

Te Korowai Whakaruruhau

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



A note from Angus

Well, here we are again – winter and all that entails!

If we cast our minds back 12 months we had just come out of the third phase of the Omicron response; preparations were being made for the second semester and a return to teaching on campus; staff and students were nervous about potential COVID infection; and Aotearoa New Zealand was gearing up for a wave of respiratory infections (COVID, flu and RSV) that threatened to overwhelm the DHBs and ICUs. Despite the predicted large numbers of people getting sick, we came through last winter reasonably well – largely because the messaging of the previous 2½ years was still fresh: **stay at home if sick, take a test and isolate if positive; wear a mask if you must go out, and pay attention to your hand hygiene.**



So, what's changed?

On some levels, a lot, yet in others, little! COVID is no longer top of mind for many; there is still an underlying concern about respiratory illness to the extent that over 3200 staff have taken advantage of the University's offer of free flu vaccinations this year (and many staff and students also took MMR, Boostrix and COVID boosters at the same time), yet others appear unconcerned and some are almost blasé about going to work with symptoms.

There has been a rise in COVID cases amongst our teams across the University recently, and anecdotally this has been compounded with many others with flu-like symptoms. In that regard, our advice is still the same as it was a year ago:

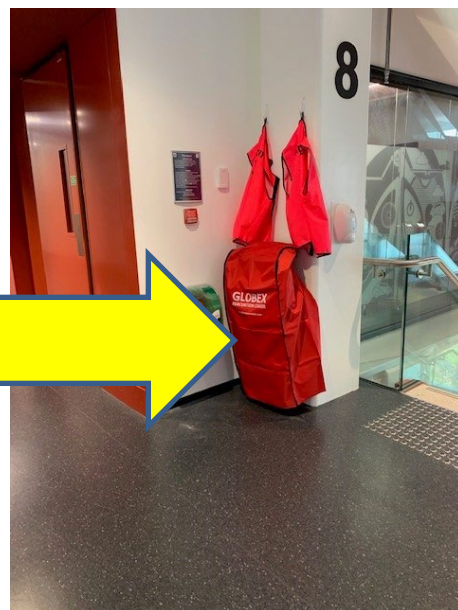
stay at home if sick, take a test and isolate if positive; wear a mask if you must go out, and pay attention to your hand hygiene.



Angus Clark - Associate Director – HSW

Evacuation Chair Training

In B405 on Level 8 there is a new Evacuation Chair, you will notice the big red Globex bags but there are several different brands.



These chairs are used to transport people with accessibility needs from the building when lifts are not in use. The clever track system glides down easily and safely, ensuring no heavy moving or handling.

[Evacuation chairs - The University of Auckland](#)



Each Globex evac chair sold is accompanied by onsite training, and everyone at the training will experience unfolding the evac chair, guiding a colleague down the stairs and being the person in the chair. All the people at the training recently agreed it is

an experience being in the chair - to trust your colleagues and the chair! Dave Lewis (HSW manager) does a great job taking everyone through the step-by-step process.

Most importantly, the training gives everyone a first-hand understanding of how a person in the chair might feel using the chair so if assisting, you can give them confidence that they are safe.

Let's look after all our people across the university.

SafePlus

Over the coming weeks all staff across the University will be receiving an invitation to complete the Safeplus Assessment Tool. ACC have proposed to cease auditing each Accredited Employer's health and safety performance to their own standards, and instead use third party tools for this assessment. In preparation for the change the University has selected the government endorsed tool Safeplus.

The Safeplus system enables an organisation to qualitatively measure, through a 'deep dive' process of conversations and practical observations, their current health and safety practices, and underlying work culture. It provides a platform for continuous improvement via a multi-choice questionnaire, with an opportunity to add your own comments.

Completion of the assessment will assist UOA understand, for each Faculty and Service Division:

- How Health, Safety and Wellbeing is perceived
- Areas which require a focused approach to quality improvement in HSW process
- How best to improve UOA a safe place to work

- How to provide confidence about our health, safety and wellbeing performance to UHSWC and Council
- How to enhance reputation as an employer of choice
- Evidence based H&S quality improvement which can be used for external audit purposes and external contractor engagement.
- **All responses are anonymous**

SAFE+

MAKING HEALTH AND SAFETY WORK

Vaccinations

Been busy and think you might have missed your chance to get the flu vaccine? We are hearing a number of colleagues having a heavy hit of the flu 2023 and we'd love to avoid it upsetting anyone else's semester.

