



## Knowing the signs will save lives

### BACKGROUND ON MENINGITIS TRUST IN NEW ZEALAND

The Meningitis Trust is a registered charitable company whose purpose is to raise awareness about meningitis and meningococcal disease and support families who have been affected by the disease.

We have been operational in New Zealand since January 2002 and we are affiliated and supported by the Meningitis Trust in the UK who has a 16-year history with promoting education, providing support and funding research into this disease.

The Trust is a national organisation based north of Auckland with our services being available throughout New Zealand.

To maintain our professional integrity we operate as an independent voice in the fight against meningitis. We develop strategic relationships with Corporations and Government Organisations to assist us in achieving our aims.

### WHAT IS MENINGITIS?

Meningitis is a deadly disease that does not discriminate – it can affect anyone and strike at anytime without warning.

Meningitis is the word all parents fear the most. It is the infectious disease that is the single biggest killer of children under 5.

**Meningitis** is inflammation of the meninges, the lining surrounding the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by many different organisms including bacteria, viruses and fungi.  
Meningitis Trust

**Septicaemia** is blood poisoning caused by bacteria entering the bloodstream and multiplying uncontrollably.

Bacterial Meningitis is very serious and needs urgent medical treatment with antibiotics.

**Meningococcal** is the deadliest form of bacterial meningitis with our 0 to 5 year age groups most at risk. With up to 700 reported cases per year, **up to 4% will die** and over **20%** will be left with **long-term effects such as vision impairment, hearing loss, learning difficulties and amputation of limbs.**

**Pneumococcal**, also a bacterial disease occurs throughout the year, with a higher incidence in under 2's and the elderly. It has a high fatality rate and increased risk of brain damage, deafness, vision impairment.

There are no vaccines currently available in NZ.

**Viral Meningitis** is more common than bacterial meningitis, is rarely life-threatening and can make people very weak. It can leave devastating side effects such as fatigue, memory loss, depression and severe headaches.

## MENINGITIS TRUST

The Meningitis Trust endeavours to raise awareness of meningitis, its signs and symptoms, as early recognition of the disease can and has saved lives and prevents young children and adults from dying or being left with serious side effects. To help us achieve this aim we promote the following services nationally:-

### Community Groups

The Trust is developing a network of community groups throughout New Zealand to assist in creating awareness of meningitis and meningococcal disease in a more localised way. These groups distribute literature to their local community as well as conduct seminars and information days on the disease. They are also involved in promoting our awareness/fundraising initiatives such as Toddle Waddle, National Coffee Morning and Monty Badges and creating other opportunities for the Trust to raise funds.

### 24 hour Helpline - 0800 446 087

A free call support line for anyone distressed or anxious about meningitis / meningococcal disease and needing someone to talk to. The helpline is staffed by trained nurses who are qualified nurses.

### One to One Contact

A unique network throughout NZ, for those needing the opportunity to share what happened to them with someone who has had a similar experience.

### Media Relations

The Trust is building relationships with all media outlets with a view to becoming a lead commentator on meningitis in New Zealand. The main aim of this is to educate the community by sending factual and consistent messages on the disease, vaccines and other related information.

## Annual Events

### **Meningitis Awareness Week**

Each year the Trust in New Zealand hosts a National Meningitis Awareness Week which includes a media launch, mailing of awareness literature to target groups and fundraising initiatives. The event is held in June as it is the beginning of the peak period for the disease in New Zealand. Our target groups are those most at risk birth to 5 and up to 25 years however those over 25 are at risk also. In 2003 and 2004 this is supported by Amcal, Unichem, and Dispensary First.

**Toddle Waddle** – A national event promoted every year which is run in conjunction with childcare centres, kindergartens and primary schools. With the Trust mascot Monty the Duck promoting the awareness messages vital to prevent the disease it is an awareness campaign for children and parents involving children being sponsored to waddle around their centre, or Local Park to fundraise to help support the work we do. Kevin Milne and daughter Tommie kindly supported the event for 2003. Sponsorship donated by Mountain Buggy.

**National Coffee Break** – A national event held each year with a broad target market of corporates through to individuals. It is both an awareness campaign and fundraiser involving supporters having a coffee event in their office or home. Our inaugural year this year was sponsored by NESCAFÉ and was a huge success. The 2004 event to be supported by Gregg's later this year.

**Monty Badges** – A caricature pin badge of our mascot Monty the Duck. He comes in different guises such as a rugby player, golfer, and runner and is attached to the message of "don't duck the issue" raising awareness of the signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease to support the community of New Zealand. This inaugural initiative has been possible due to the support of a number of Warehouse stores and is set to continue in 2004.

## WHY WE NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE WITH FUNDING

The Meningitis Trust is a **not for profit** organisation. Meningitis and / or meningococcal disease is a devastating infection that needs urgent treatment. With your help we can disseminate the vital information about the signs and symptoms of this disease nationally as well as raise the vital funds to continue our life saving work and to continue to develop our support services.

Our services are provided to the community free of charge and include:

- ?? production and distribution of awareness information on meningitis and meningococcal disease
- ?? community liaison to speak to concerned parent groups and organisations
- ?? community groups , formed by people who have had an experience of meningitis
- ?? One to one contacts, created to share experiences with someone of a similar situation.
- ?? **0800 446 087** free meningitis helpline this is a 24 hour service with specialist nurses who are trained telephone counsellors there to answer any concerns and questions. This is not a diagnostic service.

We need vital funds to assist our support to the community of NZ as both educators and counsellors therefore we are asking for your support to continue this work in New Zealand. We currently have no Government funding and rely on donations from the community.

## CONTACT DETAILS

If you require further information on the Trust our key contacts are as follows:

**Media and Business Enquiries:**

Fiona Colbert, General Manager, Meningitis Trust: 09 428 2081

**Fundraising and Corporate Development/Support:**

Nicola Garland, Fundraiser, Meningitis Trust: 09 428 2056

**Community Networks / Support, Volunteering and Community Seminars:**

Community Services Department, Meningitis Trust: 09 428 2051

Administration Department, Meningitis Trust: 09 428 0828