

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

October 2022

In case you hadn't noticed, the Government eased all its Covid-19 restrictions last month. Whilst the pandemic is not officially "over", this does signal steps towards a return to whatever passes for "normal" these days.

We didn't think anything could match the previous two years of COVID-related pressure, uncertainty, workload and enforced change – all making for a fairly stressful experience for all. Yet this year, if anything, has been at least as challenging. As we look around our campuses and engage with you all, we detect a number of you not just looking forward to Christmas and a well-earned break – but crawling towards the end of the year. We would therefore urge you to plan to take advantage of the holiday break this year, and take some additional leave if you can!

Here is a run-down on what the HSW team has been up to, as well as a couple of events we're taking part in – and invite you to join.

Radiation Safety

The University Radiation Safety Officer Francesca Casu and Radiation Safety Advisor Pooja Yadav recently hosted The Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR), whose radiation scientist **Marilen M. Espinoza-Loanzon**, was appointed as Enforcement Officer from the Office of Radiation Safety (OSR). The visit was part of a consultation for Radiation Safety Fees and



HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

Regulations Review 2021. As part of the consultation process, the ESR scientist chose to visit our MicroCT Xray facility at ABI to better understand the procedures/practices around radiation safety and operation of MicroCT Xray equipment. We would like to thank Senior Lecturer Bryan Ruddy and Dane Gerneke, MicroCT and Imaging Manager, for their support. More information on MicroCT can be found here <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/abi/about-the-institute/microct-facility.html>



Keeping Alert in Laboratories

A reminder to staff and students to drink, eat and get enough sleep before walking into labs and other hazardous workplaces. It is basic, right?

However, neglecting the basics can lead to loss of concentration or focus and mistakes – potentially leading to accidents.

Let's make sure students and staff are fully present, alert and nourished.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

Addressing bullying, harassment and discrimination

The University of Auckland is committed to a safe, inclusive, and equitable environment and to supporting this with processes, policy, guidelines and learning programmes. The Addressing Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination workshop and the prerequisite online module have been created in collaboration with an industry expert and are available to all University staff.



For [Leaders](#): 4-hr workshop, next session Nov 3rd 9:00 – 1:00

For [General Staff](#): 2-hr workshop, next session 18th Nov 10:00 – 12:00

Learning focus:

- Building a shared understanding of what Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination
- Practical walk-through coverage of the processes, policies, and guidelines in place to keep our community safe
- Develop a toolkit of strategies to build confidence in recognising unacceptable behaviour, taking appropriate action and knowing where to direct others who may have been experiencing inappropriate behaviour.

Registration is via Career Tools on the links above.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE



Hotspots System focusses on a “where not who” approach to bullying

We were interested and impressed to see Dr Fiona Moir and Dr Bradley Patten win the Collaboration category in this year’s NZ Workplace Health & Safety Awards, June 2022 with the Hotspots initiative that looks to identify and communicate bullying without naming and shaming.

The Hotspot approach centres around medical students on clinical placement throughout the country, sending them a simple, targeted multi choice survey twice a year. What makes this system different is both the way the survey is written without the opportunity for writing text, and how the data is analysed by a third party. This ensures the focus is on addressing the bullying behaviour rather than identifying bullies or victims. This data is then presented up the organisation at a systems level and compared with data across the organisation to identify “hotspots”.

As a result, improvements, and solutions to bullying include reducing workloads, changes in staff roles, addressing under-resourced areas, and training staff to pre-empt burnout and the effects of key staff absenteeism.

We really liked the way this Hotspots approach took – looking for system improvements rather than finger pointing and focusing on improving work environments for everyone.

“The aim is to identify areas of concern within placement sites, not individuals within them” (Safeguard; Issue 195, October 2022, pg 37). Read some more about the Hotspots project below: [Programme tackling bullying at medical school wins collaboration award | New Zealand Doctor \(nzdoctor.co.nz\)](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

Fun rides and playground equipment over the summer

Poor maintenance, lack of procedures and a casual health and safety culture have ruined victims (and their carers) summer fun. We have been following several WorkSafe investigations through the courts relating to fun rides and playgrounds. We all expect to be looked after by festival operators and that our safety is at the centre of their operation. That is not always the case.

This slide collapse at the [Whangamata Summer Festival](#) highlights several failings relating to rules:

Rules and instructions whilst on the inflatable slide

- Weight and age restrictions
- Monitoring staff
- Evacuation plans
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Ask the health and safety questions before unleashing the kids and get everyone home safely.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

ACC partnership programme and injury claim management

The University is part of the ACC Accredited Employer Programme (AEP) and is responsible for managing work-related injury claims.

Since we joined the AEP Partnership Programme in 2000, we have been able to manage workplace injuries and co-ordinate the rehabilitation and return to work of injured employees. In other words, we stepped into the shoes of an over-stretched ACC service to manage our employee work-related injury claims more effectively and achieve better outcomes for anyone injured at or through work.

This programme only covers employees of the University of Auckland and UniServices, and includes casual or part-time staff who have suffered a work-related accident resulting in injury. For more info, please check out our webpages...

[ACC partnership programme](#)

[Injury management](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE



Training

- There are a couple of spots left in the MH101 Mental Health training day – these have been engaging and popular sessions so you will need to be quick to get a seat on Wednesday 2 November.
[Mental Health 101 \(MH101\) \(csod.com\)](#)
- Hybrid working patterns mean there may be a different mix of team members on site than pre-Covid – Is there a first aider in your team?
There is still an opportunity get or refresh your first aid certificate in November:
[Comprehensive First Aid Course \(with Online Pre-Learning\) \(csod.com\)](#)
[First Aid Refresher \(csod.com\)](#)
- Health and Safety Representative Training (Stages 1 &2) via the EMA is finished for the year, we will pick these up in the new year.
- We are taking part in the Psychosocial Hazards & Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing (Heart and Brain Works) with special speaker Georgi Toma who is an expert in stress, burnout and workplace mental health. Register here to join us online later this month on Wednesday 30 November: [Psychosocial Hazards and Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing with Georgi Toma](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE



We are well and truly into the last quarter of 2022, in fact it's around 8 weeks until Christmas. 2022 has been a year of reconnection and recovery from the pandemic. We have come back to the university campus, incorporating some new ways of working and facing up to wellbeing challenges within our teams, families and ourselves: for some of us a face to face meeting is such a good feeling; for others it can be a struggle; or somewhere in between. We support you all.



Angus Clark

Associate Director – HSW