

SCIP Regional User Group Meetings and Professional Seminars 2015



During 2015 SCIP staff travelled throughout our region to provide Professional Seminars to health and education providers, and to host meetings for Cochlear Implant users and parents of children with cochlear implants. A summary of the meetings is presented here.

Visits were made to all of the main centres we serve. Details of seminar dates, locations, and staff involvement are listed in Table 1 below:

| Region | Date | Staff |
|------------------|----------|--|
| Timaru | 25.02.15 | Naomi Gibson, Penny Monteath |
| Palmerston North | 22.04.15 | Neil Heslop, Katherine Bayly, Nikki Cleine |
| New Plymouth | 23.04.16 | Neil Heslop, Katherine Bayly, Nikki Cleine |
| Nelson | 06.05.15 | Naomi Gibson, Penny Monteath |
| Wellington | 20.05.15 | Katherine Bayly, Nikki Cleine |
| Hawkes Bay | 24.06.15 | Katherine Bayly, Nikki Cleine |
| Canterbury | 22.07.15 | Neil Heslop, Nikki Cleine |
| Invercargill | 16.09.15 | Bekah Gathercole, Nikki Cleine |
| Dunedin | 14.10.15 | Bekah Gathercole, Penny Monteath |

Table 1: *Regions visited, date of visit and staff involved*

PROFESSIONAL SEMINARS

The aim of the Professional Seminars was to keep people up to date with developments at the SCIP, to help facilitate appropriate and timely referrals, and to maintain links with regional service providers.

The seminars for professionals were typically held from 3.30 – 5.00 pm at a range of venues. Contact was made in the first instance with local DHB Audiologists. Seminars were held within the relevant hospital/DHB facility in Timaru, Palmerston North, New Plymouth, Napier, Nelson, and Invercargill. In Dunedin, LIFE Unlimited premises were used, and in Christchurch and Wellington other (market) venues were hired.

The following topics were presented at each professional seminar:

- An update on the SCIP - Funding, the Clinical Programme, and New Initiatives
- Referral Criteria – Children and Adults – Current Practices
- Information for Referral Agents About Who and When to Refer

- The assessment process
- Cochlear Implant Outcomes – How is your patient likely to do?
- Local Supports for Patients in Your Area
- Updates on Cochlear Implant Technology

Professional meetings were well attended. A total of 125 Professionals attended the professional seminars. A significant percentage of SCIP referrals are made by Audiologists; this was therefore a key target group for the seminars and it was pleasing to see a total of 46 Audiologists attend. Audiologists earned 1 Continuing Education Point (CEP) for attendance via their professional body.

A separate seminar was held for Resource Teachers of the Deaf (RTD) in Christchurch (18) and Wellington (16) because each group was quite large in itself. A summary of professional seminar attendees by region is shown in Table 2 below:

| Region | Number of Professionals |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| South Canterbury | 6 |
| Palmerston North | 13 |
| New Plymouth | 12 |
| Nelson | 12 |
| Wellington | 7 |
| Wellington (VADEC - RTD) | 16 |
| Hawkes Bay | 18 |
| Canterbury | 6 |
| Canterbury (VADEC - RTD) | 18 |
| Invercargill | 12 |
| Dunedin | 5 |
| Total | 125 |

Table 2: Numbers who attended the Professional Seminars, by Region

A range of professionals, in addition to Audiologists, attended the seminars. Some VADEC RTDs attended other regional seminars. All were invited to attend. A summary of the variety of professionals who attended the Professional Seminars is shown in Table 3 below:

| Professional Group | Total Number Attended |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Audiologist | 46 |
| Hearing Therapist | 12 |
| UNHSEIP Screener | 3 |
| Public Health Nurse | 3 |
| ENT Specialist | 2 |
| AODC | 7 |
| SLT | 1 |
| MoE (unspecified) | 1 |
| VADEC (RTD) | 47 |
| Disability Support | 1 |
| Deaf Aotearoa | 2 |
| Total | 125 |

Table 3: *Professional Seminar attendees by group*

The number of professionals attending in the two centres where we operate clinics (Wellington, Christchurch) was lower proportionally than attendance in other regions. This may be accounted for in Wellington by the official opening of the SCIP Wellington premises on 5 May 2015 (attended by some of the training target group) which occurred two weeks prior to the training event. The Christchurch seminar closely followed the NZAS conference where a presentation had been given by the CI Programmes.

