



Impact Report

1 May 2025 – 30 April 2026



**MIGRAINE
FOUNDATION**
Aotearoa New Zealand

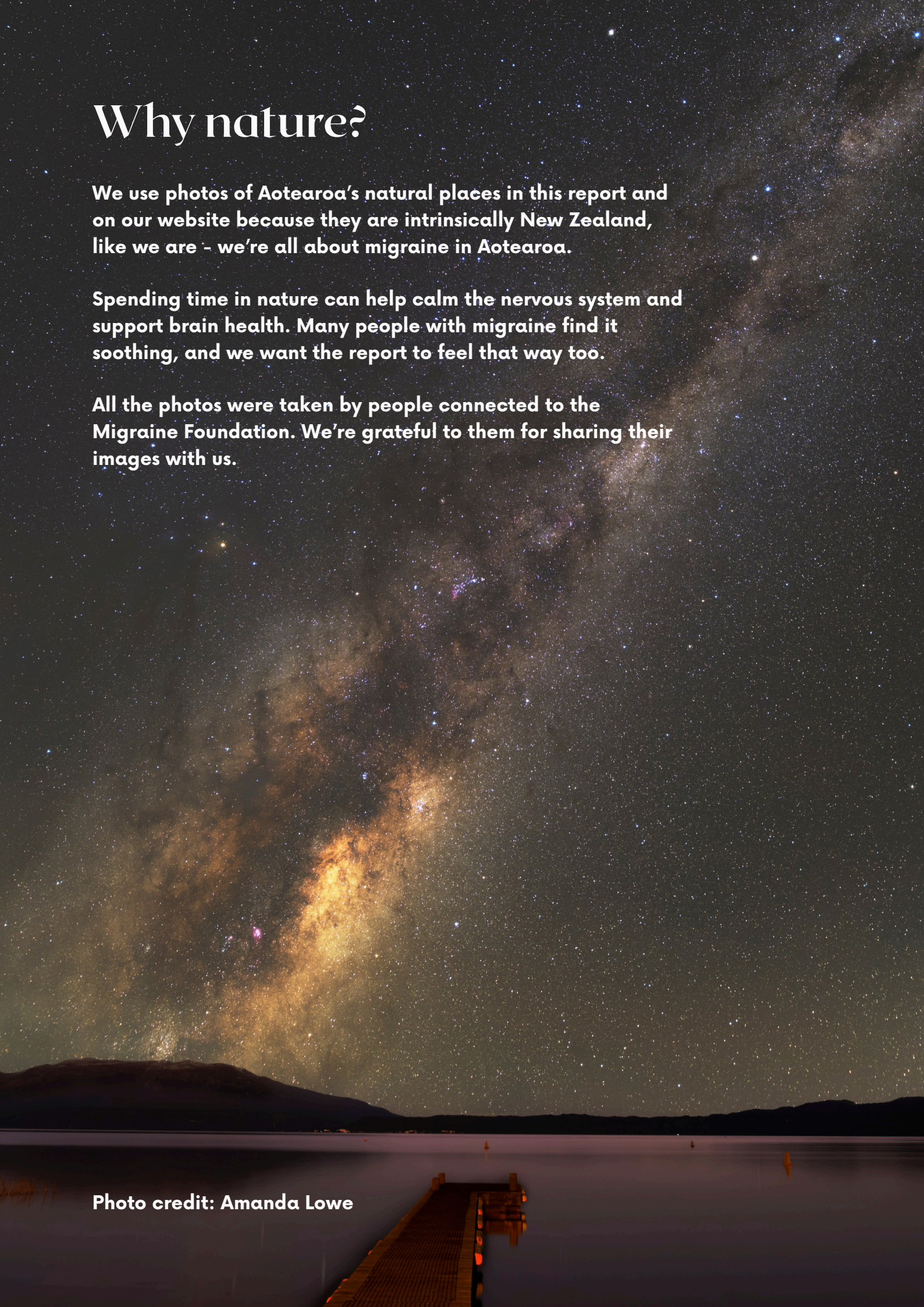
Why nature?

We use photos of Aotearoa's natural places in this report and on our website because they are intrinsically New Zealand, like we are - we're all about migraine in Aotearoa.

Spending time in nature can help calm the nervous system and support brain health. Many people with migraine find it soothing, and we want the report to feel that way too.

All the photos were taken by people connected to the Migraine Foundation. We're grateful to them for sharing their images with us.

Photo credit: Amanda Lowe



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& Why We're Here

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1 Who We Are & Why We're Here

MIGRAINE
FOUNDATION
AOTEAROA
NEW ZEALAND IS
THE NATIONAL
VOICE FOR ALL
PEOPLE IN
AOTEAROA NEW
ZEALAND LIVING
WITH MIGRAINE

Our vision is to
minimise the
health, economic
and social burden
of migraine in
Aotearoa
New Zealand.

**Migraine Foundation Aotearoa
New Zealand was founded in April
2022.**

Our charity is run by volunteers.

We've been supported by a Clinical
Advisory Group since 2023, which
consists of seven volunteer health
professionals.

OUR PURPOSE

To support people in
Aotearoa New
Zealand to live better
with migraine through
education,
connection, advocacy
& awareness and
research.

People with migraine
are at the core of
everything we do.

We're the only migraine charity in New Zealand supporting the estimated

733,000 people living with migraine disease in Aotearoa.

PILLARS OF SERVICE

Education

- To develop and deliver comprehensive, evidence-based migraine education for people living with migraine and healthcare professionals.

Connection

- To build a strong, inclusive community where people living with migraine feel seen, heard and supported.

Advocacy & awareness

- To champion the needs of people with migraine by raising awareness, challenging stigma and misconceptions and advocating for equitable access to care, treatment and support.

Research

- To support New Zealand-focused migraine research and collaborate with researchers in planning, recruitment and dissemination of findings.

