Aid in dying in New Zealand
Presenter: Matt Vickers

Matt Vickers is the widower of Lecretia Seales, a Wellington lawyer who challenged the Crown in the High Court on her right to choose how she died. In his presentation, Mr Vickers will summarise the case and the judgment, the political consequences of the ruling, and the possible implications for health practitioners in the event of a law change.

With an inquiry underway by the Health Select Committee, New Zealand law-makers are for the first time investigating assisted dying in New Zealand and how it might impact general practice and palliative care. In light of Western medicine becoming less paternal and more focussed on quality of life rather than length of life, Mr Vickers will examine what happens when the firmly held wishes of patients come into conflict with the ways in which doctors have cared for patients for decades.

He will explore how assisted dying could work in New Zealand and how health professionals might be engaged, along with looking at the experiences of overseas health professionals in places like Oregon and Europe, and the impacts of end of life care that encompasses aid in dying in those jurisdictions.