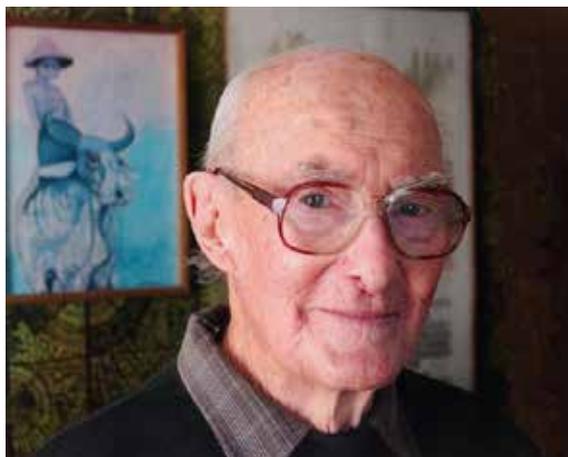


# Douglas Paviour Short

17 March 1922 –20 May 2016  
MB ChB, FRCS, MCCM, FFPHM RACP



**B**orn in Auckland in 1922, Doug spent his early years in Remuera, attending primary school and two terms at Auckland Grammar. Completing his secondary education at Nelson College with a Fell Scholarship, he went on to study at the University of Otago, where he graduated in medicine with distinction in obstetrics and gynaecology in 1946 and won the Bachelor Memorial Prize and Medal.

Under the tutelage of the Medical Superintendent, Dr Percy Brunette, Doug began his working life at Nelson Hospital as a house surgeon. His interest in medical administration and ambition to become a surgeon were greatly influenced by Dr Brunette. In Edinburgh, he completed his postgraduate training as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1951.

On his return to New Zealand from 1952–1953, Doug was Acting Medical Superintendent at Nelson Hospital, until his appointment as resident surgeon and Medical Superintendent at Dannevirke Hospital. It was here he honed his surgical skills, developed his ability as a medical administrator and began to pursue his lifelong interest in community health.

Again combining administration with surgical responsibilities, Doug took the position of Medical Superintendent at Tauranga Hospital in 1956 where he built on his Dannevirke reputation. His ability to

envision what could be and to bring people together to achieve results that would improve health delivery for a community was a special quality.

In 1966, Doug interrupted this appointment to become leader of the New Zealand Surgical Team in Qhi Nhon, South Vietnam. Here, he further extended his surgical and administrative skills in a challenging ‘Third World’ wartime environment.

From Tauranga, Doug left the hospital service to take up a position with Tasman Vaccine Laboratories as its Medical Director and Director of Special Projects Research.

Two years working in private industry saw a return to the hospital environment, firstly working as Senior Medical Officer, Accident & Emergency followed by Director of Medical Services at Wellington Hospital.

In 1976, Doug became Superintendent-in-Chief of the Bay of Plenty Hospital Board in Whakatāne. Here, he focused on several community projects funded by the beer and tobacco tax, and did some of his most inspiring work by bringing healthcare to the community—for example, the development of school-based health clinics and mobile ear caravans.

The next big step in Doug’s involvement with community health care was his key role in the formation of the New Zealand College of Community Medicine (now the New

Zealand College of Public Health Medicine) in 1980, being its foundation president.

Finally, he returned to his roots in Nelson as Medical Superintendent of Nelson Hospital in 1983. Due to government policy at the time, he had to retire at 65, but still had considerable energy and enthusiasm for pursuing projects.

As the founding Chairperson of the Nelson Regional Hospice Trust, he was instrumental in setting up the hospice service in Nelson. He helped found Nelson's Health Action Trust, establishing a community-based health promotion initiative to help people with alcohol, drug and mental health issues, as well as working part-time as a Medical Advisor for the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) until he retired at 84.

Doug was a man of many talents; he loved music and was a skilled pianist. As a skilled watercolour painter, he gained great satisfaction from yet another outlet for his creative spirit.

Such was the foresight and commitment of Doug Short. He devoted his considerable intellect and vision to a lifelong service of making a difference in people's lives and will long be remembered with affection and thanks by his family, his many friends and colleagues and all those people who benefited from his wisdom and expertise.

He was a devoted husband to wife Marie, who predeceased in 2004. He is survived by three children, Jill, David and Judy, as well as six grandchildren, and at his death on 20 May 2016 after a major stroke was the proud great grandfather to three lovely great-grandchildren.

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**Author information:**

Jill Dawson, daughter, retired living in the Motueka area.

**URL:**

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