Leadership and sustainability

- To build a sustainable, trusted and respected national migraine organisation through action and meaningful change.

OUR VALUES

Action

We focus on practical actions that improve the lives of people with migraine in Aotearoa New Zealand. We achieve our objectives through careful planning and seizing opportunities.

Partnership

Lived experience matched with clinical experts, researchers and other advocates ensures our work is meaningful, effective and engaged.

Evidence-led

We base our work on credible, evidence-based information and support research to fill information gaps. Evidence is our foundation for building trust, providing education and improving outcomes.

education

connection

advocacy & awareness

research

leadership
& sustainability



2 From the Chair



**Sarah Cahill, Co-founder & Chief Executive
Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand**

Once again I'm honoured to present this report on behalf of Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand.

Reflecting back over the past 12 months, I'm proud of what our small charity has achieved and, more importantly, the difference I know we're making for people living with migraine in Aotearoa New Zealand.

At the heart of everything we do are the estimated 733,000 people in New Zealand living with migraine. Our purpose remains the same as it was since 2022: to support people to live better with migraine through education, connection, advocacy and awareness and research.

This year, one of our priorities was to connect with more health professionals and people with migraine. For the first time we had an education stand at two major primary healthcare conferences, where we had individual conversations with more than 360 healthcare professionals. We also took our education and resources into the community at Fieldays and Pasifika Festival.

We also aimed to make our information more accessible to different communities. With support from Aotearoa Gaming Trust, we translated our patient brochure into te reo Māori, Samoan, Tongan, Niuean and Cook Island Māori. The brochures have been well received and they're also available for download on our website.

Our migraine community has continued to grow and we now have over 2,300 members in our online support group. Visits to our website continue to increase each month as does the number of people subscribing to our newsletter.

Thanks to the huge effort by Fiona, Sue, Jon and undergraduate students, we continue to conduct and publish New Zealand focused migraine research. This research is incredibly important as it creates a strong foundation for our advocacy work and creating positive change in New Zealand.

We've continued to advocate for funded access to migraine treatments. We've made a number of submissions to Pharmac, attended regular Pharmac meetings and provided feedback on Pharmac proposals. Fiona and I attended the second Valuing Life Summit at Parliament and migraine was used as an example by some of the speakers of a condition that with proper investment into treatments the economic and societal burden of migraine could be reduced.

All of the impact we've had over the past 12 months is thanks to volunteers. An estimated 2,800 hours have gone into running the charity, so a huge thank you to Fiona, Rachel and Caitlin who have been our core volunteer team, and also thanks to Suzanne, Sue, Ella, Amanda and Jane who have also contributed much of their time.

I'd also like to thank our Clinical Advisory Group – Dr Desiree Fernandez, Dr Ray Bose, Dr Rosamund Hill, Dr Kiri Brickell, Dr Jonathan Kennedy, Dr Paul Vroegop and Belinda Robinson. Their clinical expertise, advice and willingness to challenge and strengthen our work is invaluable.

Also thank you to our funders, sponsorship partners and supporters. We're incredibly grateful to every person and organisation who has supported our work, and therefore the New Zealand migraine community through either financial support or their time.

Looking ahead to the next 12 months, there's still lots to do. A significant number of people live with migraine symptoms yet remained un-diagnosed and therefore aren't receiving appropriate migraine treatment. There's still lots of stigma associated with migraine and many people face barriers to accessing appropriate care and treatment.

We'll keep doing what we're doing because we know it matters and I look forward to the next 12 months of our journey.

Sarah Cahill

Co-founder and Chief Executive

Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand

As presented at the AGM, 15 September 2026

3 Our Impact in the Community

*Our work focuses
on 5 pillars of service –
education, connection,
advocacy & awareness,
research and
leadership & sustainability.*



education

Education

WE DEVELOP AND DELIVER
COMPREHENSIVE, EVIDENCE-BASED
EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH
MIGRAINE AND HEALTHCARE
PROFESSIONALS.

For the first time we had an education stand at the Rotorua General Practice Conference & Medical Exhibition (GPCME) in June and at the South GPCME in Christchurch in August.

Both 3-day conferences provided a valuable opportunity to connect with healthcare professionals and share the most up-to-date information, resources and best practice guidelines.

Health
professional
conferences 2025





The Rotorua GPCME was attended by well over 1,000 GPs, nurse practitioners, nurses and other allied health professionals from across Aotearoa New Zealand. Similar numbers were present at the South GPCME and the post-conference report stated that we were **number 15 out of 118 exhibitors for the number of visitors. In total, we had individual conversations with over 360 healthcare professionals.**

Dr Rosamund Hill also presented about migraine at the Goodfellow Symposium (21-22 March 2026, Auckland) which is another key conference attended by primary care health professionals.

Our hope is that these opportunities to enhance the knowledge of health professionals about migraine will help improve the lives of people with migraine through better understanding of migraine disease as a disabling neurological condition, improved knowledge of migraine treatment options (medication and non-medication options) and minimising migraine stigma.

Thank you to our migraine community who supported our attendance at these conferences through a fundraising campaign, which raised over \$3,000. Also thank you to AbbVie who provided a grant to support the costs of our education stand and resource production.

And thank you to Caitlin and Amanda for volunteering their time to support our co-founders Sarah and Fiona at the Rotorua conference, and Ella for designing our posters.

Fieldays 2025

Migraine Foundation made its debut at Fieldays, with an exhibition stand within the Hauora Taiwhenua Health & Wellbeing Hub at BrainSpace, a collaboration between the Neurological Foundation, The University of Auckland's Centre for Brain Research and the University of Otago's Brain Health Research Centre.

The Hauora Taiwhenua Health & Wellbeing Hub was a lively and busy site at Fieldays, and we were well placed to have many engaging discussions about migraine.

A huge thank you to the Neurological Foundation for helping us to attend and providing us with space to connect with the migraine community.

