

Nelson-Marlborough – New Visiting Service planned early June 2017

April 2017

The Southern Cochlear Implant Programme (SCIP) is planning to add a new visiting service in Nelson-Marlborough for existing cochlear implant patients.

The programme has approximately 60 children and adults in its care who are based in the Nelson-Marlborough region. Patients usually travel to our Christchurch clinic for all of their care.

The launch of a visiting service will reduce the travel burden that many patients face in visiting our Christchurch rooms. We expect that with a reduced travel burden that clinic sessions will be more effective for patients, and that patients and families will need to take less time out from school, work, or other community activities.

Detail about the proposed visiting service is outlined here, and we attempt to answer questions people may have. If you have further questions, these can be addressed to the programme through the contact details at the bottom of this sheet.

When will the service begin?

The proposed dates are **8 and 9 June 2017**. The 2-day clinic will allow us to see up to 10 patients in this period.

Where will the service be based?

The visiting service will be hosted by the Nelson-Marlborough District Health Board, in the Audiology department of their Wairau Hospital facility in Blenheim. The Audiology department is offering their rooms for the period of our visit and have sound-treated facilities for some testing.

Patients based in Nelson wanting to attend the visiting service will need to travel to Blenheim.

Who will be providing the service?

All services will be provided by SCIP staff normally based out of our Christchurch clinic. Gemma McCombie (Audiologist) and Megan Chinnery (Habilitationist) will be providing services. Patients seen at the visiting clinics may not have worked with Gemma McCombie as their Audiologist, however the process of MAPping that patients are used to will be the same.

The visiting service is a professional development opportunity for Nelson-Marlborough DHB staff to find out more about how cochlear implant services are provided, but they will not be providing services directly. The Hospital is operating as a host for SCIP staff, only, at this stage.

Who will be able to access the service?

The service will be available to existing SCIP recipients in Nelson-Marlborough, both children and adults. The service is designed to provide easier access for patients who might otherwise find access to our Christchurch clinic difficult. The visiting service will be prioritized for patients as follows:

- Those in the first 3-6 months post switch-on who require frequent travel
- Those not well enough to travel to our Christchurch clinic
- Those without access to transport to travel to our Christchurch clinic
- Those who do not have a support person to assist them with travel to our Christchurch clinic

Appointments will be offered to patients identified above, in the first instance. Any appointments remaining for the visiting clinic will be offered to other patients on the basis of clinical need.

What services will be available?

The service is primarily an Audiology service. The visiting service will include:

- MAPPING services
- Checking, repair, and if necessary issue of loan/replacement processors
- Replacement and dispensing of spare parts
- Aided Audiogram and speech perception only as necessary

Are there any of your usual services not available at a visiting clinic?

There are some patients who will not be able to access the clinic and some services will not be available;

- The service is only available for existing recipients.
- The service won't involve assessment of new patients, and surgical services are not available.
- Services for adults will be limited to Audiology; a Rehabilitation appointment will not be available.
- Services will be by appointment only; it will not operate as a "drop-in" service.
- Services that are not specialist CI clinic services and that are available through local providers (e.g. ear moulds, hearing aid services, ear health, ORL services)

We may add some of these services at subsequent visits.

How often will the service be offered?

After the first visit, clinics are likely to be held every 3-4 months to a maximum (at this stage) of 3 visits per year, depending on patient numbers, staff availability, and clinical demand.

What is the process for arranging appointments for the visiting clinic?

All appointments will be co-ordinated out of our Christchurch rooms. The Christchurch clinic will offer appointments to patients whose appointments are normally due in the month (in this

case June) of the visit. Depending on the availability of appointments, we may be able to see patients outside their normal schedule.



The Christchurch clinic will contact patients to offer a visiting clinic appointment. If an appointment is confirmed, staff from our SCIP office will liaise with patients to ensure they are properly prepared for the visiting clinic appointment.

I normally travel to your Christchurch clinic for my appointments. Will I still have access to a travel subsidy for an appointment at the visiting clinic?

The NTA (National Travel Assistance) regulations still apply for patients attending our visiting clinic. The availability of a travel subsidy may depend on the distance you travel from your home address to our visiting clinic at Wairau Hospital in Blenheim. You should consult your travel coordinator for advice.

Can I have all of my clinical services provided through a visiting clinic?

No. The visiting clinic will not eliminate the need to visit our Christchurch clinic for some of your clinical care. Those in the early stages post-implant will need more frequent appointments (particularly for MAP changes) than we are able to provide on a visiting basis. Also, we may not be able to provide a complete array of Audiology, Habilitation, and Rehabilitation services during visiting clinics.

Do I have to use the visiting service?

No; patients living in Nelson-Marlborough who travel to our Christchurch clinic for their care may still elect to do so rather than be seen at our visiting clinic.

Who do I contact if I have queries?

Enquiries from patients should be directed to our Christchurch clinic; patients are advised not to contact either Wairau Hospital or the Nelson-Marlborough DHB.

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