

continence

NZ



ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

2019

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CONTINENCE

NEW ZEALAND

Legal Name of Entity

New Zealand Continence Association Incorporated
Trading as Continence NZ

Entity Type and Legal Basis

Continence NZ is a Charitable Trust incorporated under the Charities Trust Act 1957.

Registration Number

CC35684

Postal Address

PO Box 254
Waiuku
2341

Contact

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www.continence.org.nz



HELPING KIWIS

YOUNG AND OLD

Continence NZ is here to provide support, advice and education for the estimated 1.1 million New Zealanders who live with some form of incontinence.

1 | ABOUT US

OUR PURPOSE

Continence NZ was established to provide a service to incontinence sufferers, caregivers, health professionals and the general public by providing information and education on topics of incontinence.

Continence NZ has developed a service in an area that has largely been ignored in the past by health professionals and health care providers. The sufferers have been too embarrassed or unable to access appropriate help and in the majority of cases, suffered in silence.

From small beginnings with a public awareness campaign, Continence NZ has developed into an effective organisation that promotes continence awareness, allows the general public of New Zealand to access professional help and provides outstanding education. This is complemented with a national toll free 0800 help line and website at www.continence.org.nz

OUR STRUCTURE

We are a not-for-profit, registered as an incorporated society. We are governed by an Executive Committee with four Board meetings per annum. We have a President, Secretary and Treasurer as office holders, and up to six other Executive Committee members. We produce annual audited accounts.

MAIN SOURCES OF CASH AND RESOURCES

We receive funding from the Ministry of Health to operate our 0800 helpline and website, however this needs to be supplemented with revenue from grant and trust funding. All sources of funding are critical for our organisation. We also receive funding from corporate sponsorship.

MAIN METHODS USED TO RAISE FUNDS

We raise money through grant and trust applications, and through corporate sponsorship.

RELIANCE ON VOLUNTEERS AND DONATED GOODS OR SERVICES

Our Executive Committee members are volunteers, and we rely on volunteer speakers for our Education Days.

REPORT

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

2 | DR ANNA LAWRENCE



Another whirlwind year. I would like to thank Louise, Zoe and Janet for their tireless work and ever-optimistic approach. Their ongoing work to secure funding allows us to continue to complete the work we are charged with from Ministry of Health.

The increased profile that is slowly but steadily being created across multiple media areas, has resulted in a steady increase in calls, both from people seeking help and media requiring an opinion.

Dealing with the media is a learning curve for us all, and with the assistance of public/media advice this year from Jacqui, we have had multiple return calls for our opinion from the media. This, despite being nerve-racking at times, is a great move forward for Contenance NZ, as it continues to complete the brief given to us by the Ministry of Health, with greater education across new platforms and allowing a more diverse group of people to be reached.

We have held a very successful Men's Health Workshop day with brilliant talks from Urologist Michael Rice, Pelvic Floor Physio Hannah Orr, and Urology Nurse Practitioner Jacinta Townsend. We also had representation from the Prostate Cancer Foundation. The feedback was incredibly positive.

Contenance continues to be underfunded and under-resourced. This was recently highlighted with Counties Manukau District Health Board's Gynaecology department declining referrals for incontinence as they simply do not have the staff, infrastructure nor operative space to complete this care. This is incredibly disappointing as these are vulnerable patients who can no longer get first-world care for their urinary incontinence. This however did give us an opportunity to highlight this disparity of care delivered across New Zealand and the ongoing underfunding for continence management. I would encourage members to consider documenting any ongoing underfunding and lowering of standards they note, as without this solid information we cannot raise it as a concern to the Ministry of Health.

I wish you all a happy Holiday season, and hope to see you all return in the New Year, with new enthusiasm and ideas to help increase our profile and education going forward.

Sincerely,
Dr Anna Lawrence
Executive President
Contenance NZ

3 | REPORT FROM OUR CEO

LOUISE JUDD

The 2018/2019 financial year was focused on our growth and development, to ensure that we are well positioned to continue to serve New Zealanders living with incontinence for decades to come.

We remain well aware of the significant need for equitable access to continence services around the country, and the importance of our continued efforts to remove the stigma associated with incontinence, so that people seek help.

