



JANUARY 2015: REGIONAL LIFEGUARD SERVICE



SURF LIFE SAVING  
NEW ZEALAND

NORTHERN WINNER



# RESCUE OF THE MONTH

## RECOGNISING OUTSTANDING RESCUES

*In it for life*

**Date: January 1, 2015**

**Location: Muriwai Beach**

**Lifeguards involved: Emma Wilson, Oliver Tyack, Chase Cahalane, Tim Gibb, Matt Nugent and Ben Parker**

The strong northerly current running along the beach on January 1 made for a heavily patrolled flagged area; one lifeguard was manning the flagged area from the water’s edge while another one was in the water guarding the northern side.

Just as lifeguard Emma Wilson had begun her “in water” flag duty, a young girl began to rapidly move out of the flagged area. She struggled to find her footing and her movements looked sluggish.

Emma waded over, threw her a rescue tube and pulled her in to an appropriate depth of the water where the girl could stand. She was noticeably confused and, upon questioning, started to lose the ability to independently support herself.

Emma called for assistance and as she made her way towards the land, the patient’s verbal response started to diminish. She then collapsed in Emma’s arms. With the assistance of a member of the public, Emma carried the patient up to the dry sand and placed her into the recovery position when she began to dry retch.

While her airway was being checked, she displayed small jerking movements of the face and arms. Almost immediately, the patient began having seizures that lasted anywhere from twenty seconds to two minutes. Fellow lifeguard Oliver Tyack, who had arrived on scene, set up the oxygen tank while Emma recorded the patient’s seizures.

Lifeguard Tim Gibb was informing and updating the lifeguards as to the status of the patient and the ambulance. He also continued to run the beach and maintain the safety of the public. The patient’s seizures continued and she was having periods between her seizures where she would fail to breathe.

Oliver put the oxygen mask on the patient and Emma continued to stimulate a pain response through digging her fingers into the patient’s collarbone which made her open her eyes and gasp for air. She continued to have seizures and periods of apnoea for 20 minutes, even when the ambulance arrived.

Oliver took over flag duty, while Chase Cahalane and Emma transported the patient to the tower where the ambulance was waiting to transport her to hospital, now in a stable condition. The intervention of lifeguards helped prevent a fatality as the patient would have likely suffered seizures in the water, leading to a potential drowning.