

Connie Tuheke Ferris - Consumer Advocate

Tena tatou nga whanau, nga hapu, nga Marae, me nga lwi puta noa i Te Tairāwhiti. Ko Hikurangi me Taitai nga maunga, ko Tapuaeroa me Waiapu nga awa, ko Ngati Uepohatu me Ngati Porou nga lwi.

Huri atu ki ō tatou mate. Haere atu ra koutou, moe mai, moemai roto i te Ariki. Ko tatou te hunga ora e takatu nei, kia ora tatou.

I was born at the maternity in Waipiro Bay in 1942, the youngest of three children. I had two older brothers Pani and Rangiora and our parents were Maude and Bruce Tuheke. Sadly, I am the only surviving member of our family. Schooling for me began in Te Aroha Meeting house in 1947, and then we moved to the new school 'Tuhia-ote-Rangi Primary School' Waiorongomai, when it was opened in the early 50's. After my secondary years at Ngata Memorial College, I worked for about 18 months in what was then the milkbar of Loan & Mercantile and in 1962 I left home to work in Wellington. I worked a lot in the South Island and in 1968 left for Australia. On return to NZ Christmas Eve of 1974, I settled in Wanganui. I first married in 1968 and have two children and five grandchildren. My marriage ended in 1977 and so I was left to raise my two children. I completed my Enrolled Nurse training, began Hikurangi Te Kohanga Reo and then built my own home in Wanganui and in 1993, after some deliberations, moved home to the Coast, a move I have never regretted. I worked in the wards of Te Whare Hauora Ō Ngati Porou, the Mental Health Unit and then out in the

field as Co-ordinator for Children with Disabilities. In 1998, the day before the great 'Hikoi of Hope', I married Prince Ferris in a very simple ceremony officiated by the late Archdeacon Anaru Takurua, and attended by Prince's brother Moss and my cousin Mere Rewiti Wanao.

In 1996 I was commissioned as a Kaikarākia in St Matthews, Tuparoa and in 2000, again in St Matthews I was ordained an Anglican Priest into the Haahi Mihingare by Bishop Brown Turei. Today I find myself still working in the arena of health, as I am now the newly appointed Consumer Advocate, employed by Advocacy Network Services (ADNET) for an area that includes the Coast.

Our service, which is delivered free under the Health & Disability Commissioner Act 1994, is a vital service to all consumers that are accessing the services of all Health and Disability Providers. Part of my role as the advocate, is to ensure that all consumers are fully informed of the Code of Rights, rights that by law they are entitled to when accessing these services.

I am in the process of sending letters out to all our Marae, education facilities, and the many groups that are out



there. In fact to where ever people gather, to make myself available on their agendas, that I may come and make a presentation of this very important service for our people. I attend Heartlands in Ruatōrea on the third Wednesday of each month from 10am till 2 pm. I look forward; in fact it is a privilege to again be of service to our many communities throughout the Tairāwhiti.

I can be contacted at 0800 42 36 38 and 06 8683590.

No reira, kia koutou katoa, ko te tumanako kia piki te 'ora kia koutou katoa.

Ma to tatou Arikinui tatou e tiaki, e manaaki i nga wa katoa.

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Ngati & Healthy Prevalence Survey

During May of this year the Ngati Porou Hauora (NPH) Kaiāwhina will be contacting people who will be randomly selected from the NPH patient register. The Kaiāwhina will be informing the people of the prevalence survey and what it is all about.

The prevalence survey will take place one community at a time so not everyone who has been selected will be approached in May. We will start the prevalence survey in June and the first community will be Uawa. If you are selected and live in Ruatōria or Te Araroa who may not get contacted until August or September.

The prevalence survey involves having some measurements done

for e.g weight, waist circumference, height and blood pressure. There are other tests which require you to have 2 lots of bloods taken (2hrs a part) to measure, how much glucose (sugar), fats, uric acid and insulin is in the blood. We will also measure how

much protein is in the urine (mimi) this tells us about your kidneys.

If you are needing more information you can contact your local Kaiāwhina at the local clinic or Helen Pahau 06 8638290.



Prevalence Survey tests in Hicks Bay & Te Araroa.