Through our interactions with people via our helpline and community education, we are constantly reminded of the impact incontinence has. Many of the stories are devastating, and people often live with the effects for a lifetime. Everything we do is to ensure that we can best serve the people who need our support, and there are many. Children should not be suffering abuse due to incontinence, the elderly should not be led to believe that incontinence is a normal part of ageing and people deserve, and desperately need, access to effective continence services. There is much to be done to better support people of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds around New Zealand.

Like other small charities, we faced uncertainty with our Ministry of Health contract in 2017, however, due to the strategic efforts of our team, were able to secure a contract renewal from 1 July 2018- 30 September 2023. We are committed to ongoing service delivery enhancements, which are necessary so that we are able to reach people living with incontinence, alongside demonstrating the value of our work to funders in order to do so.

In the current funding climate it is critical that we demonstrate tangible outcomes for funders, and some of our work throughout this financial year has been focused on how we capture and utilise data. In addition to ensuring robust internal systems and processes, we also achieved important service delivery enhancements.

From July 2018 our Continence Educator Janet Thackray, a Registered Nurse and continence nurse specialist, has been available on our helpline on Mondays and Tuesdays each week. Our service has historically had very low levels of calls to the helpline, however this operational change resulted in 465 calls to the helpline during the 2018/2019 financial year, an increase of 72% compared to call volumes in the previous year. Janet provides life-changing support to people, and her availability on the helpline is already making a significant difference.

Our website remains an important aspect of our work, with 118,912 unique views to the year ended 31 March 2019, with over 80% of visitors stating that the information was useful in our website survey. We also established a quarterly e-newsletter for members of the public, with subscription rates growing each month. Our Facebook page was launched in June 2018, to coincide with our 2018 Awareness Week campaign. Although it will often be difficult to achieve page 'likes' due to the ongoing stigma regarding incontinence, the analytics show that we are reaching people, and our video content is proving to be an incredibly effective method of promoting awareness.

Our 2018 Awareness Week in June was focused on spreading the message that bladder leakage is common, but not normal, and to seek help. TV presenter and former Silver Fern Jenny-May Clarkson kindly lent her time to film a promotional video with her friend Kaz, which received a positive response and reach on social media.

In December 2018 we completed filming of a video series to support people with a learning disability living with incontinence, funded by the IHC Foundation. We also created visual resources within this project, and have plans to extend this work, so that people with a learning disability are well supported with their continence.

Obtaining funding to ensure we can continue our core operations remains a constant priority for our organisation. Although we are achieving consistent results with funding applications, a significant level of resources are necessary in order to maintain the level of funding we require. A priority for the coming years is to secure more permanent revenue streams, as the human resource currently invested (necessarily so) in obtaining funding, would be incredibly well invested in strategic growth and development.

Alongside raising awareness, education remains a priority of our work. Our Continence Educator Janet provided 83 community education sessions in 2018/2019, with 1,203 attendees. We also facilitated 2 Education Days for health professionals, with 98 attendees, and 3 Pelvic Floor Focus Workshops with 44 participants.

Despite these highlights there is still much to be done, however we look forward to our ongoing growth and development so that we can better serve New Zealanders living with incontinence, so that they can lead a full and meaningful life.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members, Executive Committee, and team members Zoe, Janet, Jacqui and Lydia for their ongoing commitment to the organisation as we continue on this development journey. I would also like to thank our funders and our significant funders, Lotteries New Zealand, the Ministry of Health, USLMedical and Asaleo Care for ensuring that we can continue our important work.

Sincerely,
Louise Judd
CEO

REPORT

4 | FROM OUR TREASURER

It has, once again, been a busy year for the Association, with constant vigilance regarding our funding required due to our strategic decision to increase staff costs.

The investment in staff costs was a necessary service delivery enhancement, which has paid dividends in regards to our performance outcomes, and the extension of our Ministry of Health contract. Due to the increased staff costs, the financial position for the year ending 31 March 2019 was a deficit of \$48,810 (\$25,113 of this being accrued annual leave). A deficit had been our anticipated result, which was made possible due to reserves that had been accrued to invest in service delivery.

Unfortunately, our usual auditor of many years was unexpectedly unable to audit our 2019 accounts at very short notice. Integrity Audit has now been commissioned to complete the audit of our accounts, and it is proposed that we retain their services for the audit of accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2020.

Our budget for the financial year ending 31 March 2020 includes the maintenance of our current wage costs, with an anticipated surplus of \$18,911.83.

As I provided my notice at the 2018 AGM I will be stepping down as Treasurer at this year's AGM, however will remain on the Executive Committee.

