



‘Life’ is a great vocation

The Whangarei Skin Clinic is based on Hatea Drive in a beautifully renovated 110-year-old villa.

Dr Heike Detjen and practice manager Jo Cuff have been operating for the last 18 months offering medical and surgical skin cancer care, as well as cosmetic medicine procedures. They recently welcomed Marie Olsen to their team, an experienced theatre and general practice nurse.

Originally from Germany, Dr Heike came to New Zealand as a junior doctor over 20 years ago. She worked for several years at Whangarei Hospital before moving into family medicine and completing her fellowship of the College of General Practitioners. Heike became an associate and later a director at Onerahi Medical Centre, working for this community as a respected GP for over 14 years.

“It is great to get to know people and their stories. Medicine with its diversity and combination of science and ‘life’ is a great vocation.”

Fostering a strong interest in skin cancer and later cosmetic medicine, Heike began her specialisation studies, becoming an accredited skin cancer doctor with the Skin Cancer College of Australasia. Over the last three years she has had extensive training in cosmetic medicine.

Wanting to focus on skin cancer work, Heike established Whangarei Skin Clinic in 2018. Moving from the role of family doctor at an established medical practice into the unknown territory of solo private practice is described by Heike as "a big step which still

feels challenging at times".

While sometimes challenging, being able to develop processes and get involved in the daily running of the clinic is exciting on a daily basis. The range of training and variety of her previous job comes in handy now. Suddenly all the tasks not performed for years, such as managing orders for supplies, operating the autoclave and making sure everything is clean and tidy, were on the agenda. Supported by practice manager Jo, who comes from a medical background and has worked in customer

service over 25 years, there has been lots of learning and laughter.

Now the clinic runs smoothly and all the team are enjoying a positive and vibrant workplace offering full body skin cancer checks, medical and surgical treatments for identified cancers botulinum toxin and filler applications, and a variation of medical skin rejuvenation therapies are on offer.

When Heike reflects, she is reminded of the many inspirational people she has met, from colleagues in Germany and New Zealand, to patients, family and friends.



Doctor Heike and office manager Jo

ADDS HEIKE:

"Now we are coming out from a very unprecedented time, the team is looking forward to welcoming patients and clients again and continuing to provide our comprehensive and personalised service. New Zealand has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world.

Early diagnosis and treatment are essential from a health perspective but at the Whangarei Skin Clinic, we don't forget about the cosmetic medicine aspect. We love to make you look and feel your best!"