



# Pete Chandler - Acting CE

*Healthy, thriving communities, Kia Momoho Te Hāpori Ōranga.*

## Wow, what a year that was . . .

it felt a bit like being on a full speed, unstoppable rollercoaster! Despite the many challenges we've been through in the last year, there has been some tremendous achievements and developments to celebrate and be proud of, across many of our services.

So I would like to take this opportunity to close off the old year by thanking everyone most sincerely for your commitment, hard work and the many improvements, wins and steps forward you've made during 2018. The Board and Executive Team truly appreciate all of you who strive to give of your best and to make a difference for those who depend on us.

As many of you know, I have been doing some diagnostic work on where we're at as an organisation, and the wider health system, and where we need to focus our efforts to navigate the very changing environment we find ourselves in. One of the things that has become very clear to me from talking to groups and individuals, is that we are crossing a bridge into a different state of being, and we end 2018 as a different organisation to the one that started the year.

I'll be sharing some of my findings and proposals in February, but I wanted to take this opportunity to give you a sense of some of the comments that are coming through from many of the people I've connected with:

- We've outgrown ourselves in many ways and need to adapt for the large organisation we are becoming.
- Many of our ways of working are just too bureaucratic, hierarchical and don't work efficiently for us anymore . . . too many meetings, emails, approvals and repeated conversations.
- We have lots of great people, and we've achieved some amazing changes – but we need to make it easier to evolve rather than having to keep pushing against our own system.
- We're over it with incivility and behaviours of colleagues that drain our energy and morale – no-one has been given that right.
- We need to build trust and psychological safety across all of our teams and services to be the best we can be.
- We need managers and leaders to evolve, to listen and to lead effectively, not micro-manage, be defensive, or make 'no' the default response.
- We have the potential to create an amazing, integrated health system for the Bay.

In talking to colleagues in other organisations both in Aotearoa and around the world, it's becoming clear that we are seeing a notable shift in the psyche and expectations of workforces at this time.

I have heard about NZ University Business Schools being approached by numerous organisations reporting that traditional ways of doing business are no longer working in this complex and changing environment which requires a more agile, engaging and simpler approach to flourish and thrive.

Around the world organisations are starting to question traditional hierarchy based organisational structures as well as the roles of managers and leaders in a changing workforce context. These themes have also come through from many of our teams in response to the three key questions I have been asking ("How are we doing? What are the most important things to be focussing on and What gets in our way?")

On top of these societal shifts, the Bay of Plenty has some of the largest population growth of all DHBs and nearly all of you have been feeling the impact of this. Sadly, neither I nor any other member of the Executive Team has a magic wand that can solve the issues and challenges we face, but what we can do is strive to create an environment where you can create, re-design, change things, try different ways of working and remove some of the unhelpful obstacles that get in our way.

We can work to break down silos and open up the space for grown-up conversations, seeking collective solutions for some of the hard things that need to be addressed. We then need the full range of talent, diversity, creativity and smart thinking from all of you . . . your unique contributions to become the best we can be, together.

On the other side of the bridge I can see our full potential for a connected system that delivers equitable models of excellence in how we provide healthcare services to our communities, as well as how we function as an organisation, in ways that work in a 2019 context . . . for us as well as our population.

Over the first few weeks of the New Year, members of the Executive Team will be working hard to plot a course through a number of the challenges we face, so that by the time we reach the end of the year we will have some new tools and approaches to better empower and equip us for our changing context. There is no doubt that this is a time where we will need to adapt, evolve and develop as individuals, teams and services, and work together to re-design some of the things that are no longer meeting our needs.

It's going to be especially important for all of our managers and leaders – in all disciplines and services at all levels – to be taking your leadership responsibilities for the wellbeing of our teams and our patients very seriously and working together to lead through this time of challenge and change. We are All-One-Team and working together is an imperative, not a choice.

There's lots more to share on the subject of our potential evolutionary journey than I have space for in this short newsletter, but I do want to share some of the key comments I've had from many of the amazing people I've spoken with .... your colleagues ... about some of the things that we can do to build, strengthen and empower each other as we enter 2019:

- Let's make 2019 a year of kindness to each other.
- Let's seek to understand first, rather than to judge.
- Every small act of CARE adds another brick into our wall of resilience and collective strength.
- Each bit of hurtful gossip, misrepresentation or unapologised-for harsh words, takes bricks away, weakens us and wears us down.
- Each of us adds a piece of what it feels like to work here, and to receive care here.
- If we work together we really can make changes and be truly amazing.

As we move into 2019 let's all strive to be our very best selves; to grow, develop and support each other through into the future state that we can become.

Nga Mihinui ki a koutou katoa  
Pete