



SERVICE COORDINATOR PROFILE: SARAH KINGIPOTIKI PACT CENTRAL OTAGO



What is your history with Pact?

I first started working for Pact back in 2006. I was studying nursing and was working part-time at North Road (Dunedin). I decided nursing wasn't for me, so took up a full-time role at another house up in Pine Hill.

When Pact restructured, I became the Service Coordinator at Cranley Street and later Carr Street (both in Dunedin). I went on maternity leave with my first daughter, returning when she was six months' old, to the home's new location in Rutherford Street. After some time, I went on maternity leave to have my son. I took 12 months' maternity leave and was asked, when he was eight months' old, if I was interested in coming to be Service Coordinator at Musselburgh Rise (also in Dunedin).

Then, after working for Pact for more than a decade, my family made the decision to move to Cromwell in Central Otago, and I was offered a six-month contract to explore support options for intellectual disability services in the Central Otago community. Unfortunately, at that time, nothing took off, so I left Pact to move on to other things. Firstly, I managed the event linen section of a laundromat, before moving onto a hire company in the region. I worked there for four years and became the Assistant Manager overseeing jobs sites and staff.

Then I was contacted by Pact to see if I was still in the region, and if I would be interested in applying for the Service Coordinator role for a new Pact home in Wānaka, which is where I am today. Not only do we now have Wānaka, but we also have homes in Alexandra, and Cromwell.

What attracted you to Pact?

My cousin was working for Pact at the time and suggested I apply for the role.

What is the best thing you do at work?

There are so many to list. It is very rewarding to support people to achieve goals, learn new skills, overcome challenges and watch them be as independent as possible. With working in Central Otago, I have enjoyed being part of a very inclusive community, allowing a lot of opportunities for those we support. I love working alongside MINT (a charitable trust set up by local families with children with intellectual disabilities), to provide meaningful activities in the community and also supporting the development of friendships. I enjoy working closely with the families to ensure that we have open lines of communication and build trust. This is a new service in the area for these families, so I feel very privileged to be part of the next step for them all.

What is the best thing about working for Pact?

Pact as a whole is a very supportive organisation that provides a lot of opportunities, not only for those we support and their families, but also the staff they employ. Being able to have the opportunity to upskill and get training around specific supports that we provide, gives staff the confidence and the feeling of being supported in their role as a support worker.

What are you most proud of in your role?

Meeting such great staff -- I continue to learn from them also. Being part of setting up services in Central Otago and giving those who have grown up in the area an opportunity to remain in their community.

What would you say to someone thinking about joining us?

If you enjoy working with people and are passionate about making a difference, join us! Every day is different.