**Progress Report for Canterbury Medical Research Foundation**

**Project Grant: Pilot of methods to measure unmet secondary healthcare needs**

**Objectives:**

The project sought to (1) pilot four methods of undertaking a survey to estimate unmet need for secondary health care; (2) obtain an indication of the approximate prevalence of unmet need and the sample size required to estimate it with reasonable precision; and, (3) to make cost-effective comparisons between the four methods in order to recommend the most appropriate method, or combination of methods, for a future regular national survey.

**Methods:**

(1) **GP Arm:** GP members of Auckland and Pegasus PHOs were invited to record cases of unmet need when seen in their clinics on their PMS systems, which were specifically modified for the purpose.

(2) **Population Sampling Arm:** A standardized questionnaire was given to representative population samples from the regions covered by the two PHO by: (i) Online surveying; (ii) Telephone surveying; and, (iii) Face-to-face surveying.

**Progress:**

The sampling methods started in November of last year. All four survey methods, and the report on the population sampling arms, were completed by 11th March 2016, when the pilot study was concluded. As a result, we are now able to make firm recommendations on the best method to use for a regular national survey.

The results of the pilot study and our recommendations are currently being prepared for publication as a methodological article for the New Zealand Medical Journal. We will send you a copy of the paper as soon as it is published. It is the intention of our study group to subsequently seek funding for a national survey of unmet secondary health care need.

Phil Bagshaw

21st April 2016