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April 2025

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## From the Chair

Tēnā tātou katoa

The last few weeks have been busy with a series of Regional hui as well as holding one online, covering an update on our proposed new Constitution which will be considered at our upcoming AGM in September this year.

As a reminder, as a Charity we are required by law to update our constitution by mid-2026 following a review by parliament of the law governing all Charities in New Zealand.



We have also been working through an appointment process for co-opting two new members of Council in Irene van Schalkwyk and Veena Patel, who we will formally welcome and appoint to Council at our meeting of 4 May. In this edition of MusT we have a brief bio for both Irene and Veena for you to get to know them a little more.

Thank you to all of you who supported Music Therapy Week, which was aligned with International Music Therapy Week from the 14–17 April. It was great to see the range of stories reflecting our community and the work that is undertaken in mainstream media and then shared in various social media forums.

Our thanks also goes out to those who have taken the time to submit their thoughts and review our submission to Government on the HPCA Act. In this edition of MusT we have an update for you on where this process is at.

Lastly, a reminder re our upcoming Hui and AGM in Christchurch on Sunday 14 September at the BrainTree Trust. We are finalising our agenda and speakers in the very near future following feedback from Council at our May meeting and will look to circulate this to all during May.

Ngā mihi nui  
Stephen Guerin

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## From the President



Tēnā tātou katoa

Congratulations to our Chair Stephen, Council members, administration team and all who are actively contributing to our future direction by working on various tasks and within groups to add value to raising our recognition and status as an organisation.

The HPCA Act review group is an important example of MThNZ responding to the changing proposals and directions of the current government in the health sector. Another is a letter to the Minister of Immigration asking for music therapists to be included on the 'green list'. Such work is all in the interests of our fabulous multi-talented Registered Music Therapists. Their invaluable work across all sectors and places of our motu is very important and has a positive ripple effect within many communities and individual lives.

In the role of President, advocacy continues to play an important part of everything we do. What a fabulous effort by all who contributed to Music Therapy Week and reached out to our wider communities to raise our profile within Aotearoa.

As mentioned by Stephen we currently have major decisions to make about our strategic plan that includes our future structure, investment strategy, and the review of our constitution. The regional hui played an important part in enabling all members to have their say and we thank the JR McKenzie Trust for the grant we received to support these activities. Our upcoming AGM hui in Christchurch is another important opportunity for you to give further feedback and I welcome the input of our two new independent Council members for their fresh perspectives too. As a member, please consider what role you can play in our organisation going forward. For example, we need new registered music therapist members on the Projects Grant Group (PGG).

Thank you, it is a privilege to be President of MThNZ  
Linda Webb MNZM President, MThNZ

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## Reminders and Key Dates

- NZ Music Therapy Registration Board applications for new registrations, and renewal of annual practising certificates (for exceptional reasons) close on 1 August 2025
  - PGG funding round two opens 1 September 2025
  - Annual Hui and AGM – BrainTree Trust, Christchurch – 14 September 2025
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## Council News

### Hui and AGM – save the date

Planning is well underway for this year's hui and AGM in Christchurch on Sunday 14th September. We invite your suggestions on the kinds of sessions and speakers that you would like included in the programme. Please email [info@musictherapy.org.nz](mailto:info@musictherapy.org.nz) with your thoughts on that.

### New Council members

We welcome to Council two new co-opted Council members after seeking interest through various governance forums, interviews by a sub-committee of Council and then full endorsement from all of Council. Council is very conscious of having the right skill sets collectively and adopts a governance skill set mapping process for this, alongside renewing ideas and thinking on Council through succession.

Our two new Council members are Irene van Schalkwyk & Veena Patel. Both Veena and Irene have a passion for music and the arts and the contribution these make in our communities including at their own personal level and in their families. In our interviews we noted their openness and commitment to Te Tiriti.



#### Irene van Schalkwyk

Irene van Schalkwyk holds a senior leadership role as Communications and Marketing Manager at the University of Auckland's Faculty of Science with a solid foundation in financial management, risk and compliance, corporate governance, and strategy development. Irene has prior not for profit experience in a leadership position with both the NZ Blood Service and Western Cape Blood Service in South Africa before moving to New Zealand with her family in early 2020.



## Veena Patel

Veena Patel works in central government policy across a range of social and economic matters. Her work requires a balance of attention to detail and supporting high-level, long-term goals.

As a trained lawyer, Veena feels that getting the little details right is a big deal. Veena has governance experience as a board member on the ChangeMakers Refugee Forum.

