

## **Renee Greaves interview**

*Counties Manukau Health patient and whānau care advisor*

After a being faced with a personal knock on death's doorstep with no prior warning, I was inspired to become involved in health care. This came about after I was interviewed about my experience and invited to help with an initiative within Middlemore Hospital.

I really enjoyed what I now understand as co-designing improvement which involved me as a patient and staff of the hospital. This experience made me really consider my direction in life and I decided to make a change from the banking industry to health care.

Co-designing as a consumer is powerful, I see it as helping to shape a culture shift in an industry; for me the most important aspect is seeing the change from an organisation that does things to and for patients, to one that does things *with* their patients/whānau.

Co-design is about designing solutions with our patients/whānau at every step of the way, right from the initial concept to implementation and not considering it as another model but as the best and only way of working that ensures we deliver the right solutions.

Using co-design methods is uplifting. It helps everyone to see things from the perspective of staff experience, patient/whānau experience and the clinical environment in which we deliver care. Co-design is about bringing all these elements together at all stages of improvement. Part of my role is about constructively challenging how we do things, how we look at everyone's perspective, and importantly how we support and mentor our patients/whānau to help us make the improvements needed in health care.

It's fantastic to see the partnership that forms amongst staff and patients/whānau when we spend the time to ask what matters to them, understanding things from their perspective, listening to their experiences.

As someone wise once told me a big part of my role is to 'rock the boat and stay in it' – which means that I can continue to help improve experience for patients and staff.