

Uniting Te Waipounamu: Building a connected infection prevention and control community for private facilities across Christchurch & the South Island.

Authors and Contributors:

Sacha McMillan, Ruth Barratt, Letitia Brewin, Tamsin Dunn, Andryna Eberle, Jill Gerken, Kathryn Howden, Sarah Lamb, Vicki McKenzie, Lyndal Pokoney, Nikki Pullar, Jess Wolfenden

More info: InfectionPrevention@nursemaude.org.nz

Background

As the complexity and scope of infection prevention and control (IPC) work has grown, professional expectations of those practising IPC have increased. Practitioners across Christchurch and the wider South Island (Te Waipounamu) work in diverse settings, including acute hospitals, residential care, community services, primary care, and private providers, with many working independently and/or in remote settings.

Similar challenges are encountered when implementing IPC programmes, including surveillance, antimicrobial stewardship, environmental management, and workforce education.

There is inequity in access to IPC expertise, professional support, and shared resources across the South Island, particularly within the private sector.

Opportunities for networking, mentorship, and collaboration between organisations are limited, often resulting in duplication of effort and inconsistent access to evidence-based guidance.

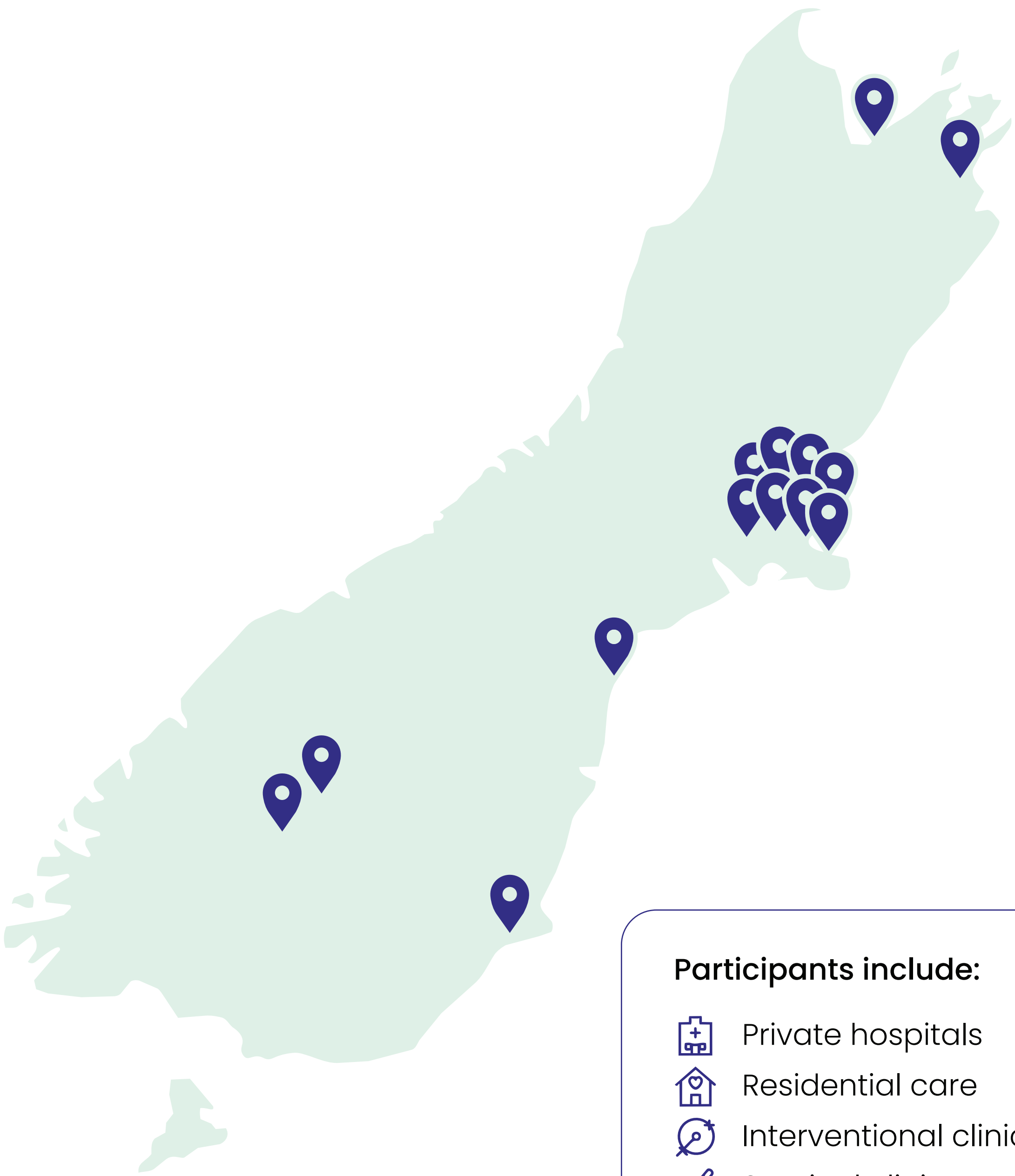
In response, a regional collaborative network was established to strengthen IPC capability through peer support, knowledge sharing, mentorship, and the exchange of practical solutions and local innovations.