And many thanks to Caitlin and Rachel for volunteering their time at Fieldays.

MAKING MIGRAINE CONNECTIONS RURALLY





For the first time we had a migraine education stand at Pasifika Festival, Auckland, 14 & 15 March 2026.

Thanks to a grant from Aotearoa Gaming Trust, we had our migraine patient brochure translated from English into five additional Pacific languages – te reo Māori, Samoan, Tongan, Niuean and Cook Island Māori. We had these at our stall and they're now also available for download on our website.

We met with dozens of people – all ages and ethnicities and all with their own unique stories of migraine. And although some people were managing okay, a common theme was a lack of awareness of all the ways a migraine attack can be effectively treated.

Many thanks to Fiona, Caitlin, Amanda, Rachel, Sofiia and Bev for volunteering to spend time at the stall.

*Pasifika
Festival
2026*



Presentations to professional groups

Throughout the year Fiona presented about migraine to various professional groups including:

- the New Zealand Health Survey interviewer training day in Wellington in June, alongside Dr Calvin Chan (neurologist at Palmerston North Hospital), providing the background for why migraine questions were included in the 2023/24 health survey and how the information from these would be used
- students from the postgraduate nursing pain specialty paper at the University of Auckland in July, discussing what nurses can do to understand, support and treat people with migraine
- The University of Otago Wellington Public Health Department weekly seminar in November, showcasing the work of Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand as an example of how research and advocacy work can combine to have a real impact.

Updated health information

During the year, our team contributed to improved migraine information for health professionals including:

- updating the [Migraine disease](#) Healthify page including updated resources for health professionals (Dr Fiona Imlach, MFANZ and Professor Debbie Hay)
- publication in the NZ Doctor magazine [Mastering migraine management with acute and preventive strategies](#) (Dr Rosamund Hill, Clinical Advisory Group member)
- updated article about migraine on the Best Practice Advisory Centre New Zealand (bpacNZ) website: "[Migraine: more than just a headache](#)" and [summary](#). bpac is one of the most trusted sources of up-to-date and evidence based information about health conditions and treatment options and this will be a well-used resource. The article was clinically reviewed by Dr Desiree Fernandez (Clinical Advisory Group) and features a story about living with migraine disease from Fiona Imlach.

Health professional factsheets endorsed

This year our **Preventive medications for migraine** and **Treatment of acute migraine attacks** factsheets were endorsed by the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP). These are the factsheets we provide to health professionals.

This means the RNZCGP has recognised these as being evidence-based, relevant, of a high quality and appropriate for general practice or rural hospital medicine.

They're available to view, download and print on our website.



1 May 2025 – 30 April 2026

105,868

WEBSITE VIEWS

53,051

USERS

Top 10 pages visited

1. MIGRAINE MEDICATION OPTIONS
2. NON-MEDICATION TREATMENT OPTIONS
3. UNDERSTANDING VESTIBULAR
MIGRAINE: A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE IN NZ
4. ATOGEPANT (AQUIPTA) AVAILABLE IN NZ
5. MIGRAINE IN WOMEN
6. EMGALITY FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS
7. LATEST NEWS
8. MIGRAINE PHASES
9. TYPES OF MIGRAINE
10. WHAT IS MIGRAINE?

Community feedback

I have been helped particularly by online info on the website (including medication info which gave me extra options to ask my doctor about) and attending webinars with neurologists.

“

After getting widely conflicting advice from different health professionals, I found answers and clear information on the Foundation's website. I was able to direct both my GP and my specialist to read it. It meant I went into treatment discussions better informed. I had a starting point of some knowledge and understanding, giving me the confidence to ask questions and advocate for myself.

The Migraine Foundation's work has truly changed my life. I first learned about the medication Aquipta through the Migraine Foundation Facebook page and read many discussions about it there.

In May last year I spoke to my GP and was able to start the medication. After working only part-time for 22 years because of migraines, I now have my life back and am working full-time again. I will always be incredibly grateful to the Migraine Foundation.

Community feedback

“

My 9 year old son suffers from migraine. Your Foundation has given me information and education about migraine.

It keeps me up-to-date with the latest information and research of what's happening in the migraine space. It gives me the confidence to talk with others about migraines how it impacts my boy.

“

Your work has hugely helped! I lived with but had very little understanding of migraine before finding the Foundation's support. The education you provide is invaluable and the impact of understanding migraine more plus being able to move onto medication that I only knew about thanks to your work, has been a game changer.

I can't thank you enough for the hours that everyone there puts into the work that the Foundation does. I've also been able to recommend the website to many others affected by migraine, which is great there is a resource for people to go and look at things. Thanks again!

“

I have been suffering from headaches/migraine for the last 20 years. I have noticed an improvement in attitude to how I am treated in an acute emergency setting from the staff. I put this down to the wonderful work Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand does to educate health professionals.

Over the years I've had some ridiculous comments made to me, for example, while I was pregnant and had a migraine attack my doctor told me: "It wouldn't have happened if you'd eaten properly," and being told by a doctor after an 8 hour wait at the 24 hour clinic: "You're not dying." Or being told by a health professional: "I had a migraine once, I had a pint of extra strong Tennent's beer and it went away."

My last visit several months ago was so positive. A doctor who had actually read my notes. Said I see you've had migraine for 20 years.

Genuinely interested in the treatment I'd tried.

Thank you Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand for the positive experiences I have been receiving. There has certainly been a change in attitude from the doctors, and the nurses have always been wonderfully supportive.

connection



Connection

WE BUILD A STRONG, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE LIVING WITH MIGRAINE FEEL SEEN, HEARD AND SUPPORTED.