I have enjoyed being able to support and assist the Association in this capacity, however feel that it is time to bring a new perspective to this role, as we navigate the challenges ahead.

Sincerely,
Laurie Hilsgen
Treasurer

**Exercise affects your pelvic floor -
ask your trainer about pelvic floor
safe exercise!**



**Educate yourself.
Empower yourself.**

LAUGH LOVE

AWARENESS WEEK 2018

DON'T HOLD ON

ANY LONGER

Despite the fact one in four New Zealanders are impacted by incontinence, it's something we're simply not talking about.

Continence NZ is working to turn that around and for our 2018 continence awareness week, from 18 - 24 June, we encouraged kiwis to start having important conversations about their bladder and bowel health.

The campaign featured a video where Jenny-May Clarkson and her friend Kaz sat down with Continence NZ's Educator Janet Thackray for a relaxed chat, to share their experiences and find out what's normal.

[Watch the video on our website here](#)

During Continence Awareness Week, we released resources including a continence checklist, and healthy bladder and bowel charts, so people could see whether they need to be concerned.

We also launched an 'Ask Janet Anything' section on our new Facebook page, giving people the chance to get answers on any issue they were concerned about from our expert Continence Educator.

7 **STATEMENT OF SERVICE PERFORMANCE**
NEW ZEALAND CONTINENCE ASSOCIATION INC TRADING AS CONTINENCE NZ



COMMUNITY EDUCATION FEEDBACK

"A straight up and helpful session on topics many find difficult. Informative and even humorous at times. Good examples of products relevant to incontinence problems."

"Excellent, dealt with what is often a taboo subject with knowledge and more importantly humour."

"Thank you for the very informative korero ... this session has given me a sense of confidence and well being."

"Thank you so much, very informative. You know your stuff."

"Fascinating presentation. I learnt a lot. Very relevant and practical information. Thank you."

"Found this very interesting from a Maori Kaumatua point of view. Would be valuable for us Maori who are embarrassed about these problems."

DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOMES:

Continence NZ aims for the following outcomes annually:

- Promotion of our services and responses to queries for support via our 0800 helpline and website
- The facilitation of two Education Days for Health Professionals
- Community Education sessions around NZ for vulnerable community groups
- Facilitation of Pelvic Floor Focus Workshops for Fitness Professionals

Our overall aim is to ensure that people are aware that they can seek help for incontinence, and do so.

Description of outcomes:	ACTUAL THIS YEAR	ACTUAL LAST YEAR
Education sessions for vulnerable community groups	83 Sessions 1,203 Participants	69 Sessions 817 Participants
Pelvic Floor Focus workshops	3 Workshops 44 Participants	8 Workshops 148 Participants
0800 Helpline calls	465	270
Website requests for support	11	8
Email requests for support	22	17
Education days for health professionals	2 Days 98 Participants	2 Days 105 Participants
Unique website views seeking support	118,912	154,566
Pamphlets distributed by DHB/private services	8,833 with 54 separate orders	6,170 with 34 separate orders
Pamphlets distributed within the community	5,856 with 17 separate requests	4,469 with 39 separate requests
Toilet cards	166	150

ADDITIONAL OUTPUT MEASURES:

In addition to the above our organisation provides 18 information pamphlets about managing incontinence, which DHB's, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and other health professionals order to distribute to their clients. We also run an annual Awareness Week to raise awareness.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

We survey website visitors and attendees of our Education Days, and receive consistently positive feedback about our work. Over 80 percent of website visitors find the information useful, and our community education feedback is exceptional - 95 percent of attendees at our Women's Health Education Day were highly satisfied with their experience, while 92 percent of attendees at our 2018 Paediatric Education Day gave positive feedback.

NEW ZEALAND CONTINENCE ASSOCIATION INC
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION



ANNA LAWRENCE
PRESIDENT

9/12/19



Laurie Hilsgen
TREASURER

9/12/19

NEW ZEALAND CONTINENCE ASSOCIATION INC

DIRECTORY

AS AT 31 MARCH 2019

DATE OF INCORPORATION

29 SEPTEMBER 1992

IRD NUMBER

60-749-485

REGISTERED ADDRESS22 GEORGE ST
RIVERHEAD
AUCKLAND 0820**OFFICERS/COMMITTEE MEMBERS**PRESIDENT - ANNA LAWRENCE
TREASURER - LAURIE HILSGEN
SECRETARY - MARY-ANNE CAULFIELD
EXECUTIVE OFFICER - HELEN PEEK
EXECUTIVE OFFICER - LIZ CHILDS
EXECUTIVE OFFICER - LISA SMITH
EXECUTIVE OFFICER - LUCY KEEDLE**AUDITORS**

