

MEDIA RELEASE

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District Councillors 'concerned' at Home Help Cuts

Waimakariri District Mayor Ron Keating and Councillor Neil Cruickshank have expressed their concern at recent media reports of cuts to home help services as a result of a Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) review of aged care services.

Mayor Keating said that the extent of any cuts in the District is still at this stage unknown, but he is worried at the distress that the prospect of home help cuts will cause to elderly people across the District.

"There are also a couple of complicating factors as far as we are concerned", he said. "In rural areas in particular, the support options are more limited and also more remote – there's an isolation factor. In addition the number of volunteers is much lower than in urban areas – there is a minimal ability to pick up the slack which could be caused by any home help cuts".

Councillor Cruickshank, who is a Director on the board of the Rural Canterbury Primary Health Organisation and also represents the Waimakariri District Council on the board, finds it difficult to comprehend the move in light of the extra

\$52 million dollars received by the CDHB this year from the Government to cover cost increases.

Both Mayor Keating and Councillor Cruickshank would like to hear from anyone in similar circumstances in the District, where cuts have been made to their home help services, and have offered to advocate on their behalf. They say their next step is to bring their concerns to the attention of local Parliamentarians Clayton Cosgrove and Kate Wilkinson.

"This is a particularly vulnerable sector of our community", said Mayor Keating. "The Waimakariri District has an ageing population and I believe we have a duty to ensure that they are properly cared for".



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For more information contact:

Mayor Ron Keating

Phone: 03 311 8900 or 03 327 6834

Email: ron.keating@wmk.govt.nz

Councillor Neil Cruickshank

Phone: 03 313 1513

Email: neil.cruickshank@wmk.govt.nz