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## Little Musical Caravan and Maraeroa Kindy

### Fostering Social Connections through Play-Based open groups

Maraeroa Kindy is a small, vibrant kindergarten located in Eastern Porirua. The Kaiako encourage ākonga to have agency over their learning and emphasise the importance of family and social connection, supporting tamariki in learning how to build positive relationships. The Little Musical Caravan was engaged to provide facilitation of musical play and scaffolded support within an open group. Our post-ableist approach is a great fit for Maraeroa and aligns well with the Te Whāriki strands; wellbeing, belonging, communication, contribution, and exploration. To illustrate the work we do at Maraeroa, we wrote a Learning Story, 'I want to play guitar'.

Liz Langham, LMC music therapist:

*This morning... there is something magnetic about the guitar and I have three children all wanting to play it – on their own! Right now! Me first! One is trying hard to strum the strings, another is placing their hand over the strings to stop the sound. The third child is looking on with curiosity, clearly wanting to join in but not sure how best to do so. Ah... this is a challenge for all of us to negotiate... I choose to stay calmly holding onto the guitar and smile at them all, simply saying 'it's ok, we can wait together.'*

*Although it is a bit uncomfortable for all of us for a minute as we wait, it creates time for each person to think about how they get what they really need. One person decides that they just really want to make music alongside their friends and so they take up the suggestion of playing a tone drum beside us. The tension lessens a little... With music from their friends picking up around us, the other two decide that they can both strum the guitar at the same time whilst I change chords to create different sounds. Later, they take turns. By practicing a 'pause' together, we all find a way to create harmony.*



This moment highlights the role of music as both a communication tool and a framework for social connection. By using music to model negotiation and turn-taking, children learn to express themselves and work through challenges in a safe, supportive environment. This fosters a sense of belonging without the pressure of conforming to external expectations, offering a space where every child is valued, seen, and heard.

Read the 'Learning Story' in full here: <https://www.littlemusicalcaravan.co.nz/play-based-group/>

## HPCA Act Review

### Submission from MThNZ

Late in 2024 MThNZ learned that the Ministry of Health was preparing to open a submission process as part of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance (HPCA) Act review. MThNZ had waited a long time for this! Having been warned that the submission period would be both short and at the start of the year, Council and Registration Board representatives Alison Talmage, Rachel Austin, Jen Glover, along with President Emeritus Daphne Rickson, met to plan our response and in-house consultation process, with administrative support from Barb Lewis. We drafted some potential responses based on what we knew at that point.

The review document, *Putting Patients First: Modernising health workforce regulation*, was released on 28 March 2025, with submissions required by April 30th. The document invited submissions from patients, health workforce, advocates, representative bodies, the public and organisations that are part of the health workforce.

The introduction cited the purpose as:

*The Government is looking at ways to improve the regulation of the health workforce as part of its plan to ensure timely, quality access to healthcare for all New Zealanders. The way in which we regulate affects the timeliness and quality of healthcare.*

Specific feedback was sought on:

- Patient-centred regulation: Faster wait times, better outcomes, and a system that truly puts patients first.
- Streamlined regulation: Using resources and administering the rules in the most cost-effective way possible, ensuring value for money for taxpayers and better outcomes for patients.
- Right-sized regulation: The level of regulation should depend on the level of risk to public safety involved.

- Future-proofed regulation: Modernised and adaptive regulation that ensures patients receive the care they need while supporting the workforce to respond to the needs of all New Zealanders.

The submission questions were quite different from what we had originally anticipated and reflected the very recent change of Health Minister. The group reviewed, reorganised or rewrote our responses to the submission questions and invited input from Rani Allen, our AHANZ representative. Rachel attended a webinar on writing submissions, organised by AHANZ, which was most useful.

MThNZ members were then invited to provide feedback on the draft submission and were given key messages for each question, should they wish to make an individual submission to compliment MThNZ. Member feedback was considered, submission answers adapted and the submission uploaded to the government's online portal on April 28th. The submission is available to read on the MThNZ website.

I acknowledge with appreciation the significant contributions of Alison, Jen, Daphne, Barb, Rani and all those who provided feedback. Now we can only hope that our voice is heard and trust that we have advocated as well as we possibly could for music therapy and most importantly, for those who would like to access music therapy within the health sector.

Rachel Austin  
HPCA Act Review Group Chair

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## Sir Roy McKenzie Music Therapy Scholarships

### Congratulations to the 2025 awardees



**Penny Warren NZ RMTh**  
PhD Candidate  
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of  
Wellington

Tēnā koutou. I am thrilled to have been awarded the Sir Roy McKenzie Music Therapy Scholarship for 2025.