The initiative aims to improve consistency of IPC practice across the region while fostering professional connections, reducing duplication of effort, and strengthening the regional IPC voice within the private sector.

By creating a sustainable community of practice, the network supports ongoing professional development, encourages innovation, and enhances the delivery of safe, high-quality care across Te Waipounamu.

Our Network Access

Private IPC practitioners from across the South Island are joining together to learn, share and support one another.



Network Members

	Sacha McMillan	
	Role:	Infection Prevention & Control CNS
	Employer:	Nurse Maude
Location:		Christchurch, Nelson & Marlborough, Wellington
	Ruth Barratt	
	Role:	Consultant – Infection Prevention and Control
	Employer:	Vector Consulting
Location:		New Zealand wide
	Letitia Brewin	
	Role:	Infection Prevention and Control Manager
	Employer:	St George's Private Surgical Hospital
Location:		Christchurch
	Alicia Gollan	
	Role:	Infection Prevention and Control Nurse
	Employer:	St George's Private Surgical Hospital
Location:		Christchurch
	Tamsin Dunn	
	Role:	Clinical Manager
	Employer:	Southern Endoscopy Centre
Location:		Christchurch
	Sarah Lamb	
	Role:	Registered Nurse
	Employer:	Southern Endoscopy Centre
Location:		Christchurch
	Andryna Eberle	
	Role:	Nurse Specialist – Infection Prevention and Antimicrobial Stewardship
	Employer:	Ryman Healthcare
Location:		New Zealand and Australia
	Jill Gerken	
	Role:	Infection Prevention & Control Co-ordinator
	Employer:	Forte Health
Location:		Christchurch
	Kathryn Howden	
	Role:	Quality Manager
	Employer:	Mobile Health Group
Location:		New Zealand wide
	Vicki McKenzie	
	Role:	Infection Prevention & Control CNS
	Employer:	Bidwill Trust Hospital
Location:		Timaru
	Lyndal Pokoney	
	Role:	Infection Prevention and Control Registered Nurse
	Employer:	Southern Cross Healthcare
Location:		Christchurch
	Nikki Pullar	
	Role:	Infection Prevention and Control Clinical Nurse Lead
	Employer:	Southern Cross Healthcare
Location:		Christchurch
	Jess Wolfenden	
	Role:	Practice Manager
	Employer:	Intus Specialist Health Care
Location:		South Island wide

Why we connected

To strengthen IPC capability and reduce inequity across the South Island by building genuine connections and a supportive community of practice.

- Strengthen professional connections
- Share knowledge and experience
- Reduce duplication of effort
- Support safer care across our communities

How we connect

- Meet every 6–8 weeks
- In different locations across Christchurch
- Online attendance options available
- Presentations, case discussions and resource sharing
- Collaborative problem-solving and knowledge exchange

What we do

- Enable peer-to-peer learning and innovation
- Share resources, tools and practical solutions
 - Exchange ideas on challenges, projects and initiatives
 - Build confidence and capability in IPC practice
 - Elevate the voice of IPC practitioners across the private sector

What we hope to achieve

- Improved consistency in IPC programmes across the region.
- More consistent, evidence-based IPC practice across the South Island.
- Shared solutions to recurring challenges.
- Learn from each other and solve problems together.
- Strengthened practitioner confidence and capability.
- Build knowledge, skills and confidence through peer support and learning.
- Increased sense of connection to a larger IPC community.
- Feel supported and connected across Te Waipounamu.
- Reduced duplication of effort by aligning tools and resources.
- Share and streamline resources to save time and improve quality.
- Strengthening the regional IPC voice within the private sector.
- Speak collectively to advocate for safer care and better outcomes.