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Practice managers: 'Never gonna keep me down'

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Practice managers juggle problem solving, improvising, initiating and organising [Zak Neilson on Unsplash]

PMAANZ

Practice managers are worth their weight in gold, and will soon get the chance to qualify in their sphere, writes **Heidi Bubendorfer**

Remember those lyrics, “I get knocked down, but I get up again, you are never gonna keep me down...” (from Chumbawamba)? And Billy Ocean’s “When the going gets tough, the tough get going”?



Heidi Bubendorfer

I think primary care epitomises these lyrics.

The Practice Managers and Administrators Association of New Zealand (PMAANZ) is proud to be supporting our membership of dedicated practice managers and administrators. PMAANZ provides members with peer support, mentoring, networking, professional development, professional representation in the health sector and a stunning annual conference.

We all know that practice managers are worth their weight in gold and have a plethora of tools in their kit. Not only do they run a tight ship, but they also solve problems, improvise, initiate, organise everything and keep smiling. They are the very sticky glue that holds everything and everybody together.

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen the emergence of even more role diversity for practice managers; some have become credentialled COVID-19 vaccinators, rostering experts, bouncers and diplomats. It was a huge blow that, once again, the COVID-19 outbreak forced us to make the difficult decision to postpone the PMAANZ Conference which was to take place on 22 to 24 February.

We have already secured our next dates: 27 to 29 October 2022 in Rotorua.

With the theme “Past, Present and Future” and a diverse set of quality speakers, it will be educational, challenging and inspiring as well as an opportunity to network with friends old and new.

We will run webinars as conference teasers, the first of these being the health and disability commissioner and General Practice NZ discussing how the tsunami of COVID-related complaints is being managed.

One surprise we were to share at the conference was our PMAANZ rebranding. The new PMAANZ logo and branding depict our organisation as a vibrant and happening entity. Chair Michelle Te Kira will unveil this to members within a few weeks.

We are proud of our professional development work, and can now offer PMAANZ members new educational opportunities. The executive has been working with the University of New England, in New South Wales, Australia, to develop tertiary-level programmes for practice managers and administrators.

Practice managers often start their journey as administrators coming up through the ranks, from reception, to admin supervisors and through to practice managers and operations managers. There hasn't been a fitting qualification until now, and PMAANZ is thrilled to offer members the opportunity to undertake the Diploma of Leadership in Healthcare Practice, a Certificate in Leadership, and learning modules in cultural safety and equity.

These qualifications provide a great opportunity for practice managers to look at systems and processes as well as strategy and leadership. Although Australian based, the knowledge is compatible with New Zealand.

These qualifications and courses are not just for those who are starting out, but also for experienced managers looking for further education.

This year has also seen the introduction of a mentor database, set up by PMAANZ to enable members to connect with experienced practice managers and have one-on-one discussions and support.

PMAANZ has come a long way since it first formed in 1996. It has always been governed by volunteers and run as a not-for-profit organisation. Over time, the association has gained traction and now has a significant presence in the health sector.

Ms Te Kira is a strong voice for PMAANZ, and sits on numerous high-level boards and advisory groups, advocating with determination for general practices.

Heidi Bubendorfer is secretary of the Practice Managers and Administrators Association of New Zealand

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