# CEO Update – High Performance High Engagement

If you read the news the future for healthcare looks rather bleak, and not just here in New Zealand, but across the globe. With an aging population whereby life expectancy is growing faster than health expectancy, we require radical change in the way we deliver health services.

However here in South Canterbury, the future is not bleak. Here, when we see increasing life expectancy and stagnant funding, we see opportunity. When we hear our community want to be more involved in their care, we see an empowered future. When we look around the room, we don’t see an aging workforce, we see years of experience and the best minds in the business coming together.

No one knows our community like we do. By establish High Performance High Engagement here at South Canterbury we are ensuring the people closest to the opportunity are involved and engaged in working through its solution. At a time where health could feel restrictive and cumbersome with a focus on financials, we want to remove barriers, enable free thinking, and really challenge our assumptions about how we deliver health.

High Performance High Engagement won’t change the world overnight. It takes courage to hand over the reins and empower the collective to not only solve the problem but to identify it to begin with. But what HPHE has done is unlock a new way of thinking and elevate the engagement of the individual, the workforce and the DHB to take us forward to a brighter future.

## **Our journey so far**

### Launch

In early November a group of DHB leaders, union delegates and union organisers gathered to discuss an idea coming out of the Health Sector Relationship Agreement (HSRA) Steering Group on a new way of working together. As a group we were introduced to the philosophy of High Performance High Engagement and heard the evidence of how this process had transformed organisations such as KIWI Rail and Air New Zealand.

To be honest, I had expected greater scepticism and while those around the room were able to share their concerns, it became apparent very quickly that there was a common drive to improve our organisation for the benefit of staff and patients. Instead of trepidation there was enthusiasm.

### Development of the South Canterbury DHB Charter

There was an existing national charter however we felt in order for HPHE to be successful in South Canterbury it had to be reflective of our unique situation. And so we began the arduous task of creating a charter by group. Line by painstaking line I learnt of the patience that would be required during the HPHE process. But during this time we not only developed a charter that we all believe in, we developed relationships, knowledge, respect and trust. I can’t think of a better foundation to build from.

### Selection of Projects

The health system is on the cusp of change and we are no different here in South Canterbury. The list of projects we were able to collectively come up with far exceeded our ability to implement them. So we needed to be really clear about what projects were going to deliver the best outcomes for patients and improve the working lives of our staff.

The four projects we have agreed to look at include:

* The Surgical journey
* The Mental Health and Addictions journey
* Staff Leave
* IT IS strategy

It does not escape my notice the magnitude of these broad projects. In South Canterbury we are lucky to have Primary Care as part of our system as we act as both the DHB and Primary Health Organisation. This means we have a real opportunity to look across the system to implement change. We have seen Air New Zealand embrace HPHE and become one of the best airlines in the world; there is no reason why we can’t achieve the same in health.

What is clear, as we now get ready to embark on the projects, is High Performance High Engagement has created a platform for us to establish change. He waka eke noa – a canoe which we are all in with no exception – reminds us that our goals cannot be achieved unless we all work together.