



# Change

## Julie Fidoe Regional Manager, Waikato/Hauraki

Julie Fidoe is an English woman passionate about change. Change for the better. Change from custodial to community based mental health services.

Julie trained as a psychiatric nurse and started her career by developing services throughout her home county of Yorkshire. But in 1991 she boarded a plane bound for New Zealand after being recruited to develop regional forensic psychiatry services for the (then) Manawatu/Wanganui Area Health Board.

From there Julie's career saw her become part of some significant changes to health and social services around New Zealand. She's managed the National Secure Unit leading the change from a custodial environment into a therapeutic one; worked as an organisational change agent for the Department of Social Welfare; lead the changes after Wairarapa District Health Board made the decision to close Masterton Hospital's mental health inpatient unit and provide alternative services in the community; she's even worked with forensic scientists (the crime scene guys – kind of like CSI!) at ESR (the Institute of Environmental Science and Research) in Wellington.

But Julie says one of the highlights of her career has been working as the Ministry of Health's Project Manager for the Disability Directorate, overseeing the closure of Kimberley Residential Centre in Levin. Kimberley was a facility accommodating people with intellectual disabilities, although also had physical disabilities or experienced mental illness.

Kimberley was the last institution in New Zealand to close. When Julie started as Project Manager 370 people were resident at the centre. Some had been there for more than 50 years. "It was a delight and pleasure to see these wonderful people leave a large institution and relocate to their own home, with their friends from the centre and start to live an ordinary life".

Julie joined Pathways three years ago as the Waikato/Hauraki Regional Manager and says this is the best career move she has ever made. She says she is constantly and consistently amazed by the positive differences Pathways staff make for people every day. "People that choose to use our services are paramount and they inspire us to shape our future support models." She believes staff seem to ripple with energy, creativity and passion. "It's a pleasure to be in the company of an organisation that really cares and privilege to work with people that are highly focussed and committed to our profession!"

Julie lives in Pirongia with her Kiwi partner and a raft of pet ducks. She loves horse riding, likes to think of herself as an amateur chef (look out Jamie Oliver!), grows organic herbs and vegetables and enjoys creating a variety of ambiances through aromatherapy and candles.

Pathways People  
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