Kia ora,

Welcome to the very first St Martins Medical Newsletter! We're excited to have a new way to keep in touch and share what's happening at St Martins Medical.

Our monthly newsletter will keep you up to date with key information, news and changes at the practice. We'll always put the key information right at the top, so even if you don't have time to read the rest, you can quickly catch up on what you need to know.

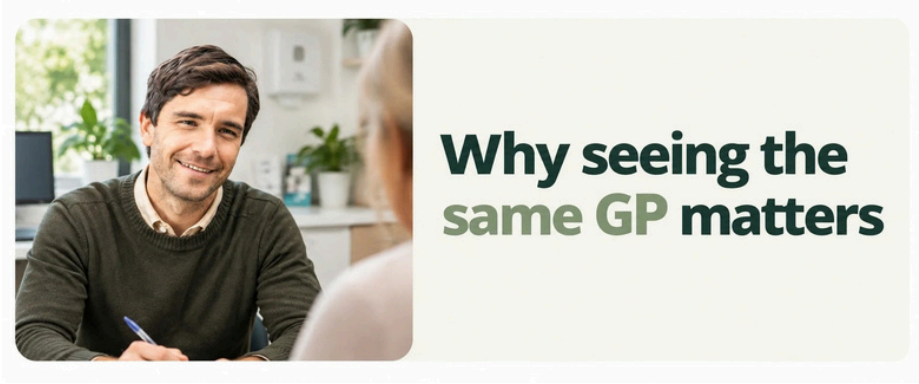
But it won't all be practice updates! We'll also share practical health and wellbeing tips, help you get to know our team a little better, and highlight useful community health services and resources.

We'd love this to be a two-way conversation, so please share your feedback, suggestions or ideas for future editions.

We hope you enjoy our first edition!



From Lizzie and the
St Martins Medical Team



One of our goals at St Martins Medical is to help people build an ongoing relationship with their GP.

We know that seeing the same GP over time makes a real difference. When your doctor knows you, your medical history and what matters to you, it's much easier to provide care that is personal, joined-up and tailored for you. Research also shows that people who regularly see the same GP tend to have better health outcomes and fewer hospital admissions.

Of course, we realise it is not always that simple! Many of our GPs work part-time, appointment books can be very busy, and sometimes your usual GP may just not be available.

Rather than having just one usual GP, we're encouraging everyone to have **two GPs they know and trust**:

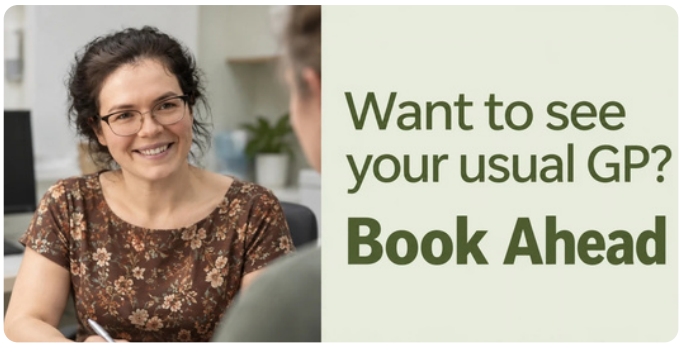
- **Your primary GP** – the doctor you see most often.
- **A second GP** – who gets to know you too and can provide care when your primary GP isn't available.

We'll record both GPs in your notes, so when you contact reception they can try to book you with one of them whenever possible. If you book online, we'd encourage you to choose one of your two usual GPs for routine appointments too.

For urgent problems, it's different – if you need to be seen that day, we'll make sure you see whichever clinician is available.

Continuity of care is something we really promote and value at St Martins, and we're working on ways to make it easier despite the realities of busy general practice. We're also lucky to have Dr Sam Cosgrove on our team, who is currently researching continuity of care in general practice and helping us think about how we can do it better.

Over time, we hope this means you get to know two GPs – and, most importantly, they get to know you better too.



If you know you're going to need an appointment, it's worth booking ahead – particularly if you'd like to see one of your usual GPs.

It's particularly worth thinking ahead if you need a review before your next repeat prescription, or you're due for a long-term condition review.

A Handy Tip

If your GP asks to see you again in a few weeks or months, book your next appointment at reception before you leave. Or pop a reminder in your calendar to make the appointment a couple of weeks before you're due.



Repeat Prescriptions

Please plan ahead for repeat prescriptions too. If you take regular medication, try to request your prescription **at least two weeks before you run out**. That way, if your GP needs to see you first, there's time to book an appointment. If you're going to run out before you can be seen, we can provide a short bridging prescription, but this will mean an additional cost.