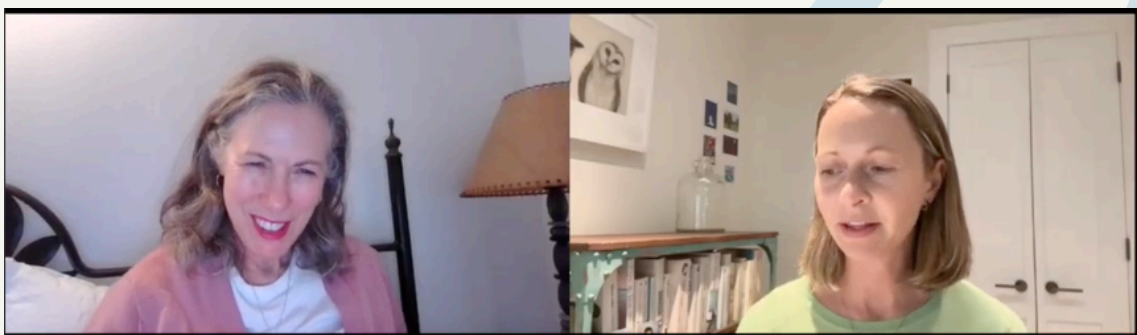
Webinars

At the end of October we hosted another free patient webinar with Dr Rosamund Hill, Auckland neurologist and headache specialist and a member of our Clinical Advisory Group.

Our migraine community had the opportunity to submit questions for Dr Hill to answer during the webinar.

Access to a neurologist is a huge barrier for many of our migraine community. From our survey of people with migraine in 2022, around half said they'd been unable to see a health professional for migraine and for more than half of those, the health professional they'd wanted to see was a neurologist.

A review of the Aotearoa New Zealand neurology workforce in 2025 found that we have only one neurologist per 71,500 adults (including those neurologists working in private and public) or one per 74,600 adults if only including neurologists in public hospitals. The global recommendation to achieve best practice is one neurologist per 28,000. **Free, accessible events like these are therefore crucial.**



Online support group

Our private, online support group continues to grow and is a place of support, advice and tips.

As at 30 April 2026 we had 2,326 members.

The best thing is the support group on Facebook. I haven't even posted on it, but just reading it and knowing others are in the same/similar boat is so helpful, because I feel so isolated with my migraines, and no one else except close family really understands the extent to which they control my life. I also like the latest medical research that is sometimes posted.

Great education, information, advocacy & connection opportunities to expert medical professionals' advice & to other Kiwis living with migraine disease.

Without Migraine Foundation Aotearoa NZ I would be much less informed about this debilitating medical condition, its symptoms, & its treatment options & hopeful possibilities going forward.

Community Meet-ups

We held in-person support group meet-ups in Auckland, Christchurch and the Kāpiti Coast.

These meet-ups are a great opportunity for our migraine community to connect with others and support each other.



Newsletters detailing research/knowledge, updates on available/planned/advocated for medications etc have been invaluable and give me hope for the future as someone with chronic migraine.

Newsletters

We continue to email our subscribers a free, monthly newsletter containing the latest migraine information from Aotearoa New Zealand and globally, plus additional newsletters relevant to our subscribers.

The number of people who have subscribed has increased by over 25% this year.

Email Support

Our volunteer team answered 154 enquiry emails from either people living with migraine or their family.

“

I have appreciated the concrete information in these newsletters and from the website. It has helped me understand migraine a bit better and I don't feel as adrift as I did.

“

I am very grateful to the Migraine Foundation for their information about preventative medication, such as Emgality. This enabled me to approach my GP (who until then had never heard of it) for a referral to a neurologist for assessment. I am now able to take Emgality regularly which has changed my life!

I am hopeful that advocacy to Pharmac for these drugs will one day make them available to every migraine sufferer.

I also love the research and the advice which comes via the newsletter, together with the Facebook group.

Community feedback

“

Well let me sum it up like this: Every good medical intervention, treatment or solution I have had for migraine has not come from a medical professional, it's come from Facebook. That includes the Migraine Foundation Facebook group, without which I would be in huge pain and distress every day.

So the Foundation has been a game changer for me. I heard about CGRP medications through the Foundation's Facebook group, and have tried those with good success, and also about Botox. Meanwhile I had to go through four GPs before I found one who was willing to prescribe a CGRP medication, let alone having heard of them!

So the level of expertise and specialist knowledge from the Migraine Foundation is quite elevated compared to the average doctor. I've also found community, help, advice and just empathy from others on the Facebook group. **The Migraine Foundation's website and newsletter are always packed with information and I know if I'm researching something, they will know exactly the correct information and the most up-to-date information, so I can 100% trust it.**

Now more than ever, having experienced this battle with chronic migraine, I realise that the medical establishment is a social construct, and it's one that no longer serves most people.

Organisations like the Migraine Foundation are doing the heavy lifting. Kia kaha!

Migraine Foundation has helped me by providing accurate information about different medication options, so I could then discuss them with my doctor and find a better treatment option.

“

Has definitely helped me feel less alone, there is a whole community across the migraine spectrum here - I obviously knew I wasn't the only one with migraine in NZ, but I can literally find a story, or resources, suggestions etc for any aspect of my migraine experience.

I also hugely appreciate the effort gone into providing information on treatment options and advocacy for medication & services. I am not yet in a financial position to try Emgality, but feel very well educated on the options.

Reading of others' experiences gave me a huge sense of validation that as a migraineur I've not ever felt before!

Information about prevention and treatment possibilities has been invaluable - the Foundation provided me with the information and courage to talk with my GP about Emgality, which I've been using for a couple of years and it is working well - in fact, it has changed my life!

With the information provided by the Foundation I now feel confident to talk with people about migraine and I've encouraged many people to go to the site to learn about migraine and to talk with their GP about prevention and/or medication options rather than struggling on in constant pain. Science and research are so important when challenging the myths about migraine, and lobbying government/pharmac for more resources to treat migraine.

Thank you so much for all the work you do educating and lobbying for better migraine medication/prevention.

research



Research

WE SUPPORT AND UNDERTAKE NEW ZEALAND-FOCUSED MIGRAINE RESEARCH AND COLLABORATE WITH RESEARCHERS IN PLANNING, RECRUITMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS.

