

Media Release

8 June 2018

Waikato volunteers vital to help stop NZ's single biggest killer

As the country marks National Volunteer Week, the Heart Foundation's Waikato branch says a heartfelt thanks to the hundreds of volunteers who give their time to support the charity locally.

Heart Health Advocate Lisa Mitchell says National Volunteer Week, from 17-23 June, is a perfect time for the charity to acknowledge the difference their volunteers make to the lives of people living with heart disease and their families.

"We simply couldn't continue our mission to stop New Zealander's dying prematurely of heart disease and help the more than 186,000 Kiwis currently living with it, without the generous support of our amazing volunteers in the Waikato.

"We are very grateful to this group of kind-hearted Kiwis who generously help out at community events, collect during our Big Heart Appeal, and help with administration.

Lisa Mitchell says heart disease is New Zealand's single biggest killer, claiming at least one life every 90 minutes.

"As a charity, we rely heavily on our volunteers to address that sobering statistic and deliver our health messages throughout the country.

"Many of our volunteers have experienced heart disease personally and the theme of this year's National Volunteer Week, 'Volunteers the heart of our community', certainly applies to them."

Many people come together to help with the organising the Big Heart Appeal held in February each year. There are over a hundred people collecting each year coming from all walks of life and background generously giving their time. The community service clubs have

been very supportive of our collections and we simply could not succeed without their help and the help of the many people who get out and shake the bucket outside the supermarkets and on the streets.

Of course , we would also like acknowledge the Supermarket Managers and owners who have allowed us to use their premises in setting up the collection stalls. The supermarkets are critical to our continuing to collect each year.

If anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer simply register your interest, by contacting Lisa Mitchell on 852 5145

ENDS

Editor's Note: Lisa is happy to be interviewed for a news story and can be contacted on 07 852 5145

Heart Foundation at a glance:

Heart disease is New Zealand's single biggest killer, claiming the lives of more than 6,000 New Zealanders every year – that's one person every 90 minutes.

The Heart Foundation funds leading-edge research and specialist training for cardiologists, while our education, support and prevention programmes address heart disease head-on in the community.

Through our work with young children, we create a foundation for keeping hearts healthy into the future.