

## **The Story of Christina Crawford: A Fellowship Journey**

Christina Crawford's story begins in Hastings, where she grew up, attended Hastings Girls' High, and built deep roots in the local community. Pharmacy was not just a career for Christina—it was a calling shaped by family, community, and a love for science and helping others. Her mother's encouragement and a local pharmacist's advice led her to pursue pharmacy, a profession that offered flexibility, ownership, and the chance to make a difference, especially for women in the 1980s.

After training at the Central Institute of Technology and completing her internship in Fielding, Christina returned to Hawke's Bay, managing Bay Care Pharmacy—the precursor to Hastings Health Centre. Her career spanned community and hospital pharmacy, including a stint in London, where she and her husband, a teacher, worked and lived for four and a half years. Christina's experience overseas broadened her perspective, exposing her to the complexities of hospital pharmacy and the importance of collaboration among health professionals.

Back in Hawke's Bay, Christina became a champion for workforce development and collaboration. She saw firsthand the challenges facing pharmacy: under-resourcing, a tight workforce, and a lack of promotion for the profession. Christina's passion led her to volunteer as the pharmacy intern support coordinator for the local branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of NZ. She organizes after-hours meetings, supported interns (including those from overseas), and fosters a sense of community among pharmacists. Her approach is hands-on and caring—pizza, baking, and a safe space for learning and sharing.

Christina's commitment extends beyond technical knowledge. She emphasises the importance of holistic care, cultural understanding, and supporting pharmacists through every stage of their careers. Her voluntary work was driven by a belief in the future of the profession: "It's our workforce. Those people I am connecting with now are my future employees, employers, locums—they're the only person that's going to let me go on holiday. If not me, then who?"

Her leadership and dedication did not go unnoticed. Christina was nominated—anonously—for a fellowship, a recognition of her impact and service. The process involved letters of support from colleagues, many of whom she had mentored or worked alongside. Christina's humility and collaborative spirit shone through: "I connect with people. I like that. It's a beautiful thing, an important thing. Having the kōrero face to face and walking their journey, kanohi ki te kanohi, shoulder to shoulder—that's the way to go."

Throughout her career, Christina advocated for the profession to embrace flexibility, family, and lifestyle. She encourages pharmacists to speak positively about their work and to support each other, especially in rural and community settings. Her story is one of resilience, generosity, and a deep commitment to making pharmacy a welcoming and rewarding career for all.