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for this award to support my PhD research. I have continued to study part time alongside my work on the MMusTher programme at The New Zealand School of Music—Te Kōkī. I am already finding that my research is supporting my work with music therapy students on the programme. As I move into the final stage of my PhD research this Scholarship will be used to cover my fees for this year. I aim to complete my research in 2026 so I have a busy time ahead!

My academic supervisors, Dr Daphne Rickson and Dr Sarah Hoskyns, continue to support, guide and encourage my research journey. Thank you again. Nāku iti noa, Penny.

**Susannah Tierney**

Master of Music Therapy student,  
Victoria University of Wellington Te  
Herenga Waka



I am writing to express my gratitude for being selected as a recipient of a scholarship in support of my music therapy studies.

As a music therapy student, I am working toward a career where I can help individuals heal and express themselves through the transformative power of music. Currently, I am working in an adult in-patient mental health facility and I am thoroughly enjoying my placement; I hope to continue in this field and join the growing number of music therapists required to work in mental health facilities. This scholarship significantly lightens the financial burden of my education, allowing me to focus more on my coursework, clinical training, and personal growth. The contribution not only supports my education but also fuels my desire to continue working hard in my studies and future career. I am motivated to use the knowledge and skills I gain to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those I work alongside. Ngā mihi.

**Mekaela Fleener**

Master of Music Therapy student,  
Victoria University of Wellington Te  
Herenga Waka

I am very grateful to Music Therapy New Zealand for awarding me the Sir Roy McKenzie Music Therapy Scholarship.

It is a great privilege to receive this award, and I am humbled to have received such recognition by the music therapy community in Aotearoa. This award will enable me to purchase relevant resources such as instruments and books for the development of my music therapy practice. This was not something I had even been able to consider for this year prior to being awarded this scholarship.

There are also a number of professional development opportunities that I did not have the funds to consider seriously but might be able to partake of now, such as Neurologic Music Therapy training and the Music Therapy New Zealand conference. I am so grateful to be able to receive this award and I look forward to the opportunities that are now open to me because of it!

**Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou**

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## **SoundsWell Singers**

**Lindgren Fund**

**Introduction**

SoundsWell Singers wishes to extend thanks and appreciation for the funding received for our project from the Lindgren Fund. Over the last 3.5 years SoundsWell Singers has been busy and

has significantly grown in numbers. We now regularly have over 35 singers each session (including carers or partners, supporting a number of our members). There is a strong sense of community within the group, and there are a growing number of volunteers who help with the morning tea, transport, and concerts. With rising numbers there was a need to create new song folders for our larger group and we had the generous help of a choir member to help put them together.



### **Professional Development**

The funding included both facilitators, Megan and Penny, attending the Song Leaders Network Aotearoa (SLNA) event in 2022, however for various reasons we were both unable to attend. Other relevant professional development was attended which added to resources and music to include in the sessions. These included Megan attending shorter, local, vocal workshops through SLNA, and vocal health sessions. Penny attended the World Congress of Music Therapy in Vancouver, where she attended a number of workshops and presentations focussed on voice work and vocal health, and research on music therapy and Neurologic Music Therapy (NMT). This was very beneficial in developing ideas to use in the choir and to underpin the work with SoundsWell Singers.

### **Sharing and Educating in the Community**

There have been opportunities to provide information sessions and perform at conferences to expand awareness of the work of SoundsWell Singers and of neurological choirs. These included presenting and singing at the Waitohi hub in Johnsonville during NZ Music Month, and at a Parkinson's information session. In August 2024, SoundsWell Singers were also invited to sing and speak at the Annual Gerontology Conference in Wellington, and in September at the 50th Anniversary Conference for Music Therapy New Zealand (MThNZ). These events involved a big commitment and effort from the singers to attend, organise transport, and navigate new venues. The MThNZ grant has been used to support the choir to do this as well as following up on networking by circulating information to interested parties and organisations.

### **Community Collaboration**

In 2023 we ran a fundraising concert in collaboration with a local intermediate school – Evans Bay Intermediate (EBIS). In September 2023, Megan and Penny spoke at an information evening for at the EBIS Curiosity Catch-up which linked into the broader community of the school and local area. Students of EBIS held a non-uniform day which raised \$400 for the choir. There was also an art competition for students to design an image for the concert poster.

School students also learnt the NZSL signs for the song Pepeha by Six60 and joined the choir when they performed this in the concert. The event was a huge success and raised enough money to fund our venue hire costs for the whole of 2024.

During our performances in 2023 and 2024, some choir members shared their personal experiences and the role that SoundsWell Singers has in their lives. These moments are very

impactful for both choir members and audience members. They raise awareness of the benefits and value of neurological choirs, from a first hand perspective.