INTEGRITY AUDIT LIMITED

ACCOUNTANTSACCOUNTING INNOVATION LIMITED
PO BOX 72 592
PAPAKURA
AUCKLAND**BANKERS**

BANK OF NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND CONTINENCE ASSOCIATION INC

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

	2019	2018
Cash Flows From Operating Activities		
Cash was received from:		
Donations, fundraising, Grants and other similar cash income plus Income in Adv. TY less Inc in Adv LY	245,271	
Cash Revenue from Member Services plus last year debtors less this year debtors	3,104	
Receipts from providing goods or services plus last year debtors less this year debtors	18,938	
Interest, dividends and other investment receipts	-	
NET GST (refund) / paid	1,152	
Cash was applied to:		
Payments to suppliers and employees plus TY prepaid + LY CL		
Less LY prepaid - TY CL Donations or grants paid	- 316, 311	
Donations or grants paid		
Net Cash Flows From Operating Activities	- 47, 845	-
Cash Flows in & out of Non-Current Items		
Cash was received from:		
Receipts from the sale of fixed assets		
Cash was applied to:		
Payments to acquire fixed assets	-\$1,012	-\$3,500
Net Cash Flows from Non-current Activities	-\$1,012	-\$3,500
Net Increase / (Decrease) in Cash	- 48,857	-3,500
Opening Cash	179,116	
Closing Cash	130,259	-3,500
As stated in the Financial Position:		
Bank Accounts and Cash	130,259	179,116

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NEW ZEALAND CONTINENCE ASSOCIATION INC
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

	2019	2018
INCOME		
Sales	7,346	4,696
Pelvic Floor Focus Workshops	3,770	29,281
Income - CHC education day	2,030	
Children's Education Day	5,792	
<i>Total Providing Goods & Services</i>	18,938	33,977
<i>Membership</i>	3,104	2,239
Ministry of Health	63,680	67,630
Corporate Sponsorship	33,000	
Trust and Grant Income	103,463	104,047
Lotteries Grant	55,000	65,000
<i>Total Grants, donations and fundraising</i>	255,142	236,677
Interest Income	1,528	3,472
Other Corporate	656	700
Total Income	279,368	277,065

	2019	2018
EXPENDITURE		
Regional Travel	3,395	
Advertising	3,374	751
Education Day	2,942	7,439
Awareness Week	2,300	
Pelvic Floor Focus Workshop Expenses	4,343	19,320
Continence Educator	3,719	44,234
Executive Meetings	2,870	3,470
Project Costs	10,940	
Children's Education Day 02 Nov 18	2,377	
Consulting & Accountancy	1,966	1,578
General Expenses	1,765	6,314
Office Expenses	1,333	364
Printing & Stationery	9,955	9,021
Rent	5,115	16,516
Subscriptions	2,603	-
Telephone & Internet	7,301	9,296
Travel - National	3,402	6,850
<i>Total Providing Services</i>	69,701	125,153
Employees & Volunteers	256,177	145,758
<i>Total Expenditure</i>	325,878	271,275
Operating Net Surplus (-Deficit) before depreciation	(-\$46,510)	\$5,790
Depreciation	\$2,300	\$3,383
Operating Net Surplus (-Deficit) after depreciation	(-\$48,810)	\$2,407

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NEW ZEALAND CONTINENCE ASSOCIATION INC
STATEMENT OF MOVEMENTS IN EQUITY FUNDS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

ACCUMULATED FUNDS	2019	2018
General Funds Opening Balance	\$171,509	\$169,102
Prior period adjustment	\$2,512	
Operating Net Surplus (-Deficit) after depreciation	(-\$48,810)	\$2,407
Total Accumulated Member Funds	\$125,211	\$171,509

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NEW ZEALAND CONTINENCE ASSOCIATION INC
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 MARCH 2019

