

Members defer midwives move

A Canterbury Area Health Board member, Mr David Close, yesterday failed to find a seconder to a motion to appoint a midwife to the Obstetrics Standards Committee.

The board was reluctant to make changes to the composition of the committee until the new manager of secondary care took up his position in November.

The committee consists of the medical superintendent-in-chief, two representatives of general practitioners, the medical superintendent of Christchurch Women's Hospital,

and a representative of the paediatrics department.

The medical superintendent, Dr Ross Fairgray, said: "I have no great objection to midwives, but by the same token that same committee should be able to exercise discretion over midwives." Mr Close said the board had already adopted a plan for obstetrics and gynaecology containing proposals to broaden membership to include a midwife.

Another board member, Dr Jocelyn Hay, said the committee was about to be reviewed.

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Let's talk health

early March '89

A group of Ashburtonians aware of the need for a community health forum are organising a health festival for the general public to be held in July.

Publicity officer for the Community Health Awareness Group Mrs Jennifer Audeau said the festival to be called Lets Talk Health will run for five days from July 10 and end with a day of displays, demonstrations and free clinical testing.

Mrs Audeau said although the group had been set up with the idea of working towards a festival she hoped that afterwards it would continue to work as a public forum for health in the community.

There had been talk of a health resource centre in the community for some time and Mrs Audeau suggested that maybe this could be a fore runner to setting up such a

centre.

She said the idea of the festival was that each day key note speakers would present talks and workshops in most aspects of community health with a strong emphasis on life-style and taking responsibility for one's own health.

Serious health concerns would be discussed along with more fun aspects of good living such as yoga, aerobics and natural foods.

The final day of the festival would take the form of free clinical testing by health professionals in the community and a huge display and information centre set up in the Sinclair centre.

Mrs Audeau said because of the number of free tests being offered that day other venues in the immediate vicinity would be used so that the public could walk from one to the other.

Breast-screening idea condemned

By SARAH SANDS

Local women's health groups are unhappy with the suggestion that Canterbury women pay for their own breast-screening machine.

Last month, a member of the Canterbury Hospital Board, Mrs Caroline Cartwright, called on women to raise the \$125,000 for a mammography machine.

"If the women of Canterbury feel strongly about this then I am sure they could do something to raise the money - it's

in their own life interest," she said.

A spokeswoman for The Health Alternatives for Women (T.H.A.W.) said the request showed that women's health was not considered important.

"The fact is that everything has been run down. We have a worn colposcopy machine and laser and now the women are being asked to fund-raise for a mammography machine. It's no solution," she said.

The Canterbury-Westland region of the College of Midwives said it was extremely disappointing that a Hospital Board member representing Canterbury women would make such an anti-women statement.

"Obviously the increased awareness of women's health stimulated by the Cartwright report is short-lived, or perhaps never recognised by the Canterbury Hospital Board," said a representative of the region, Ms Julie Hasson.

"Since saving money is a top priority of the Canterbury Hospital Board, one would think that a machine which employed preventative techniques would, in the long run, save in-patient hours and be an ideal investment," she said.

Local midwives felt that if women were being asked to pay for their own mammography machine, middle-aged men should be asked to pay for their own cardiac unit, Ms Hasson said.

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