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# Expert to hit world stage

**Emily Beaumont**  
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For thirty years Richmond's Paddy McBride has immersed herself in acupuncture and she is now considered one of the leading experts in the world.

In November, at this year's World Federation of Acupuncture Societies (WFAS) conference in Paris, Paddy will be a keynote speaker. "Building connections with other countries is extremely important. The New Zealand acupuncture profession is small, but we are part of a huge global community," says Paddy.

She knew she'd found her calling on her very first day at acupuncture school and now Paddy is on a mission to educate people about its benefits and to put New Zealand's acupuncture profession on the world stage.

The New Zealand advisor to the Acupuncture Now Foundation (ANF) - an international organisation which aims to educate people about the benefits of acupuncture, Paddy is also a member and former president of Acupuncture New Zealand (AcNZ).

At her clinic in Richmond, Paddy's

clients range from newborn babies to people in their 90's.

"Acupuncture isn't just for pain relief and musculoskeletal injuries. It can be used to successfully treat a variety of conditions. I have a special interest in obstetrics and women's health, but I also see people for asthma and allergies, digestive disorders, coughs, colds and flu, headaches, infertility, mental health issues, and many others." Paddy says there are still a lot of misconceptions about acupuncture, which are preventing it from reaching its full potential as a healthcare resource.

"The biggest of these is that acupuncture and other traditional Chinese medicines are an 'alternative' to Western medicine. I describe the two approaches as 'collaborative'. They work differently but can be extremely powerful when used together in an integrated approach. There is a place for both - they aren't in competition." Convinced that acupuncture has a huge potential to reduce the burden on New Zealand's primary healthcare, Paddy says there are over 800 acupuncturists currently practicing in New Zealand.

"Education is key, and I feel extremely privileged to be able to play a part in this," says Paddy.



Paddy McBride conducts an acupuncture session on Adrian Reid. Photo: Emily Beaumont.

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