ACCUMULATED FUNDS	2019	2018
This is represented by:-		
CURRENT ASSETS		
BNZ	118,579	112,902
BNZ 25	9,713	10,703
BNZ 66	1,967	1,806
BNZ Term Deposit	-	53,705
Debtors - Services	18,373	8,502
Prepayments	-	1,266
Total Current Assets	148,632	188,884
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accruals	-	2,760
Annual Leave	25,113	17,038
Unspent Grant Income	-	-
Louise Judd Credit Card	755	757
Zoe Gillett Credit Card	597	
GST owed to IRD	1,316	2,468
Total Current Liabilities	27,781	23,023
Working Capital	120,851	165,861
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
As per Schedule	4,360	5,648
Total Net Assets	125,211	171,509

NEW ZEALAND CONTINENCE ASSOCIATION INC

14 NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS & ACCOUNTING POLICIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

THIS YEAR

Note 1 Cost	Depn Rate	Depreciation Schedule Categories	Opening Book Value	Additions/ (Disposals)	Deprec.	Closing Book Value
\$23,791	33.0%	Furniture & Office Equipment	\$5,648	\$1,012	\$2,300	\$4,360
\$23,791			\$5,648	\$1,012	\$2,300	\$4,360
LAST YEAR						
\$21,807	33.0%	Furniture & Office Equipment	\$5,531	\$3,500	\$3,383	\$5,648
\$21,807			\$5,531	\$3,500	\$3,383	\$5,648

Statement of Accounting Policies

Continence NZ is an incorporated society under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908.

General Accounting Policies

Continence NZ has elected to apply PBE SFR-A (NFP) Public Benefit Entity Simple Format Reporting - Accrual (Not-For-Profit) on the basis that it does not have public accountability and has total annual expenses of equal to or less than \$2,000,000. All transactions in the Performance Report are reported using the accrual basis of accounting. The Performance Report is prepared under the assumption that the entity will continue to operate in the foreseeable future.

Particular Accounting Policies

The following particular accounting policies which materially affect the measurement of earnings and the financial position have been applied.

Bank Accounts and Cash

Bank accounts and cash in the Statement of Cash Flows comprise cash balances and bank balances (including short term deposits) with original maturities of 90 days or less.

Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are recorded at cost less accumulated depreciation.

Depreciation

Depreciation has been calculated on a straight line basis over the estimated useful life of the assets. The rates of depreciation are shown in the depreciation schedule.

Debtors

Debtors have been recorded at their net realisable value.

Going Concern

The nature of the organisation is that it is reliant on the continued support of its members and funding bodies. The management is confident of receiving this ongoing support, and accordingly has adopted the going concern assumption, in the preparation of these financial statements.

Notes to the Accounts & Accounting Policies CONTINUED For the year ended 31 March 2019

Revenue Recognition

Income is recognised when invoiced, or receipted, except where income is received in advance. Income in Advance is stated as a current liability where the funds have not yet been expended, according to the authorised purpose, and those funds would be required to be repaid to the funder.

Income Tax Exemption

Section CW41 & 42 of the Income Tax Act 2007 exempt income tax, on an organisation registered with the Charities Commission, and applying income to its charitable purposes. The society has Income Tax Exemption and Charitable status through its registration with the Charities Commission on the 30th June 2008 [CC35684].

Changes in Accounting Policies

The governance have transitioned the organisation to comply with financial reporting under the PBE-SFR-A(NFP) standards. The transition had minimal impact on the accounting policies from the previous year under the old generally accepted accounting practice of NZ Financial Reporting Standards & Statements of Standard Accounting Practice.

GST Exclusive

The entity is registered in terms of the Goods & Services Tax Act 1985. These statements have been prepared on a GST Exclusive basis of accounting, and the Statement of Financial Position reflects any GST owing or due at balance date.

Operating Commitments [Rent / Leases]

The organisation has no material property lease agreements. The entity has no material other operating commitments. [Last year \$nil]

Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

The entity has no material Capital commitments or Contingent liabilities as at balance date. [Last year \$nil]

Related Party Disclosures

The management committee are not aware of any related party transactions requiring disclosure.

Subsequent Events Disclosures

The management committee are not aware of any events subsequent to the balance date and prior to adopting these statements that requires disclosure.

Significant Grants and Donations with Conditions which have not been Recorded as a Liability

Original Amt	Description*	Not Fulfilled Amt	Purpose and Nature of the Condition(s)
	None noted		

Goods or Services Provided to the Entity in Kind

Description

None Noted



You'd be lucky to find anyone more passionate and knowledgeable about continence than our Continenence Educator Janet Thackray. The experienced nurse travels up and down the country informing people from all walks of life about bladder and bowel health – and it's her dream job.

