



New Zealand
Resilience
Trust

Fostering Resilience in Aotearoa New Zealand

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“New Ambulance Service for Wellington Community – More May Follow”

The New Zealand Resilience Trust is honouring 30 Wellington people at its inaugural prize giving ceremony this Friday. Each person has completed a community education course with the local North Wellington Resilience Trust in the first half of this year.

Along with the recipients a number of others will be in attendance at the event, which will be hosted by the Hon. Peter Dunne, Patron of the North Wellington Resilience Trust.

Attendees at the event, to be held at Newlands College, will also hear Mr Dunne announce the establishment of a community ambulance service for the area. This service – which will be one of the first to be formed under the recently-updated quality standard for ambulances – will be the first ambulance service in the country owned- and operated at a grass roots level.

The NWRT will be operating an ambulance service in the Greater Newlands Area starting later this year, which will contribute to the resiliency of the community in a number of areas:

1. As a resource, it means an ambulance service will be available in the community should there be a major earthquake or other natural disaster;
2. Volunteers will be required to operate the ambulance, so local people will have the chance to learn valuable medical and patient care skills;
3. It will serve as a focus for community participation.

Chair of the local Trust, Reg McLean, says the service will be also be a boon to local sports groups and schools. “The Newlands/Grenada Community Ambulance will be staffed by qualified ambulance staff and made available at no charge to attend any large gathering or sporting event held in the greater Newlands area,” says Mr McLean, “As well as providing a higher level of first aid, this gives us plenty of hands-on training opportunities for our volunteers. Although the service will not transport patients, it will have all the equipment and capabilities of a regular ambulance.”

The establishment of this service has wider impacts for the rest of the country. Director of the New Zealand Resilience Trust Jarrod Coburn – himself a qualified paramedic – says the new Standard opens the way for communities to develop custom-tailored ambulance services to meet their needs.

“As a national trust we will comply with the Standard and be able to offer umbrella coverage to future locally-based resilience trusts across the country,” says Mr Coburn, “What we are seeing here today is the start of a revolution that will see more communities become self-aware and become more responsible for their own destinies.”

The Trust was awaiting the publication of the new Standard to start work on the service, and moves are currently underway to establish the first of what might be many similar local services in the Wellington area. Already a vehicle has been donated and some funding secured for the necessary medical equipment.

ENDS

About the New Zealand Resilience Trust

The New Zealand Resilience Trust is a non-profit organisation that helps develop, and supports, local community resilience trusts. The Trust's overall aim is to create environments whereby communities can develop a state of high resilience. This is done through identifying attributes of resilience, and assisting local community groups to develop those attributes.

Our ethos is to practice what we preach. This means the Trust does not interfere with local communities, rather we take a hands-off approach and interact only when requested. The Trust promotes volunteering, and encourages the use of existing community resources. Funding is not normally sought from Central or Local government. This is to ensure the Trust is seen to be acting separate – rather than on behalf of – the State. However, this does not preclude us working with government agencies on projects of common interest.

What is “resilience”? It is the property of an object that allows it to return to its original shape if it has been deformed. It represents a ‘memory’ of an original state of being. It is the ability to return to what is normal.

What is “community”? Community is a grouping together of similar objects. In a human sense, community can be represented as a geographic area, shared interest, or common experience, whether that be individually or organisationally. People are often members of multiple communities, but there is often no compulsion to be active within them. One of the key issues facing us today is that many individuals demand the right to receive a service, but few accept the responsibility to provide such a service. In other words, most communities have a few ‘doers’ and a number of ‘hangers-on’.

We choose to define community resilience as the ability of that group of people to ‘bounce-back’ from an adverse experience.

In this context an adverse experience might be:

- A group of young children killed on a pedestrian crossing
- A large local employer closing down
- A spate of teen suicides
- Major earthquake or other disaster
- A place of worship burns down
- The loss of a major service

Attributes of resilience include:

- strong and clear communication between many groups
- a feeling of safety and security
- respect for one-another, and for one’s environment
- a large degree of self-awareness
- self-reliance; a willingness to develop and draw-on resources within the community
- confidence
- the ability to react rationally to adversity (orderly, no panic, no hysterics)
- pride and a sense of place
- active participants in democracy
- a well-understood common vision

These attributes don’t define resilience: they contribute to its development.