Research papers published

Use of non-pharmacological approaches for migraine treatment: Results from the Migraine in Aotearoa New Zealand survey

Fiona Imlach and Sue Garrett published the fourth and final article from our Migraine in Aotearoa NZ survey in the Journal of Clinical Medicine, as part of a special issue on migraine. This article looked at what alternatives to medication people used to try and manage their migraine attacks.

Primary care clinicians' perspectives on migraine management in Aotearoa New Zealand: a qualitative study

This paper was the outcome of 4th year medical student Julia Randerson's summer studentship in 2024/25, which was supervised by Sue Garrett, Jon Kennedy and Fiona Imlach from Otago University Wellington. These researchers also volunteer for Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand.

Julia interviewed eight primary care clinicians (five GPs and three nurse practitioners) to find out about their experiences of managing people with migraine, including barriers to and support for effective care. In summary, key barriers to care were system barriers of cost of appointments, waiting times to get appointments and limited access to specialist care. These barriers impeded people seeking help for migraine symptoms, receiving a diagnosis of migraine disease and getting treatment.

Frequency of migraine recorded in primary care and hospital records in Aotearoa New Zealand: a cross-sectional study

Fiona Imlach was one of a group of researchers who explored the recording of migraine in primary health care and hospital data. From a large sample of patients in a large Primary Health Organisation in Auckland, only 5% were noted to have migraine, compared to a known prevalence of migraine in the population of around 15%.

The reasons for this under-recording of migraine in health records could be due to people with migraine not seeking help from health professionals, underdiagnosis and misdiagnosis, poor record keeping, barriers to health care and lack of knowledge about migraine symptoms and treatments.



**Julia Randerson, Dr Jonathan Kennedy,
Sue Garrett and Fiona Imlach**

Triptan use in NZ: Report



DURING JUNE AND JULY 2025, WE CONDUCTED AN ONLINE SURVEY ASKING PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR USE OF TRIPTANS FOR MIGRAINE AND THE NEED FOR MORE MEDICATION OPTIONS TO TREAT MIGRAINE ATTACKS.

The survey was undertaken to gather evidence about the need for a wider range of migraine-specific medications in Aotearoa New Zealand, where only two triptans are currently available despite seven being available internationally. The findings highlighted strong community support for increased access to additional treatment options, including alternative triptans and nasal spray formulations.

The survey findings were shared with Pharmac to support advocacy for additional funded triptans, including zolmitriptan nasal spray, which remains under consideration pending confirmation of supply availability in Aotearoa New Zealand. Pharmac acknowledged the value of patient input and indicated it would continue discussions with potential suppliers. The Foundation will continue working with Pharmac and pharmaceutical companies to advocate for greater access to internationally recognised standards of migraine care and treatment options for New Zealanders.

NZ Health Survey 2023/24

IN JANUARY, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH PUBLISHED RESULTS ON MIGRAINE FROM THE 2023/24 NEW ZEALAND HEALTH SURVEY.

Key findings include that 1 in 7 adults in NZ (15%) reported migraine symptoms in the last three months, based on a validated screening questionnaire, but half of these had never been diagnosed with migraine by a doctor. This equates to around 317,000 people with migraine symptoms but without a diagnosis.

The survey also shows that Māori have the highest rate of migraine symptoms (20%) and Māori and Pacific adults have the highest rates of migraine symptoms without a diagnosis (~11%).

These results would not have come about without Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand requesting to have questions about migraine included in the 2023/24 NZ Health Survey. We asked for the migraine screening questions to be included, so that we could see what the rate of undiagnosed migraine was, as this has never been studied in NZ before.

Pharmacy Honours student project

Fiona, Sue and research colleagues from Otago University (Amber Young and Chloe Campbell) were successful in getting funding from the Pharmacy Education and Research Foundation for a Pharmacy Honours student to work on a project about management of migraine in pharmacies. This started in November 2025 and will continue for the 2026 academic year.

Project funding



Fiona Imlach was awarded a \$299,906 project grant from the Neurological Foundation NZ to identify which groups are missing out on migraine diagnosis and best-practice care using national health data.

Fiona will lead a team including data analysis experts, Māori and Pacific researchers and clinical advisors over two years, starting in May 2026.



The Neurological Foundation also awarded the VJ Chapman Fellowship to Dr Sue Meredith, to develop and test an online workplace migraine education programme in Canada.

Before leaving for Canada, Sue met with Fiona Imlach and Sue Garrett to talk about how her research could be used to support similar initiatives in Aotearoa NZ. We look forward to seeing the results of Sue's project and finding ways to adapt her research to address the stigma and difficulties with work reported by people with migraine in this country.

Fiona Imlach and Dr Sue Meredith have both been awarded funding from the Neurological Foundation.



**Neurological
Foundation**

Community feedback

[The Foundation] keeps me informed about advances in treatments and also provided me with a sense of community: being a migraine sufferer can be very frightening and one can feel alone, but through the Migraine Foundation I have felt a great deal of comfort knowing I am not alone.

“

The Migraine Foundation has provided a supportive community through its Facebook page and this has been immensely helpful because it has convinced me to not give up and to keep trying different medication options.

In addition, the information provided on the website has led to me being far more informed when I speak to my GP which means I feel I have far more agency over medical decisions.

Lastly, I am grateful for the work the Migraine Foundation does to advocate for the funding of new medications such as the anti-CGRP medications. I am not someone who could afford these privately so it would be potentially life-changing if they were ever funded.

“

Accessing the Migraine Foundation has dramatically influenced my life. After all my life with chronic migraine in excess of 18 days per month, I felt I had a community who understood.

Without the Migraine Foundation I would not have become aware of Emgality, which I have now taken for over a year and a half. I made my GP aware of it, which at the time she had little knowledge. Emgality has certainly decreased the severity of my migraines.

