

Nurses to compare notes

The inaugural Combined Neonatal, Flight and Emergency Nurses' conference will be held at Christchurch's Hotel Grand Chancellor during the next few days.

Organising committee convener Michael McIlhone says that traditionally conferences have been held annually on an individual basis by each group of nurses.

"These organisations have been in existence for several years and have grown from strength to strength."

McIlhone says Christchurch was chosen as the venue for the September 1 to 4 conference for a variety of reasons.

"The recent opening of the new Christchurch Women's Hospital fitted in well with our conference theme, New Beginnings, and the conference will provide an ideal opportunity to highlight this state-of-the-art building built for the women and babies of Canterbury.

"Our venue, the Hotel Grand Chancellor has an excellent reputation for successfully hosting a number of large conventions and its central location lends itself to a

smooth organisational process. Christchurch in springtime is a sight not to be missed and the proximity of the convention centre to the CBD, Avon River, Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens was a major factor in deciding on a suitable venue."

With a significant group of nurses working outside major metropolitan areas of New Zealand, conferences are an important part of the annual calendar, says McIlhone.

"They provide a platform for nurses, and affiliated health professionals such as midwives, paramedics and physiotherapists, to meet and exchange knowledge and philosophies.

"In addition, it exposes people to the latest in health-care practices and trends. Evidence-based practice is the cornerstone of health care delivery in New Zealand and this conference provides an excellent opportunity to reinforce this ideal. The electronic medium is an excellent means of exchanging information but is no substitute for 'pressing the flesh' and interacting with like-minded health professionals."

Up to 300 delegates from all around New Zealand, plus representatives from Australia, Malaysia, England and the United States are expected to attend the four-day conference.

Keynote speakers include Christchurch's internationally renowned expert in emergency medicine Mike Ardagh, prominent Melbourne-based Professor of Neonatal Nursing Research Linda Johnston and internationally respected Chicago flight nurse Scott de Boer — who has appeared opposite actor George Clooney in several episodes of television's ER.

McIlhone says although keynote speakers are an important drawcard, the main contributors are the delegates themselves.

"This is an opportunity for nurses to both present and share with their peers and colleagues research studies, case studies and audits from their own clinical practice.

"This is an important part of a nurse's professional development."

■ For more information, see: www.cdhb.govt.nz/conference