- Campus Pharmacy are still taking walk ins for the flu vaccine – you'll need to show your Campus Card or Staff ID answer a couple of questions to be eligible.
- For eligible staff and students requiring Covid Booster, MMR (measles, mumps rubella), Boostrix (whooping cough, tetanus, diphtheria) immunisation, these are all available at Campus Pharmacy. If you are not sure what you are entitled to, the pharmacy staff will be able to assist you.
- PLUS, this year we have partnered with local pharmacies for our people based in Leigh Marine Lab (Matakana Pharmacy) and Tai Tokerau (Kensington Pharmacy) to provide flu vaccines paid for by the university. Same deal as Campus Pharmacy – just walk in, show your Campus Card or Staff ID and you are eligible.



It is not too late (Flu Vaccine is available right up till 30 October 2023)– write it on the notice board, bring it up at team meetings, mention it in your weekly wrap up, check with your colleague sitting next to you – it's FREE to staff and students.

Hearing and Lung Testing ... What does it involve?

Some staff working with dusts, dander or chemicals known to affect the lungs, or with or near noisy equipment need to be tested to ensure existing controls are working

Lung function Testing - How is a spirometry test done?

A spirometry test is done using a small machine attached to a mouthpiece, called a spirometer.

The nurse can show you how to blow into the spirometer before starting the test.

To do the test you need to:



- Sit comfortably
- You may be asked to wear a clip on your nose to make sure all the air from your lungs goes into the mouthpiece.
- First do a relaxed breath - it is often described as a big sigh into the machine.
- Then take a deep breath and breathe out as fast and as hard as you can, for as long as you can, through the mouthpiece.

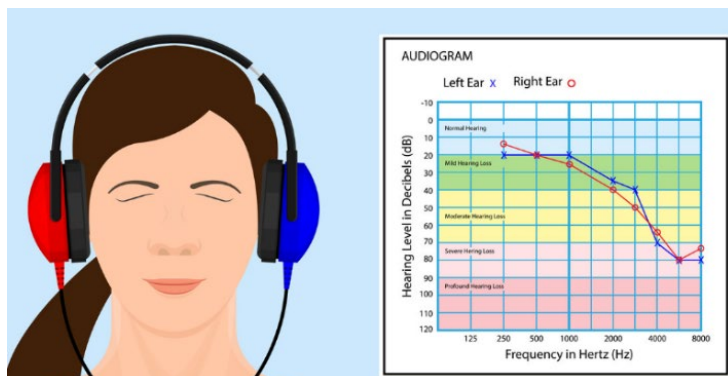
You will need to blow a few times, and put as much effort into the test as you can, to get an accurate result. Results will be shared with you, if there are any abnormalities the nurse will not pass on the results to your GP.

You'll be advised to visit your GP and take your test results with you.

What to Expect During a Hearing Test

The whole process should take about 30 minutes, and it's painless.

Most adults who get hearing tests are asked to wear earphones and listen to short tones that are played at different volumes and pitches into one ear at a time. Whether or not you can



hear each sound shows whether or not you can hear high-pitched or low-pitched sounds, quiet or loud sounds, and whether your left or right ear has hearing loss.

During some hearing tests, you may also be asked to listen to speech at different volumes, which will be played into one ear at a time. The voices will be played quietly through your earphones, and you'll be asked to repeat what words were just said. This test is done in a soundproof room, since some people have trouble hearing voices when there's background noise.

What the Results Mean

A hearing test isn't a pass-fail exam. But the results can show whether you have hearing loss in one or both ears and how much hearing is gone. The intensity of sound is measured in units called decibels. When someone whispers in your ear, that's 30 decibels. Normal speech is 60 decibels. Shouting in your ear starts at 80 decibels.

Adults with hearing loss up to 25 decibels have normal hearing. Hearing loss breaks down this way:

- Mild hearing loss: 26 to 40 decibels
- Moderate hearing loss: 41 to 55 decibels

- Moderate-to-[severe hearing loss](#): 56 to 70 decibels
- Severe hearing loss: 71 to 90 decibels
- Profound hearing loss: 91 to 100 decibels

You may be surprised if your hearing test results show that you have mild, moderate, or even greater hearing loss -- especially if your hearing loss has crept up on you gradually. Results will be shared with you, if there are any abnormalities the nurse will not pass on the results to your GP.

You'll be advised to visit your GP and take your test results with you.

What are we discussing in the HSW team?

Did you know Auckland has already had a full year's worth of rain in just six months, so it's no surprise that many of us are feeling down and that we've been stuck in winter for a year!

We are about to head into the real depths of Winter and all the wonderful delights it brings with it! Though it also has few problems. Winter brings us poorer health during the flu season. I know many of us would rather pull up the covers and binge watch Netflix, Disney or gaming, but we really do need to pluck the courage and venture outside.

