

From our Board Chairperson

Christine Lake

This year has been one of significant change for Plunket as we work towards achieving our vision of “making the difference of a lifetime in the first 1000 days” for families across Aotearoa New Zealand.

One Plunket

The significant change was to be expected after the governance consolidation decision made in late 2016 by Plunket's membership. This year saw the completion of the transition project, as the Royal New Zealand Plunket Trust was officially established in November last year, operating alongside the Royal New Zealand Plunket Society until the Society ceased operation on 1 January of this year.

Consequently this report covers both the final six months of the Royal New Zealand Plunket Society and the first six months of the Royal New Zealand Plunket Trust.

I would like to personally thank the transition project team, and all the Plunket people, past and present who undertook a mammoth task to document and execute the required legal and contract changes in a short timeframe. I would also like to acknowledge the work that the community services teams and finance teams have completed as the volunteer groups moved to a new funding and operating model.

This is my first year as Chairperson of the Plunket Board, and I feel privileged to work with the talented Trustees around our boardroom table, Plunket people who are doing so much to support young families.

My journey with Plunket began in 2000 when I joined as a volunteer in Christchurch. Throughout my time with Plunket I have been privileged to gain different perspectives of families' and communities' needs through my volunteer roles.

Seeing Plunket from a national point of view, I remain committed to the work of our volunteers, but equally I recognise the need for Plunket to adapt to New Zealand's changing economic and societal landscape.

Our focus must be on working together as we reach into so many homes and collaborate with other organisations to better address the issues affecting families.

Securing a bright financial future

Our Board has a long term financial strategy that will ensure a secure financial future to support the next generations of Plunket babies. Over the past three years, we have continued to invest in the upgrade of Plunket's technology infrastructure and enhancements to the electronic Plunket Health Record (ePHR) to keep Plunket relevant and ready for the challenges ahead. We have used a combination of borrowing and past reserve balances to fund these investments.

Well Child Tamariki Ora is the foundation of our universal service, which Plunket has provided for over 110 years and this will not change. However, we need to ensure we are delivering this service in ways that meet the needs of today's families and in ways that are adaptable and sustainable so we can continue to meet them into the future.

The growing costs associated with delivering Well Child Tamariki Ora and shaping our services meant we set a budget deficit. Through a combination of tight financial management and efficiency savings, our reported deficit of \$6.7 million for the Trust was within this budget. Our financial strategy



will see us return to a position of generating a surplus within the next three years.

Since coming together as a single organisation on 1 July 2017, Plunket is now better placed to understand the true costs of delivering our services. This has meant we can make informed decisions about our operations to ensure we deliver our long term financial targets.

Thanks

Andr e Talbot's term as President of the Society finished in November 2017 and I would like to thank Andr e for her strength and leadership during her three year tenure as President. In that period, Andr e led discussion on some hard questions and the best governance framework to meet the challenges of the future.

As a charity we are incredibly grateful for the support we receive from our partners, supporters and funders. Without this support we simply would not be able to achieve so much.

Ng  manaakitanga

Christine Lake

Christine Lake, Board Chairperson

From our Chief Executive

Amanda Malu

Mihimihi
Ko Aoraki toku Mauka
Ko Waihao toku awa
Ko Takitimu toku waka

Ko Kati Huirapa, toku Hapu
Ko Waihao toku Marae
Ko Kai Tahu toku iwi
Ko Amanda Malu toku ingoa

Plunket's commitment to ensuring every child has the best possible start in life was further reinforced for me this year when I returned to the birthplace of Plunket, Karitane. Reconnecting with Plunket's whakapapa and the journey that Plunket has taken to become the organisation it is today was incredibly humbling. It was an opportunity to celebrate the founders of Plunket and acknowledge the work that began all those years ago.

Parents in 1907 could not have imagined how different life could be for parents of today let alone being able to access advice through a phone or a computer. However, despite these advances in technology, many of the challenges facing wh nau and families today are as significant as they were 111 years ago.

Today almost 30% of New Zealand children live in poverty. Plunket sees over 30% of families in high deprivation areas and evidence of the impact that poor housing, lack of access to services and the increased cost of living is having on children's health and development is overwhelming.

As understanding grows of the complexity of parenting today, and the challenges facing some of our families, we understand the need for Plunket to change too, so that we can adapt and respond to these needs. Having a national view of all of our services means we can deliver the right support to wh nau when and where it's needed most, irrespective of where they live.

Since we launched our strategy in 2016, Plunket's Board has made some bold and necessary decisions to invest in new ways of supporting families and

become a more modern and relevant organisation, including establishing a national database of volunteers.

Plunket people

In 2018 we asked our staff how they felt Plunket was doing. I am pleased to say they are committed to our strategy. The next step for us as a leadership team is to continue to work with them, our volunteers and stakeholders to bring this to life.

Every day our people – staff and volunteers – are responding to the needs of wh nau. Increasingly our nurses, kaiawhina and health workers are not just performing core Well Child checks, but are advocating for babies and families needing assistance from other support agencies and addressing broader health issues.

This was highlighted in May when Plunket made a submission to the Government's select committee on the Child Poverty Reduction Bill. One of our nurses shared her experiences of working at the frontline. Sadly, these experiences are becoming more common for our nurses, and increasingly our community groups provide a vital lifeline for parents and families.

Investing in Innovation

This year Plunket's electronic Health Record (ePHR) has taken a leap forward with all Plunket nurses and health workers using a tablet to record the developmental milestones of tamariki during their Well Child Tamariki Ora visits. The migration of our legacy system into the ePHR has meant the end of the paper-based record for all of our current Well Child families.



With 250,000 children enrolled with us we are uniquely placed in the health sector. Consequently, we are able to use this innovative technology to gain rich insights and a single national view of Plunket families and identify where the greatest needs are.

Technology will continue to play a role in how we support families in the future alongside our face-to-face services. For example, video conferencing support services, Facebook chats and Parenting Podcasts are new developments we have been working on this year.

All of this however could not have been achieved without the commitment of our staff and volunteers, and the generous support of our partners, funders, donors and supporters. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to investing in the future of tamariki in New Zealand.

Ng  mihi nui

Amanda Malu

Amanda Malu, Chief Executive

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