### **Charitable Trust**

The formation of the Charitable Trust for SoundsWell Singers is now in its final stages. There have been a number of unexpected delays however we have a generous lawyer who is finalising the trust deed. There are also five Board members committed to being part of the Trust Board, including a highly skilled fundraiser, a previous lay member on the MThNZ council, and a therapist from another discipline, all with experience as board members for various trusts or organisations. So it's onwards and upwards for SoundsWell Singers as we get ready to celebrate 10 years of singing together, with a very exciting birthday concert in Wellington in August!

**Megan Glass NZ RMTh and Penny Warren NZ RMTh**

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## **Interview with Retts van Dam**

**NZ RMTh, Māpu-i-Musika-Therapy Falē**

### **Interview for Music Therapy Week 2025**

**O o'u mātua Peleina the late Tupa'i  
IosefoTauau Tenasio Auva'a &  
Toleafoa Etevisē (Fidow) Auva'a  
Na ou fānau I Moto'otua Hospital, Apia,  
Western Samoa 1967  
O lo'u igoa o Marietta (Auva'a) van Dam  
I am a Samoan music therapy practitioner  
in Aotearoa Niu Sila**



Aotearoa NZ Music Therapy Week 2025, will indeed build upon last year's 50 years celebration of quite phenomenal, courageous, resilient, music therapy pioneers like my own Supervisors Claire Molyneux, (who helped me to establish Māpu-i-Musika-Therapy Falē); and now Lisabeth Toomey, and her contemporaries, who were the first music therapy practitioners here in Aotearoa. We give thanks for all who have come after them, our Te Kōkī Music Therapy course run by Dr Daphne Rickson and Dr Sarah Hoskyns and teams; and upon all whose research-based and person-specific / community-tailored mahi and guidance we are all inspired, learning from as we speak.

It is hard work and often long hours, but always rewarding when the musical self of a client reaches out to play a rhythm, their beats on an instrument; or vocalise in their own time ... their own sounds... their own voice, movement... sometimes to express themselves musically or to sing through pain, grief – or for our people:

- who seek collaborative physiological support after a brain injury
- or the sacred palliative care mahi
- or for those who are dealing with being a survivor of sexual abuse
- or our Special Needs Communities who teach me so much

– or students who bless this space with their angelic presence (all kids are angels whom we as adults must awahi with aroha and positive parenting and teaching).

I do consider one of my advantages as a Pasifika Music Therapy Practitioner, is that I know and love our multifaceted Pasifika Cultural Heritage, and how it is so deeply interconnected with our Oceanic world, as well as the Northern Hemisphere. We are all travellers, journeying together towards the common goal of love, being loved and meaningful relationships.

Arōhanui  
Retts van Dam  
NZ RMTh

*For interviews and other media content from Music Therapy Week, visit our website:  
<https://www.musictherapy.org.nz/>*

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## Why Regional work 'works'

### A Music Therapist's perspective from the Wairarapa

As a music therapist living in Greytown, South Wairarapa and working in Wellington and across the Wairarapa, I have experienced firsthand the unique advantages of practicing in a regional setting.

Specifically with living in the Wairarapa, I have been able to explore walks like the Patuna Chasm in Martinborough, hike at Mount Holdsworth and explore local bike trails. Vineyards such as Luna Estate and Moy Hall are only a 15 minute drive away and Wellington City is an hours drive, with regular transport links to the city. Housing is more affordable and properties come with more space, meaning I have room to store instruments, and am able to explore options around having a dedicated music therapy studio for private practice.

Thinking more broadly, regions have a high demand for services like music therapy, meaning practitioners have an opportunity to fill an essential gap. Regional work often encourages therapists to be pioneers, shaping services to meet the needs of the local community. It also allows for varied practice, in that one day I might be leading a neurological choir and the next I may be working with a neurodiverse young person through a government agency. This variety has kept my caseload dynamic and enriching.

There have also been opportunities for innovation and leadership. In the Wairarapa, I have had the chance to advocate for music therapy, develop community led initiatives and educate local professionals about its benefits. Although at times working regionally has felt isolating, I have been able to meet my need for professional connection through regular supervision practice online, attending conference and becoming more involved with the work that Music Therapy NZ is doing for the profession.

For anyone considering a move away from the main centres, I would wholeheartedly encourage it. The opportunities to grow and develop your career are vast, and the rewards – both personal and professional are profound.