Advocacy in this sector to help decrease the prohibitive cost of this range of anti-CGRP meds is vitally needed, thanks to the Migraine Foundation to advocate, raise funds, and educate, my life and those around me as a consequence have improved hugely.

advocacy & awareness



Advocacy & awareness

WE CHAMPION THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH MIGRAINE BY RAISING AWARENESS, CHALLENGING STIGMA AND MISCONCEPTIONS AND ADVOCATING FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CARE, TREATMENT AND SUPPORT.

European Migraine and Headache Patient Summit 2025

In June, Sarah had the privilege of attending the European Migraine and Headache Alliance (EMHA) Migraine and Headache International Patient Associations Summit (MHIPAS) in Brussels, Belgium.

The summit brought together migraine advocates and patient organisations from 29 countries, providing a valuable opportunity to share experiences, build relationships and collaborate on strategies to improve migraine care globally. Discussions with patient organisations, clinicians, researchers and industry representatives highlighted the growing international movement to improve recognition of migraine as a serious neurological disease and public health issue.

A key theme throughout the summit was the significant burden of migraine and the need for equitable access to effective treatments. Delegates called for improved awareness, better education of healthcare professionals, earlier diagnosis and greater access to modern therapies. While many of these discussions focused on Europe, there was broad recognition that the challenges facing people with migraine are shared globally and require collective advocacy and action.

Sarah had the opportunity to present the New Zealand migraine landscape to an international audience, highlighting the experiences of more than 733,000 New Zealanders living with migraine. The presentation covered New Zealand's healthcare system, current treatment options, access challenges, advocacy achievements and future priorities. Sharing New Zealand's perspective helped raise awareness of the unique challenges faced locally while also demonstrating that many barriers to migraine care are common across countries.

Participation in global discussions reinforced that New Zealand is not alone in facing challenges such as limited access to specialist treatments, ongoing stigma, gaps in healthcare professional knowledge, workplace barriers and insufficient research investment. Strategic planning sessions explored how patient organisations can work together to address these issues, with a particular focus on improving access to internationally recognised standards of care and emerging therapeutic innovations.

Attendance at the summit provided valuable opportunities to build international partnerships, exchange knowledge, and learn from successful advocacy initiatives around the world. The relationships established and insights gained will help inform our future work and strengthen efforts to improve migraine care, treatment access, and quality of life for people living with migraine in Aotearoa New Zealand. Huge thank you to EMHA for providing funding for Sarah's attendance.



Valuing Life Summit 2025

In October, co-founders Sarah and Fiona attended the second Valuing Life Summit at Parliament. The summit brought together patient advocacy organisations, government representatives, healthcare decision-makers, industry leaders and policymakers to discuss medicine access and the future of healthcare in Aotearoa New Zealand. The event provided an important opportunity to ensure the experiences of people living with migraine were represented in national conversations about health policy and medicine funding.

Discussions throughout the summit highlighted the challenges Aotearoa New Zealand faces in accessing modern medicines compared with many other developed countries. Speakers explored healthcare funding models, health technology assessment, emerging technologies, and the broader economic and social benefits of investing in effective treatments. A recurring theme was the recognition that medicines should be viewed as an investment in health outcomes rather than solely as a cost to the healthcare system.

Fiona was a guest speaker on a patient advocacy panel, where the challenges faced by people living with migraine were highlighted. Particular attention was given to the limited availability of modern migraine treatments and the barriers many New Zealanders experience in accessing effective care. Migraine was also referenced by other speakers as a significant chronic neurological condition with substantial personal, social, and economic impacts.



Sarah and Fiona attended the second Valuing Life Summit at Parliament during October 2025



The summit also provided an opportunity to engage with Members of Parliament and representatives from across the political spectrum ahead of the upcoming election cycle. Discussions reinforced the importance of ensuring patient voices are included in decisions about healthcare priorities and medicine access.

Participation in the summit strengthened relationships with other patient organisations and healthcare stakeholders while reinforcing the Foundation's role as a leading voice for the migraine community. Continued engagement in national policy discussions remains critical to achieving equitable access to effective treatments and improving outcomes for people affected by migraine across Aotearoa New Zealand.



Neurological Alliance

We continue to be an active member of the Neurological Alliance, which focuses on improving health and services for people with neurological conditions. In this capacity we've met with various health spokespeople and policy advisors in Government.

These meetings have been focused on the priorities of the Alliance which are:

- workforce shortages
- medication access
- community-based care
- data and research.

Fiona also attended the launch at Parliament on 3 March 2026 of the report Access to Innovative Pharmaceutical Medicines in New Zealand.

Submissions

We made a number of submissions over the year relevant for our migraine community:

- Submission to Pharmac of our triptan use in New Zealand research and request for zolmitriptan update
- Submission to proposed amendments to the designated pharmacist prescriber specified prescriptions medicines list
- Submission to proposed amendments to the designated registered nurse prescriber specified prescriptions medicines list
- Collective statement from consumer and patient representative groups on Pharmac's proposal to decline some medicine funding applications on the Options for Investment list
- Response to Pharmac's proposal to decline medicine funding applications on the Options for Investment list
- Request to Pharmac to fund the range of migraine preventive medication options on the Options for Investment list

We continue to meet with Pharmac regularly as a member of the Pharmac Consumer Stakeholders Forum.

Migraine in The Media

We continued to look for opportunities to have migraine represented in the media to help raise awareness.

MIGRAINE FEATURED IN

- Radio New Zealand (Sunday Mornings, Afternoons, Nine to Noon)
- The New Zealand Herald
- 1 News Breakfast
- Newstalk ZB
- The Post
- Otago Daily Times
- Sunday Star Times
- The Listener
- Manawatū People's Radio
- University of Otago news
- New Zealand Doctor
- The National Tribune
- Pharmacy Today
- Sick and Tired Aotearoa New Zealand podcast
- AUT Debate

“

The Foundation's work is raising awareness about a disease that is not talked about or understood in this country enough.

