

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT FOR HKNZ ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It is my absolute pleasure to present my first CEO report to the Heart Kids NZ (HKNZ).

I commenced my role, in an interim capacity for 6 months, with HKNZ on 15th May 2024. This contract role expired on 16th November and at the Boards invitation, and with support from staff, my CEO role has transitioned to that of a part-time employee, in a permanent capacity, with effect from 18th November 2024.

Since commencing my role with HKNZ, a special acknowledgement should be made with regard to the commitment of the whole team at HKNZ, during a time of significant organisational change. I would especially like to acknowledge the personal support of so many of the dedicated HKNZ staff, there are too many to list and to thank individually but it is their belief and trust in me that has made my job possible. I cannot thank them all enough for their unreserved confidence in me, to support them, and the incredibly important work of HKNZ in the community.

I would also wish to formally acknowledge the support of the Board, and in particular the input and encouragement from Ashlee McCormick, the HKNZ Board chair. In my opinion I would not have been able to progress, my role at HKNZ, without the Board endorsement, but most especially Ashlee's personal support.

In my brief time with Heart Kids, I have become incredibly invested in Heart Kids and I don't think anything resonates more with me as to the very essence of what Heart Kids is all about, than the brief summary, in part extracted from the HKNZ Statement of Service Performance (SSP).

Heart Kids provides vital practical and emotional support for children, young people, and adults living with congenital and acquired childhood heart conditions, and their families. Our services include tailored family support in the community and hospital, resources to navigate life with a heart condition, and events that foster connection and resilience. By partnering with health professionals, businesses, education and community groups, we ensure that every heart family can access the support and information they need on their heart journey.

HKNZ is proud to support a community of over 13,000 members across Aotearoa. This includes over 5,000 direct clients - heart kids, teens, adults, prenatal cases, which includes over 280 heart angels who have sadly passed. Families, including parents and siblings, make up the remaining over 8,000 and are an integral part of our community.

Our reach is nationwide, with a dedicated team of 7 full-time and 21 part-time staff working across our family support and engagement and operational national support teams. This ensures that we can provide tailored, timely support to our members wherever and whenever it is needed. But most especially together, we are united in our mission to support all those impacted by congenital and acquired heart conditions

HKNZ is a provider of nationwide community family support services via an absolutely dedicated and again inspirational family support team led by Ngaire Allen. Our network of Taituara throughout the country, from Auckland, Starship hospital, and regions nationwide, delivering wherever possible personal or at the very least remote support, are the backbone of the services we provide to support our families. By maintaining contact with our families via such as murmurs coffee groups, networking events, facilitating clinics and just being there wherever and whenever our families need you. Personally, it has been a very real thrill for me to meet heart families and heart adults at family support events, be that with heart adults or parents and heart kids. I am just so thankful for the opportunity to work, but most especially to support you.

It was truly inspiring and quite emotional for me to attend the Heart Kids summer camp this year. To witness and see the kids having fun, meeting old friends, establishing lifelong transformative relationships, sharing their own personal stories, was simply awesome. This event only happens as a result of an incredible effort both from our family support and engagement team, to secure the funders and sponsors who financially support the event but also navigating what is a challenging coordination and often complex logistical project. This event would not happen without the support of the wonderful volunteer network, including the medical team, and also the heart adults who for me are the true inspiration for the kids that others have been along their journey. I have described the summer camp as a "jewel in our crown" I was just so proud of everyone and to see how this event came together.

Heart Kids NZ receives no government funding, we have a small, dedicated engagement team, led by Hanna Griffin, who do any incredible job. I am genuinely in awe of the work these folks do, the level of commitment, and as I say the dedication of this team is in my opinion unparalleled. Everything from managing our grant funding programme, sourcing and maintaining relationships with donors and other supporters, to managing and coordinating the amazingly successful national fundraising campaigns such as Heroes for Heart Kids, and Little Heart Day. To managing our brand, coordinating not only the consistency of our messaging for both internal but most especially our external communications, by social media, newsletters with our supporters, volunteers and our members. All of this fundamentally underpins the ability for us to be able to deliver via our family support team the services and support for our heart kids' community. You are incredible and I cannot thank you enough as a team for your efforts and support not only for Heart Kids but for me personally.

I should also make special mention of the numerous regional fundraising events often facilitated by our Taituara, but also a network of local volunteers often this is coordinated by local branches and again our local volunteers. These events continue to lift the awareness of Heart Kids but most of all provide the opportunity for our families and volunteer community to not only raise funds, and engage with local businesses, but also network with themselves to support other local families.

From an administrative perspective our operations team led by Viv Stark, ensures that there is consistent management and coordination of a myriad of tasks such as our systems, payroll, staff expenses, travel, insurances etc including liaison with our external accounting services providers. All of these services are absolutely essential for Heart Kids to operate and function as an organisation. I am so grateful to this team to act as the "glue" that blends the organisation together.

Heart Kids has an incredible network of supporters be they again the incredible volunteers, or our amazing financial supporters, the donors, the trusts and foundations everything you do, every dollar you give to Heart Kids really does make a difference. I can't thank you enough.

To conclude, it is my absolute privilege to do all I can to support Heart Kids and the families in the community. In particular that our families are not alone on this journey from hospital and birth to adulthood. As the expectations and level of support inevitably changes but most of all there is continuity in our vision that at all times our community should indeed feel supported, connected, informed and hopeful for the future.

Working with an incredible and amazing team all of whom, along with our Maia bear mascot, are truly my inspiration and enable me to say with sincerity that after over 30 years of working in the business and corporate world "I have found my place".

Thank you

David Pimblott
Chief Executive Officer
16 April 2025