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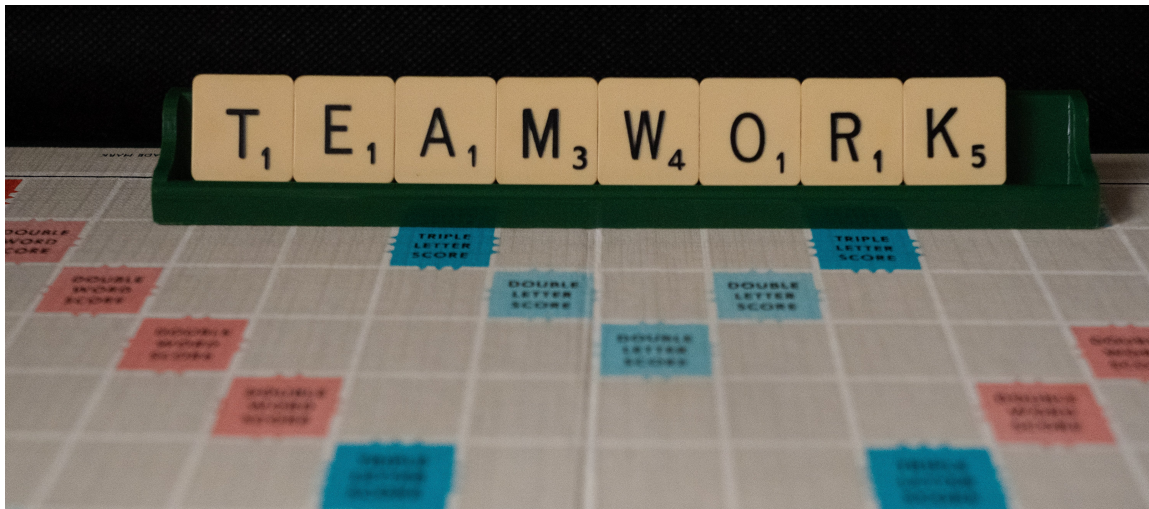
On silver linings and buoying the team

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2 minutes to Read



The value of teamwork is highlighted in a crisis like Omicron [Image: Nick Fewin on Unsplash]

PMAANZ

Practice managers and administrators have been in the thick of the long years of COVID-19. **Jo Bennett** finds inspiration in the general practice response

Two years after the first case of COVID-19 reached our shores, it is hard to believe how far we've come.

Two years ago, COVID felt like a foreign word and wearing face masks day in, day out was not our “normal”.

A new generation has since been brought into the world, surrounded by face masks rather than facial expressions. Milestones have been missed, celebrations, funerals, and even things taken for granted for children like first days at school, graduation, balls, school productions and play dates have all been affected.

People of all ages and stages have missed out on their usual social interaction, and this has highlighted how important it is to stay connected and how easily people can become vulnerable.

For now, it is still hard, especially in health, to think about anything but COVID-related issues, especially after an extremely challenging start to 2022.

But for every crisis, there has to be a silver lining. It has been inspiring to see teams pull together to get the mahi done when short-staffed, continually adapting as the requirements change in our full workload of vaccinating, swabbing and managing community cases, as well as trying to manage business as usual.

It is also exciting to see the speed at which technology has enabled virtual health to be embraced and paper systems replaced, things that in the past would have taken years to implement.

Staff and teams are stretched and are feeling tired and overwhelmed with all the information and flexibility that is required to manage this pandemic.

Self-care is important

As managers, we want to ensure our staff feel valued, have opportunities for continued growth and development and, most importantly, feel cared for. This is also true for managers themselves: self-care is critical to be able to care for others.

The PMAANZ conference is a great opportunity to practise self-care. This event is a chance to connect and network with old friends and new, learn, grow, develop and leave feeling re-energised to tackle whatever comes next.

Sadly, once again the COVID outbreak in Aotearoa has forced the association to postpone its conference. The conference that was to take place on 24 to 26 February will now be held on 27 to 29 October 2022 in Rotorua.

As it will be our 25th annual conference, the theme is “Celebrate – past, present and future” and it will certainly be educational, challenging and inspiring.

The programme is being reviewed to ensure content is relevant; it will include a diverse range of speakers across many areas including: equity, LGBTQ, rainbow youth, mental health, rural health, health care home, burnout, ACC, immunisation and the Ministry of Health.

A separate day for receptionists is a great opportunity to upskill staff.

Before October, PMAANZ will be organising some hot-topic conference teasers in the virtual world. Another silver lining!

Information on these sessions will be updated on our Facebook page and website.

PMMANZ provides collegial support all around Aotearoa via several branches.

Branches offer regular meetings and training opportunities throughout the year.

Jo Bennett is conference convenor for the Practice Managers and Administrators Association of New Zealand and is practice manager at Birkenhead Medical Centre in Auckland

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