Professional Seminars - Evaluation by Attendees

A presentation “Evaluation Form” was given following the seminars in Wellington, Hawkes Bay, Canterbury, Invercargill, and Dunedin. This had not been introduced in the earlier visits. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. Participants ranked the statement “This presentation was useful” along a 5-point scale:

Strongly Disagree – Disagree – Neutral – Agree – Strongly Agree.

28% Agreed with the statement

72% Strongly Agreed with the statement

Topics rated most useful were:

- Referral criteria
- Assessment process
- Clinic overview & funding
- Device overview

- Case Studies
- Population and location

People also mentioned:

- Timelines
- Compatibility of speech processors with accessories
- Private and public funding mechanisms

Suggestions for future training included:

- Discussion of benefit “What happens if it doesn’t work for me?”
- Case Studies
- Video of Assessment and Mapping
- What happens when a CI is upgraded
- Troubleshooting tips
- More on Habilitation
- Anything paediatric
- Updates 2-yearly

Under “Other Comments” people frequently said they appreciated that SCIP had come to their region. Other comments included:

“Good to have Audiology and Rehab people.”

“Thanks for answering questions.”

“Valuable learning and networking.”

“Nice to put names to faces at SCIP.”

“Found it helpful, had couple of clients ask about CI recently.” “

Small group made it easy to ask questions.”

“Good to know about new devices.”

“Exceptionally interesting.”

“Succinct, relevant and well presented by knowledgeable people.”

“Good to hear what's happening for recipients.”

USER GROUP MEETINGS

Cochlear Implant users, family members, and parents of children with cochlear implants attended the User Group meetings. These were held from 7.30 – 9 pm (some 7.00- 8.30 pm) in a range of venues including LIFE Unlimited rooms, Motel/Hotel conference rooms, and Cancer Society rooms.

A summary of the user group attendees by region is shown in Table 4 below:

| Region | User Group Attendees |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| South Canterbury | 13 |
| Palmerston North | 28 |
| New Plymouth | 12 |
| Nelson | 30 |
| Wellington | 25 |
| Hawkes Bay | 27 |
| Canterbury | 16 |
| Invercargill | 28 |
| Dunedin | 16 |
| Total | 195 |

Table 4: *User Group attendee numbers by region*

A total of 195 people attended the meetings. SCIP had previously presented to CI users in Dunedin and Invercargill in 2014. The meetings in those regions were still very well attended with 16 and 28 attendees respectively.

Topics in the presentation included:

- Update on the SCIP
- Funding and population spread
- Device related topics e.g. changing microphone protectors, pairing with processors, using accessories, new processors
- Resources for listening practise and support available locally

Participants were very welcoming, asked lots of questions, and contributed a lot to discussions. They were very pleased that SCIP staff had come to their region.

In some regions User Groups are already well established. In these centres one or more recipients act as a point of reference for others in that region and undertake to arrange regular meetings for fellow recipients. The SCIP encourages these user groups as a means of peer support.

FUTURE PLANNING – REGIONAL SERVICES

The professional seminars and user group meetings undertaken in 2015 are a new initiative for the SCIP. We are mindful that the majority of our recipients and users do not live in the near vicinity of either our Christchurch or Wellington clinics.

We provide some outreach via our Habilitation service but the focus of these visits is children only, and sometimes the focus falls on individual children, families, or education professionals, rather than communities of users.

With increasing recipient numbers, particularly in the regional centres, the programme will look to build on this year's regional seminars. These seminars and meetings will become one part of what we expect to be a more comprehensive regional service that will be further developed in 2016 and beyond.

Some considerations for future regional services include:

- Regional outreach services by visiting clinicians to provide Audiology services for those in long-term follow up
- Regular facilitated user group meetings and seminars at intervals to be determined
- Biannual regional professional seminars
- Remote Audiology and MAPping services via the internet
- Collaboration where possible with local service providers for the development of clinical services closer to the recipient's own home

These ideas will be explored and we expect to provide further detail by early 2016.