This organisation is so important to keep the pressure up for government to recognise the enormous impact migraine disease has on the people living with it and that it is undertreated, underdiagnosed and underfunded in public health.

All people living in Aotearoa need to be able to access care so that living with migraine does not mean they lose their ability to feel like contributing members of our society.

This is especially important for those that do not have the means to self fund for treatment.

Thank you for all of the work you are doing to educate and support us.

Anti-CGRP progress

In September, PTAC recommended Fremanezumab (Ajovy) be funded with high priority and it was subsequently added to Pharmac's Options for Investment list. Ajovy became available in New Zealand via private prescription in January 2026.

Awareness Week 2025

During September we ran a week-long migraine awareness campaign. We shared people's experiences of living with migraine on social media through stories and videos, with the aim to make migraine more visible. Thanks to everyone who contributed to our media and engaged with our posts.

VOICES OF MIGRAINE



Achim, Kāpiti Coast

"There is a constant fear of when will the next attack start? This puts a damper on any planned activities."



migrainefoundation.org.nz

VOICES OF MIGRAINE



Jackie, Nelson

"You have to advocate for yourself and suggest things your doctors may not have thought of and keep pushing until you get results."



migrainefoundation.org.nz

VOICES OF MIGRAINE



Mara, Wellington

"I have to make [migraine] a priority so I don't commit to things that I may not be able to complete."



migrainefoundation.org.nz

VOICES OF MIGRAINE



Melva, Hamilton

"It takes effort to live in pain. I have to focus hard on words, and that's tricky as I use words a lot in my line of work."



migrainefoundation.org.nz

VOICES OF MIGRAINE



Ella, Kiwi in Scotland

"Dealing with the pain (pain that would send anyone else to ED) is only a fraction of the impact of migraine."



migrainefoundation.org.nz

VOICES OF MIGRAINE



Amanda, Auckland

"My attacks come on really quickly, sometimes within half an hour and without much warning."



migrainefoundation.org.nz



leadership &
sustainability

Leadership & sustainability

Volunteer team

Our volunteer team continues to meet online every week and hold 3–6 monthly full day in person strategic meetings. As of 30 April 2025, our core volunteer team consisted of

- Sarah Cahill (co-founder, Chief Executive)
- Fiona Imlach (co-founder, Policy and Research Lead)
- Rachel Easton (Accountant and Secretary)
- Caitlin Veale (Media Advisor)

Our core team is supported by volunteers Sue Garrett (research), Suzanne Vale (design), Amanda Lowe (health professional and consumer engagement), Ella Jensen-Graham (graphics and design) and Jane Bollard (charity and governance advice).

