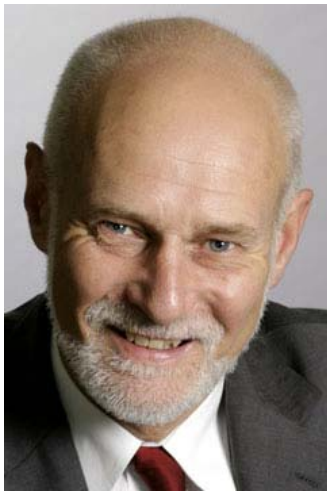


A message from the Minister of Health



No one knows when the next global influenza pandemic may occur, but it's a real threat that we as a nation must prepare for.

Pandemics of this kind are not something new to us. The Spanish flu of 1918-19 infected 40 per cent of New Zealand's population and killed about 8000. It is important that we learn the lessons that history has to teach us and are proactive in preparing for a pandemic. New Zealanders can take comfort in the fact that New Zealand is well advanced in these preparations.

While the virus does not yet seem to be in a form that spreads between humans the animal disease continues to affect people indirectly. There is nothing about the progress of this disease that gives us any comfort and countries around the world continue to develop and test their plans for a potential influenza pandemic.

Over the last 18 months the Ministry of Health has engaged with the government sector, and particularly the health sector, in a period of intensive planning for a potential influenza pandemic. A lot has been achieved in this time, with the advancement of local and national pandemic plans across agencies, culminating in the completion of the New Zealand Influenza Pandemic Action Plan (NZIPAP).

The NZIPAP is based on a sequential four stage strategy, which aims to keep the disease out of New Zealand ("Keep it Out"), to control any first clusters of cases within the country ("Stamp it Out"), to manage the impact of a pandemic if it becomes more widespread ("Manage it"), then to focus on New Zealand's recovery from the effects of the pandemic ("Recover from it").

It is vital for us to test our pandemic plans, which is what Exercise Cruickshank will do. Exercise Cruickshank will test all four stages of the NZIPAP over five days in May 2007.

I appreciate that you have all put an enormous amount of time and effort into your pandemic planning to date. I encourage you to continue with this work by participating in Exercise Cruickshank. The exercise is a rare opportunity to test New Zealand's plans at all levels, including whole of government collaboration and response. The experience gained from this exercise will be instrumental in advancing New Zealand's preparedness.

Hon Pete Hodgson
Minister of Health

Margaret Cruickshank

Exercise Cruickshank has been named in honour of one of the key figures in the 1918 pandemic.



C Newman collection Canterbury Museum

Margaret Cruickshank was the first New Zealand woman to register as a doctor and subsequently to engage in general medical practice.

When the terrible influenza epidemic of 1918 struck Waimate, Cruickshank was already tired and overworked but she responded magnificently to the needs of the district. When her driver fell ill she went by bicycle or by horse and gig. She not only gave medical care to her patients but attended to any urgent domestic tasks, which at times included feeding babies and milking cows.

Margaret Cruickshank caught influenza herself and, with her strength already depleted by her labour for her patients, she died of pneumonia at Waimate on 28 November 1918. She had never married. She was one of 14 New Zealand doctors who lost their lives during the epidemic and one of 17 victims who died in Waimate.

The people of Waimate lined the streets as her cortège passed. In gratitude for her work a marble statue of Cruickshank was erected in the town in 1923. On it were carved the words, 'The Beloved Physician / Faithful unto Death.' In 1948 the maternity ward in Waimate Hospital was named in her honour.

Hughes, Beryl. 'Cruickshank, Margaret Barnet 1873 - 1918. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 7 April 2006
URL: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>

Exercise Cruickshank Coordinating Instructions

The draft Exercise Coordinating Instructions are now out for consultation and open to feedback and comments. This document is intended to assist participating organisations and agencies with their planning for Exercise Cruickshank and includes information on Exercise Aims and Objectives, Scenario, Exercise Design and Responsibilities and Administration.

All feedback is valued and important. This will all help ensure the exercise is a huge success.

Please forward any questions, comments and feedback on this document to Nikki Hooper (nikki_hooper@moh.govt.nz), Exercise Coordinator by **noon 8 February 2007**.

Upcoming Events

8 February

Deadline for feedback on draft Exercise Coordinating Instructions

23 March

DHB workshop - Northern region

26 March

DHB workshop - Central region

27 March

DHB workshop - Midland region

29 March

National workshop - Central Government agencies

2 April 2007

DHB Communications Managers conference

3 April 2007

Whole-of-Government Communications Managers conference

10 May 2007

Cruickshank 1 'Keep it Out'

16 and 17 May 2007

Cruickshank 2 and 3 'Stamp it Out' and 'Manage It'

23 May 2007

Cruickshank 4 'Recover from It' Local workshops

30 May 2007

Cruickshank 4 'Recover from It' National workshop