IF YOUR MEDICAL PROBLEM IS MORE URGENT, PLEASE PHONE US.

We keep some appointments available each day for urgent problems. Reception will put you in touch with one of our nurses, who will assess what you need and help arrange the most appropriate appointment with the right person. If we don't have a suitable appointment available, they'll advise you on what to do next.

Rāpaki Marae Visit



The team at St Martins Medical Practice were privileged to visit Rāpaki marae at the end of August. There was a good number of St Martins kaimahi who were keen to connect with the marae and the tangata whenua and learn more about the local iwi and history.



After we were welcomed onto the marae, we were able to sit down and share morning tea with our hosts, getting to know them. We were fortunate to learn about the meanings and symbolism of the beautiful carvings in the new whare whakairo and the stories of the local iwi. After lunch, we were taken on a local history hikoi, taking a walk around the area as we learnt the history of the people of Rāpaki. It was a wonderful experience and we are excited to build on this new relationship with Rāpaki Marae.

Forest Bathing at Mt Vernon Park



Occupational Therapists Louise Tapper, who works as part of the St Martins Medical Centre team, and Catherine Fink recently volunteered their time to offer a Forest Bathing (Shinrin-yoku) session for eight St Martins Medical Centre patients at Mt Vernon Park. The session was offered as a wellbeing initiative, providing an opportunity for patients to experience this gentle, nature-based approach to wellbeing.

Forest Bathing is a gentle, nature-based wellbeing practice that provides an opportunity to slow down, engage the senses and connect more intentionally with the natural environment.

During the 90-minute session, participants were offered a range of simple invitations to pause, notice and experience the environment around them. The session was very well received. During our closing sharing circle, participants reflected on how valuable it had been to have the opportunity to slow down, take notice and simply spend time engaging with nature.

Following the positive response, we are pleased to be offering another Forest Bathing session on **Friday 4 December, from 10.00–11.30am**. This will be another opportunity to step away from the busyness of everyday life, slow down and experience the benefits of spending time mindfully in nature.

Louise Tapper and **Catherine Fink**
Occupational Therapists
Thrive OT



Learn more about Thrive OT thriveot.co.nz

To sign up for the next Forest Bathing session, email us at **admin@stmartinsmc.co.nz** or phone reception on 03 337 0991.

City Mission Winter Drive



A huge thank you to everyone who donated to our Christchurch City Mission Winter collection. The response from our patients and team was fantastic, and the City Mission was incredibly grateful for the jackets, shoes, socks, sleeping bags and food donated for their Outreach programme.

The Christchurch City Mission supports people and whānau in Christchurch and wider Canterbury who are experiencing hardship. They provide practical help such as food, clothing and other essential items, along with wider support including housing help, advocacy and other community services.

We're so pleased to have been able to support their important work, and we're now hoping to make this an **annual winter collection**.

Learn more about the City Mission and the great work they do at **www.citymission.org.nz**

Community Spotlight

Each newsletter, we'd like to shine a light on a local group or organisation doing great things in our community. **First up is:**

The Yarns Men

The Yarns Men is a Christchurch-based charity helping men build stronger social connections through good conversation, shared experiences and community. They run regular Yarns events, bringing men together over food, guest speakers and relaxed conversation. They also offer YarnsSupport, where men going through a tough time can catch up one-to-one with a trained peer supporter, and The Art of a Good Yarn, a short programme helping men build connection and have more meaningful conversations.

Whether you'd like to meet some new people, feel more connected, or simply have a good yarn, it's worth checking them out.

To find out more, see upcoming events or get involved go to yarnsmen.co.nz



Marie has been a Doctor at St Martins Medical for 3½ years. Her interests are Mental Health, Gender Affirming Care and Continuity of care for long term conditions. Marie loves walking, cycling, gardening, reading and spending family time with her husband and greyhound Orina, who is living her best life.

We asked her to name some of her favourite things.

Favourite Podcast – Desert Island Discs

Favourite Book – anything by Becky Chambers (very beautifully written sci-fi)

Favourite Movie – Dean Spanley (little known and beautiful Sam Neill film)

Favourite Music – the Smiths – I listened to a programme about them recently and it took me back to the wonderful music that soundtracked late high school/early uni for me.

We'd love to hear from you!

This newsletter is for you, and we'd love to know what you think. Is there something you'd like to see in future editions? Or perhaps you have an idea or suggestion for the practice?

We're always keen to hear from our patients. Your thoughts and ideas help us make St Martins Medical an even better place for everyone.

Email us at **admin@stmartinsmc.co.nz** or hand feedback to reception.

