

The "baby" helping to save other children

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Training mannequin raises the bar for dealing with child health emergencies.

Simantha is only nine months old but "she" is bringing a world of knowledge to paediatric health workers who may be faced with child emergencies.

A SimBaby, Simantha (as she has been named by Waipapa Christchurch Hospital staff) is a training mannequin that simulates a nine-month-old, designed to help child health staff recognise and respond to paediatric patients during the type of medical events expected in a hospital setting.

Buddle Findlay Child Health Foundation, through its partnership with Canterbury's Māia Health Foundation, contributed towards Simantha's purchase - costing around \$75,000. The training aims to give child health staff from all disciplines a chance to manage simulated clinical emergencies.

"Children can have different physiological responses to illness or injury compared to adults," says Christchurch paediatrician Dr John Garrett. "It's important to emulate the difficulty of working around a small patient on the resuscitaire, including things like intubating a baby-sized airway, and using paediatric-only devices.

"Learning how to effectively recognise and respond to respiratory emergencies, shock, and cardiopulmonary arrest can improve a doctor or nurse's ability to respond more confidently in an emergency.

"SimBaby takes us to the next level of realism and immersive simulation. SimBaby blinks, has pupils that respond to light, can have a seizure and have a chest drain inserted, among other things," says Dr Garrett, who has been working with Canterbury District Health Board on the SimBaby simulation programme.

The Buddle Findlay Child Health Foundation's long-standing partnership with the Māia Health Foundation supports children receiving medical care in hospital in Canterbury. If hospitals or other child healthcare providers face an urgent need for equipment or other vital resources, the Buddle Findlay foundation will quickly consider applications for funding to help meet the need and provide an immediate and direct benefit for the children.

Buddle Findlay Child Health Foundation Trustee Julia Gabrielle says the Foundation is here to help hospitals provide a service to children that they might not otherwise be able to offer.

"A principal focus of the Buddle Findlay Child Health Foundation is to provide funding assistance at short notice to meet the urgent health needs of children receiving medical care in hospital," she says.

"Such a need may arise, for example, from an unforeseen critical shortage or local unavailability of a vital resource, an emergency situation, a breakage or malfunction requiring immediate and unbudgeted replacement or repair, or an unexpected short-term opportunity to upgrade vital equipment.

"It is fantastic to see that the SimBaby simulation programme has already proved invaluable in enhancing the care of infants and children locally and enables the health staff to provide the safest possible care for such vulnerable patients.

"Our foundation is firmly committed to improving the experience for children and infants in hospital care and helping them to stay out of hospital in a direct and tangible way."

The Buddle Findlay Child Health Foundation has donated more than \$1,300,000 for urgent medical care for children since it was established in 2005. The partnership with Māia Health Foundation began in 2018 and more than \$100,000 has been provided since then to support children's care in Christchurch.

The Buddle Findlay Child Health Foundation is funded by the partners and staff of Buddle Findlay.

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