That's because she wants to get incontinence out of hushed whispers and into everyday conversation.

Janet will immediately put you at ease with her humour and relaxed approach. She cuts effortlessly through the embarrassment and shame that prevent so many people from even talking about leaking bladders and bowels - never mind asking for the help they need and deserve.

The born and raised Brit started off as a general nurse in the UK, then trained as a midwife, before moving into accident and emergency nursing, and ultimately working as a community nurse. She then moved into the field of continence and had the unusual job of visiting men in their homes and fitting them with rubber continence appliances – you can imagine the conversations.

Then, two decades ago, she emigrated to New Zealand and has worked here as a Continenence Nurse Specialist before joining the Continenence NZ team.

JANET THACKRAY

"If you introduce humour it takes away the stress and anxiety of incontinence, which makes a big difference."

She was initially given a three-month role for a pilot study on whether there was a need for community education, and the initiative "just took off".

"It was phenomenal," Janet says. "There was such a need out there ... I was just swamped."

Now based in Tauranga after a move from Auckland, she's travelling the country working with a wide range of community groups - including Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, MS and Stroke groups – while also educating at Rest Homes and Hospices.

As it's only partially funded by the Ministry of Health, Continenence NZ works hard to secure additional funding to ensure that Janet can keep up her community education.

It's important work.

Janet covers bladder and bowel management and the pads and products which are available. She also whips out some "interesting, antique devices".

"It's all about education. I like my sessions to be informative and practical with a few laughs. To encourage people to talk about incontinence. I try to stick to a plan but prefer to be guided by what each group wants to hear. Different groups have different problems so we end up talking about things pertinent to them," she explains.

"It's very flexible, very variable, every talk's different depending on the points raised. I try and make it a safe environment."

Janet finds people are quickly brave in opening up and what they say, "they've never seen a doctor yet they'll talk about an embarrassing subject in front of their colleagues or complete strangers, which is amazing," she remarks.

"Also if you introduce humour it takes away the stress and anxiety of incontinence, which makes a big difference. And I talk about my prolapse, and it gives them permission to talk about theirs and what they can do about it."

She also makes herself available before and after the sessions for people to come and chat to. "I always stay around afterwards – and sometimes there's a little queue!" she laughs. "I end up with a little cluster around me and give them on the spot advice and can tell them what to do and where to get help.

"I also give them our 0800 number for a confidential chat. Sadly, on numerous occasions some people have suffered in silence for as long as, in one case, 30 years, and never told anyone."

Janet says incontinence is a symptom, not a diagnosis, and the important step is to find out the cause.

One thing she has noticed is people being held back from simple solutions because they have been misinformed.

For example when she speaks to older women's groups there can be as many as two thirds of the audience with incontinence issues.

"A lot of them have been told in their 30s 'you're going to be like this for the rest of your life'. But things have changed. Even if you are 80 there are treatments that can help.

"And it's heartbreaking when they've been incontinent for 40 or 50 years and have been paying for pads all that time, when a \$60 vaginal pessary could fix the problem."

"Any leakage is abnormal," is Janet's mantra.

"Even if it's only a tablespoon, that is abnormal. You need to nip that in the bud before it becomes a cupful," she urges.

"If you have incontinence see your GP to get a referral to the Continenence Nursing Service, a urogynaecologist, or a pelvic floor specialist physiotherapist. Get expert help, a one-off visit may be all that you need."

And you don't need to be embarrassed. "People are embarrassed to show their bottoms to doctors, but when you work in this field one orifice is the same as every other orifice. Whether it's your nose, your mouth, your anus or your vagina."

That's a line which makes people at her education sessions giggle, as you can well imagine.

"I just love my job. I absolutely love it. Out of all the nursing I've done, being able to help people with incontinence, as much as I have with this, has been the most rewarding. Even above delivering babies – because sometimes it's a very simple thing such as adjusting fluid intake to solve the problem.

"It's heartbreaking to meet such a wide range of people who are desperate for someone to talk to about the issues they are having.

"They always say, 'you're the first person who's ever listened to me'. It's such a privilege. I'll be doing this until they kick me out," she laughs.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

We are incredibly grateful to our 2018/2019 funders, who ensure that we are able to continue to provide essential support to New Zealanders living with incontinence.



Proudly supported by

