

## THE NEW ZEALAND BRAVERY DECORATION (N.Z.B.D.)

### Dr Bryce CURRAN

Date of action: 22 February 2011

Date of award: 23 June 2014

#### *Citation*

On 22 February 2011 a magnitude 6.3 earthquake struck Christchurch, causing the collapse of the Pyne Gould Corporation building, trapping around 30 people inside. Dr Bryce Curran, an anaesthetist from Christchurch Hospital, was sent to provide medical assistance at the Pyne Gould Corporation building. He made several forays into the building to administer morphine to trapped victims. He then joined urologist Dr Lydia Johns-Putra, a firefighter and a Police officer in a rescue operation to free a man who was trapped inside the building. The man was in danger of bleeding to death with his legs pinned between a concrete pillar and a collapsed floor section. There was no way to remove the concrete safely and a decision was made to amputate both of his legs. Dr Curran administered morphine and ketamine to provide anaesthesia and tourniquets were applied to the man's legs. Dr Johns-Putra then began the amputation procedure lit by torches and using a hacksaw and penknife. She grew fatigued from the effort of operating the saw in a confined space and passed the hacksaw to Dr Curran who took turns with the Police officer and firefighter in completing the operation. An aftershock occurred during the operation. The man was loaded onto a tarpaulin and escorted to ambulance staff waiting outside the building. Dr Curran rode with the man in the ambulance and assisted in resuscitating him en route to the hospital. Dr Bryce Curran and the rescue team carried out a lengthy operation with minimal equipment in a confined, unstable and dark space whilst under the constant threat of aftershocks. The man survived due to their efforts.