We have to think of winter as an endurance race – with the end goal as staying well over the next few months. How can we do this? I know you'll know this but yes, a friendly reminder.

- Eating well, with plenty of Vitamin C. This is plentiful in our supermarkets via seasonal fruit, so the cost is not excessive.

- Exercising! We live in a beautiful part of the world, even though it's a little damp at times. Going for a brisk walk: wrap up, wearing layers so you can peel off as your body warms up. Exercise is a real boost to our mood, stimulates our brain so we feel happier, boosts our energy levels, and helps us sleep better.
- Sleeping well. While we've all heard about the ideal eight-hour sleep, actual requirements can vary significantly from person to person. The Sleep Council recommends somewhere between seven and nine hours of sleep is optimal. In addition, take steps to create the right environment to promote quality sleep by switching off your bleeping smartphone or iPad and avoiding caffeine after 6pm. Whacking the heating up when you get home may be comforting on a chilly evening, but if you leave it cranked up it will make it harder for you to sleep. Experts suggest keeping your bedroom temperature at around 18c – not too hot and not too cold.

HSW's International Correspondent in Italy

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Francesca Casu (Hazard and Containment Manager, HSW team) is working remotely from her homeland in Italy. Looks glorious from a rainy city campus.



Francesca always has an eye out for health and safety controls in her environment. This picture got her considering ineffective controls ... What is she looking at in Borgo Medievale in Parco del Valentino, Turin?



Francesca asked "What is the purpose of the chain crossing the stairway?"

This little person replied "I could fit"

So the reason for the chain was not the unsafe flight of stairs but because someone lives at the top of the stairs. Francesca thought this was a good example of an ineffective control.



Change in ACC Injury Provider

From the 1st July 2023, the University and UniServices are changing their ACC injury management provider to Wellnz. This means that staff should now ask treatment providers to send any ACC work-related injury claims to Wellnz.

Full details are available on the [Work-related Injuries](#) and [Injury Management](#) webpages. Posters will be circulated for noticeboards to provide necessary updated information, haven't received a copy of the poster? Email us at hsw@auckland.ac.nz

HSW Training coming up

Moving and Handling Training – throwing this one out there again this month as we've had a very favourable response across the university.

- Applying safe handling technique to work tasks
- Risk assessment - what, when and how
- Action plans for handling issues
- Safe handling techniques
- Warm ups and pre and post activity stretches

We need 7 attendees to schedule a moving and handling class and there are some criteria for registration. Read about it and drop us an email. [Moving and Handling Training \(Manual Handling\) \(csod.com\)](#)

- [Risk Assessment](#) 20 July or 22 August (morning session)
- [Health and Safety: Role of a Leader and Manager](#) 11 July / Epsom Campus or 12 September / City Campus (3 hours)
- [Fire Safety and Warden Training](#) Pick a time and location! (90 minutes)
 - B260.321 OGGB Mon, 17 Jul 2023, 10:00 - 11:30 (class is nearly full)

- B405-222 Eng faculty (City) Thu, 24 Aug 2023, 10:00 - 11:30
 - B405-222 Eng faculty (City) Wed, 20 Sept 2023, 10:00 - 11:30
 - B902.402 Eng faculty (Newmarket) Thu, 19 Oct 2023, 10:00 - 11:30
 - B260.325 OGGB Mon, 13 Nov 2023, 10:00 - 11:30
- [Comprehensive First Aid Course \(with Online Pre-Learning\)](#) A number of classes are full with waiting lists including 7 July, 16 August and 29 August. Seats available on 14 September, 13 October and 23 November(1 day). Encouraging to see so many UoA people trained as first aiders for their team.
 - [First Aid Refresher](#) 13 July and 15 August (1 day)
 - [Health and Safety Representative Training: Stage 1](#) 12&13 October (2 days)
 - [Health and Safety Representative Training: Stage 2](#) 26 October (2 days)
 - [Mental Health 101 \(MH101\)](#) 28 July (only a couple of seats left) and 28 September, this is a popular course with real life examples, role playing and strategies to use on the job (1 day)
 - [Chemical Safety Management in Laboratories](#) 22 November (3 Hours)
 - [DLP Containment Workshop](#) 19 July (3 hours)

Online Courses

- [Creating Health and Safety Awareness](#) 20 minutes
- [Health and Safety Awareness for Triage Co-ordinators](#) 15 minutes
- [Health and Safety Awareness for Line Managers / Academic Leaders](#) 20 minutes



Tūngia te ururua, kia tupu whakaritorito te tupu o te harakeke

Clear the undergrowth so that the new shoots of the flax will grow
