Heart Foundation’s online Heart Help Directory can help patients find local cardiac support groups. Phase II groups are formal cardiac rehabilitation programmes run by clinical staff for people who have been discharged

---

from hospital within the last few months. Phase III are community-based support groups for anyone who has experienced heart disease. The directory also lists contact details for the local Green Prescription provider.

[Visit the directory](#)

---

## Upcoming 2020 conferences

Please check with the conference website directly as information below may change.

**[WONCA \(World Organization of Family Doctors\)](#)**

**Postponed to 5-7 November 2020**

Auckland

**[CSANZ New Zealand 2020 Annual Scientific Meeting](#)**

**Cancelled**

Dunedin

**[New Zealand Resuscitation Council Conference](#)**

**Cancelled**

Rotorua

**[Indigenous Nurses Aotearoa Conference 2020](#)**

**7-8 Aug 2020**

Auckland

**[Lifestyle Medical Conference](#)**

**Postponed**

Wellington

**[GP CME South](#)**

**13-16 August 2020**

Christchurch

**[Rotorua GP CME 2020 \(North\)](#)**

**11-14 June 2020**

Virtual meeting

### Lockdown learning

While conferences have been cancelled or postponed in the short term, there are still many opportunities to continue your learning online.

The European Society of Cardiology offers online learning and has a range of information on Covid-19 and cardiology.

Physicians' Academy for Cardiovascular Education offers a range of online learning sessions and membership is free.

[Visit site](#)

[Visit site](#)

---

## Heart Foundation community engagement sessions

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and Government restrictions, all face-to-face events have been cancelled. We will continue to review this on an ongoing basis and will recommence face-to-face events as soon as we safely can.

Details will appear on the [Heart Foundation events page](#) when these sessions are available.

---

## Regional office details and Heart Health Advocates

The Heart Foundation offices are closed until further notice, but our Heart Health Advocates can be still be contacted.



[Find your local branch](#)

[Contact a Heart Health Advocate](#)

---