Pip Algie, NZ RMTh



## Kahikatea Music Therapy & Community Arts Trust

### Ronnie's Fund Project Report

#### Summary of the Project

The Trustees would like to thank Peta Wellstead and Music Therapy New Zealand for a grant from Ronnie's Fund, which supports regional projects. This funding was used to support an exploratory project to resume music therapy services in Warkworth, after a break during the COVID-19 pandemic. Warkworth is predominantly a rural community, in spite of being part of Auckland city. The town centre is 60km from central Auckland and has a wide rural catchment.



The Trust's projects include Sing Up Rodney community music therapy / singing groups for adults with an acquired neurological condition, following the neurological choir model established by the University of Auckland's CeleBRation Choir and further developed through Alison's PhD research. A weekly Sing Up Rodney group in Orewa (founded 2017) has recovered well after pausing during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns. However, a monthly Warkworth group (active late 2017 – early 2020) had not resumed due to funding challenges and uncertainty about participant numbers.

A grant from Ronnie's Fund for regional projects (\$750) enabled the Trust to offer three sessions and increased community networking to explore local interest in a new group. As our funding application to another organisation was unsuccessful, we reduced the length, rather than number, of planned sessions. Two public sessions (November 13 and December 14) were held, attracting small groups of participants, including adults with dementia, well older people, and adults with intellectual disability from local community houses. We also received apologies from other people who were interested but unable to attend. A presentation and experiential session were also held for the Warkworth Stroke Support Group.

The Trust is now considering future plans, in collaboration with community support groups and other service providers. Initially we will be providing a pilot of monthly sessions for the

Warkworth Stroke Support Group, subsidised through a small grant from the Lister Presbyterian HealthTrust, and continuing to strengthen our local networks through the Warkworth Community Services Information Day (March 25th) and Music Therapy Week initiatives. We will keep Music Therapy New Zealand informed of our progress.

### Acknowledgements

The Trustees would like to thank Peta Wellstead and Music Therapy New Zealand for this grant. We also acknowledge practical support from Warkworth Library, Warkworth Stroke Support Group, Rodney Health Professionals Network (particularly Paddy O'Sullivan of Age Concern), Mahurangi Methodist Parish, and Rodney Inclusive Communities Inc. (RICI).

Alison Talmage NZ RMTh (Trustee; Contract Music Therapist)

Susie Kasza (Trustee, Warkworth)

on behalf of the Trustees

E: kahikatea.info@gmail.com

7 March 2025

Photograph of Alison Talmage RMTh with members of the Warkworth Stroke Support Group (with permission)

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## A History of Music Therapy New Zealand (1974–2023): Passionate People

### Te Hitori o “Te Rōpū Puoro Whakaora o Aotearoa” (1974–2023): Te Hunga Ngākau Whiwhita

Since 1974, hundreds of passionate people, members, and supporters of Music Therapy New Zealand (MThNZ) have laboured to increase awareness of the potential of music as a powerful resource in the support of human wellbeing.

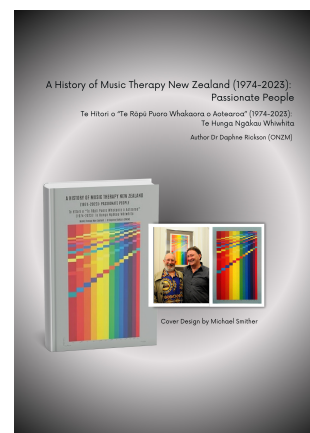
Quotes from over the decades demonstrate the feeling and passion that this book delivers:

“(Seeing the work) immediately convinced me what a wonderful medium music was to get through to [...] autistic children and others of that kind” – Sir Roy McKenzie, 1973

“Music therapy has brought happiness to young people, and to elderly people in hospitals and rest homes. The Society for Music Therapy is a very fine organisation” – Richard Spence Volkmann (Dick) Simpson, 1993

“(Music therapy) was an incredible experience as (Hineraukatauri, who has cerebral palsy) responded magnificently to the challenge to learn to communicate through music” – Dame Hinewehi Mohi, 2003

Copies of the book are available from the MThNZ office (at cost) for \$50 which includes gst and postage. Contact [info@musictherapy.org.nz](mailto:info@musictherapy.org.nz) to advise how many copies you would like. Books are also available from Barcelona Publishers and Amazon.





Roy McKenzie of the McKenzie Education Foundation with children at the opening of the McKenzie Centre for Music Therapy in March 1977



Hineraukatauri with Trustees of the Raukatauri Music therapy Centre (from left) Hinewehi Mohi, George Bradfield and Campbell Smith, at the 5th Anniversary of the centre, 2009

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We extend a heartfelt thank you to the generous contributions of our membership, supporters and sponsors upon which our organisation depends.

**Ngā mihi mahana!**



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