



## THE *Weekly Word*

WEEKLY NEWS AND NOTICES FOR SDHB STAFF

### New Pain Relief Pumps

Southland Hospital has introduced a new patient controlled pain relief pump system which will have major benefits for quality and safety, according to Intravenous Therapy Development Nurse Peter Boon.

About 14 Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) pumps went live on 29 October, replacing the hospital's eight standard syringe drivers. The new PCAs feature six protocols (or settings) to be chosen by the anaesthetist, before the pumps are set up in recovery and sent with the patient to the wards.

To use the pump, patients push a button and the PCA will administer the correct dose of pain relief into their vein when they choose. The machine monitors how often a patient has received a bolus and will only administer when it is safe to and will lock if it is not.

Peter said the new PCA bags only have to be changed every 72 hours, in comparison to every 24 hours with the old system. The pumps also come with premixed pharmaceuticals meaning they will take less time to prepare.

He said this would save time for staff and enhance patient safety. "Being able to cut down on the amount of staff interaction needed means there is less room for drug errors". As well as its clinical advantages, Peter said the new PCAs are considerably cheaper than the old syringe driver system and easier to service.

Over 200 nurses and midwives were trained to use the new pumps prior to going live by surgical ward nurse Valerie Boon and REM Systems representative Cecelia Thelning and Peter said staff feedback had been very positive.

The introduction of the PCAs was the culmination of a 12 month extensive trial process; with Otago DHB testing the PCA's sister pump for epidurals. Peter said the epidural pump will eventually be introduced to SDHB and the PCA to Otago, with both DHBs having cut their workloads by having trialed a product each.



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