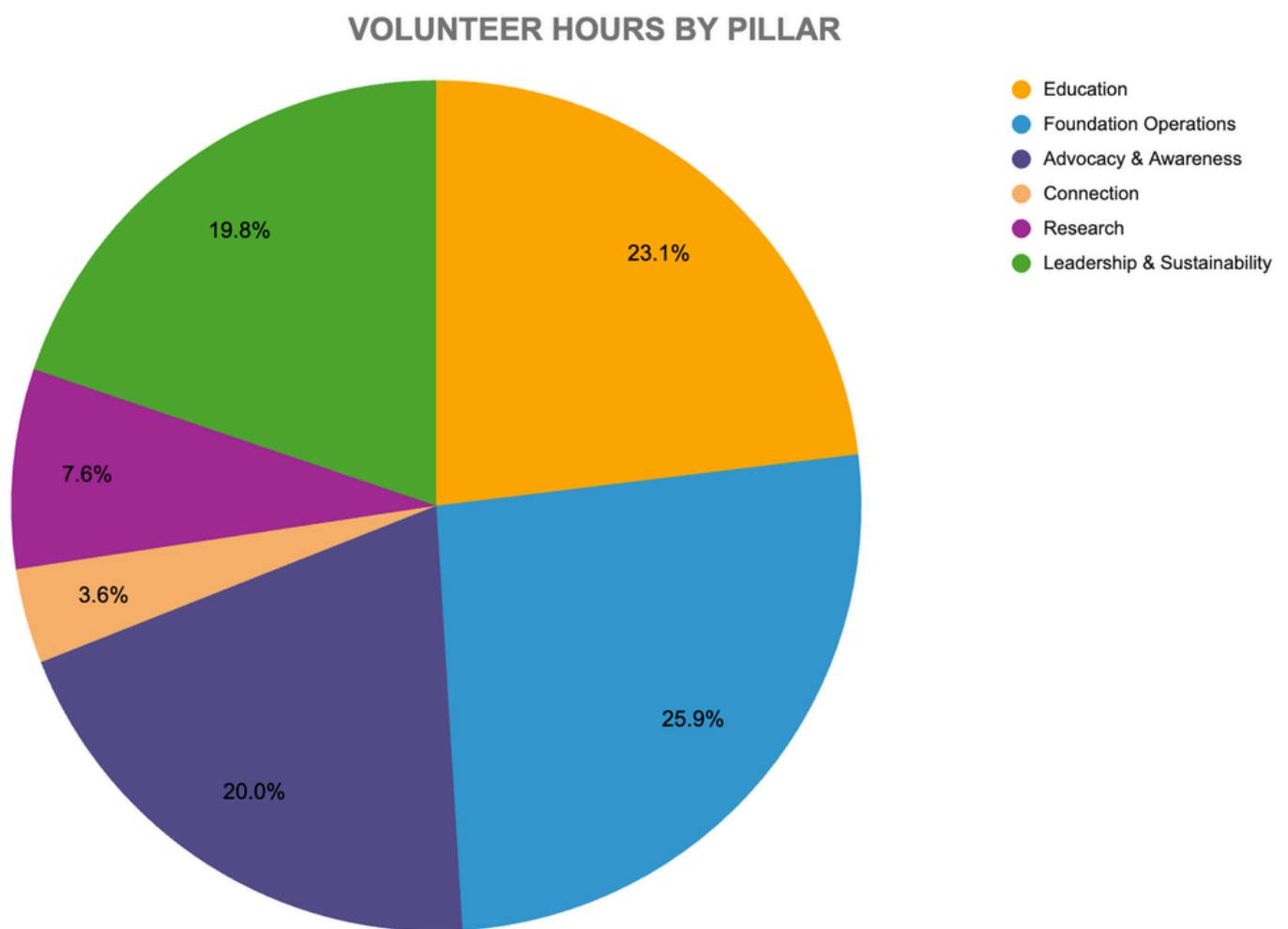
Clinical Advisory Group

We continued to meet quarterly with our Clinical Advisory Group, who provide us with ideas and a clinical point of view, review information and offer networking opportunities with other clinicians and organisations.

Dr Rosamund Hill - headache specialist and neurologist
Dr Desiree Fernandez - headache specialist and neurologist
Dr Ray Bose - headache specialist and neurologist
Dr Kiri Brickell - neurologist
Dr Paul Vroegop - pain specialist and psychiatrist
Dr Jonathan Kennedy - general practitioner
Belinda Robinson - community pharmacist

Volunteer hours

OUR TEAM HAS VOLUNTEERED AN ESTIMATED 2,770 HOURS OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS TO ENSURE THE ONGOING SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CHARITY.





4 Supporters & Funders

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE IN OUR MIGRAINE COMMUNITY WHO SUPPORTED US THROUGH A ONE-OFF OR REGULAR DONATION.

Your support has been invaluable and ensures migraine has a voice in Aotearoa New Zealand.

ALSO THANK YOU TO:

- The Neurological Foundation for providing us with office space, event sponsorship and ongoing support
- Teva for sponsorship for our education and awareness initiatives during 2026
- AbbVie for event sponsorships and education initiatives during 2025 and 2026
- Fidelity Life for supporting us with a grant through its “We support who you support” initiative during 2026/27, and to Ting (Lun) Yuan and Kenny Kaushish for the nomination
- The Lion Foundation for grants to support some of our operating costs
- Cervin Ltd for sponsoring our advertisement in its Primary Health & Wellbeing Directory and Health Pages online directory, and for publishing our e-learning courses for health professionals
- Aotearoa Gaming Trust for a grant to translate and print our patient brochure into 5 additional Pacific languages during 2026

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS:



Neurological
Foundation



abbvie



AOTEAROA
**GAMING
TRUST**



THE LION
FOUNDATION



Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand is a member of the New Zealand Neurological Alliance, the International Headache Society Global Patient Advocacy Coalition (IHS-GPAC) and the European Migraine and Headache Alliance (EMHA)



European
Migraine &
Headache
Alliance

EMHA



5 Financial Performance

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand

For the year ended 30 April 2026

	Apr-26	Apr-25
Income		
Donations - Members	1,616	1,568
Donations - Non members	12,480	11,284
Grant Revenue - Education Events - Internal	-	4,000
Grant Revenue - Operating Activities	10,000	10,000
Grant Revenue - Project Work	50,000	-
Grant Revenue - Promotional Materials	4,391	-
Grant Revenue - Website, memberships & Xero Costs	1,355	974
Membership Fees	-	3,700
Sales of goods and services to public	6,100	100
Sponsorship Revenue - Advocacy & Awareness	4,181	-
Sponsorship Revenue - Education Events - External	5,086	3,220
Sponsorship Revenue - Education Events - Internal	-	3,700
Total Income	95,209	38,546
Cost of Sales		
Promotion expenses - Fundraising	20	-
Total Cost of Sales	20	-
Gross Profit	95,189	38,546
Expenses		
Accounting Software Subscription	825	759
Advertising	-	20
Charities Services Filing Fees	51	51
Community Events - External	2,887	524
Education Events - External	6,095	3,430
Education Events - Internal	-	5,720
IT costs	1,937	2,278
Memberships & Subscriptions	293	173
Migraine Community Meet Up Costs	-	82
Online Payment Processing Fees	348	228
Postage & Courier costs	-	46
Promotional Expenses	9,487	980
Staff training and professional development	1,162	103
Travel, Food & Accommodation - Advocacy & Awareness Events	142	-
Travel, Food & Accommodation - Community Events - External	130	1,158
Travel, Food & Accommodation - Education Events - External	9,285	2,534
Travel, Food & Accommodation - Education Events - Internal	-	997
Travel, Food & Accommodation - Internal	742	182
Volunteer gifts	70	-
Total Operating Expenses	33,452	19,262
Net Profit	\$ 61,736	\$ 19,283

4

years of operation

154

patient email inquiries
answered by volunteers

7

volunteer health
professionals in our
Clinical Advisory Group

733,000

people living with
migraine disease in
Aotearoa

2,326

Online support group
members

71%

monthly newsletter
open rate

2

health professional
conferences

37

latest news articles
published on our
website

3

community in-person
meetups of people with
migraine disease held

20

newsletters sent to a
growing number of
subscribers

2

community events
attended with an
education stand

2

research papers
published in New Zealand
medical journals

From 1
May 2025

–
30 April
2026

1

patient webinar

6

official submissions

2,770

volunteer hours to run the
charity

3

cofounders



**MIGRAINE
FOUNDATION**
Aotearoa New Zealand

1

awareness campaign
47

A stylized illustration of a blue bird, possibly a penguin or a similar seabird, rendered in various shades of blue. The bird is positioned in the lower half of the page, facing right. It has a long, pointed beak and a small white dot for an eye. The background of the entire page is a solid medium blue.

Compiled by: Sarah Cahill, Fiona Imlach, Rachel Easton
Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand
Charity number: CC60312

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