

AUTUMN 2019 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
www.acwellington.org.nz



Age Concern Wellington

Serving the needs of older people

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Executive Officers Report

After the heady summer days we have enjoyed it is a shock to realise that this is the autumn issue of our magazine. I do hope you were able to make the most of the good weather and spend a little time outdoors.

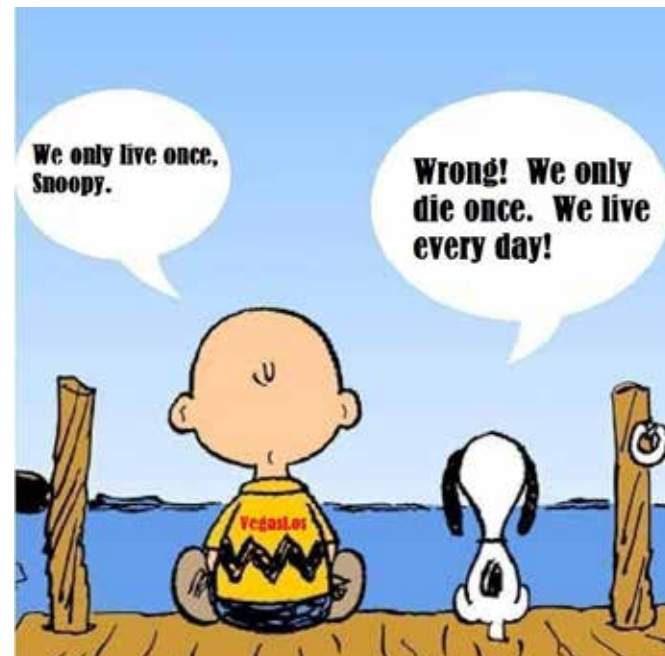
As the days draw in, this is a good time to think about preserving our mobility. The temptation is there to avoid the regular walk on cold or inclement days. Steady As You Go is featured in this edition. Steady As You Go is a Balance and Falls Prevention programme that combines doable exercises with a fun hour of companionship in a weekly class. Participants report a measurable improvement after a few weeks. There is no need for fancy gym gear or lycra, just suitable shoes (the sort you would use for walking) and some water (we don't want you to dehydrate).

We have started several new classes in the past few months in a range of locations and we'd love to see you there. Start and finish times all take public transport Super Gold card hours into account.

Enjoy your reading and consider making this Autumn the time you try something new.

Marion Cowden

Executive Officer



Loneliness and Social Isolation

Loneliness is indiscriminate. There is an abundance of research on this subject in New Zealand currently and young people are just as likely to feel lonely as older generations. It is known that levels of loneliness in this country are escalating and as anyone who has ever experienced it will agree, the feeling can seem insurmountable once it settles in our tummies and our lives.

The importance of being aware of and talking about loneliness and lack of social relationships has been proven to be as bad for health as smoking. There can be many reasons for being lonely, such as health, mobility impairment, sensory loss, changes to driving ability and bereavement. There are all sorts of things happening as we age which can make getting out of the house increasingly difficult and so social isolation can cause loneliness.

When people are no longer able to drive, that's where Driving Miss Daisy comes in! Driving Miss Daisy is the connection from home to the community. They make it their priority to ensure each and every journey is filled with laughter, kindness and positivity.

Driving Miss Daisy clients can have the same driver every time which is great for building relationships. The drivers also love to catch up with the clients and will do everything possible to make the journey enjoyable. That can be as simple as a trip to the supermarket or regular hairdresser appointments. Sometimes, it can be more adventurous and include trips further afield; outings to the beach for a breath of fresh air or coffee with friends; anywhere the heart desires.

Driving Miss Daisy is committed to helping clients get out and about, so every client can live life to the full and enjoy every moment.

Editorial supplied by Driving Miss Daisy

Driving Miss Daisy your companion and your driver!



Keep your independence and freedom with our safe, reliable companion driving service.

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- Shopping trips
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- Social outings, meetings, church
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Mana-Porirua	Ph: (04) 235 7985
Wellington City	Ph: (04) 470 7523
Wellington East	Ph: (04) 384 8344
Wellington North	Ph: (04) 478 5535

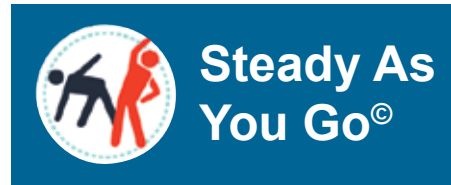


Driving Miss Daisy®

www.drivingmissdaisy.co.nz

Age Concern Wellington run a number of strength and balance classes called Steady As You Go.

These exercises have been proven to increase strength and balance – they exercise all parts of the body, are fun and most people can participate. The cost of attending is also very low – \$3.00.



Below is a table of the classes currently available. We plan to start more classes over the next few months.

Steady As You Go Classes 2018/2019

DAY	TIME	LOCATION	ADDRESS
Monday	10.30am	YODAT Group	Innermost Gardens, Mount Victoria
Monday	11.00am	Quaker Meeting Rooms	7 Moncrieff St, Mt Victoria
Monday	12.00pm	Johnsonville Community Centre	3 Frankmoore Ave, Johnsonville
Tuesday	11.00am	Seatoun Village Hall	22 Forres Street, Seatoun
Tuesday	11.00am	Stokes Valley Hubb	184 Stokes Valley Road
Wednesday	12.00pm	Eastbourne Community Hall	Tuatoru St, Eastbourne
Wednesday	12.00pm	Karori Community Centre	7 Beauchamp St, Karori
Thursday	11.00am	Bob Scott Retirement Village	Graham Street, Petone
Thursday	1.00pm	Tawa Community Centre	5 Cambridge Street, Tawa

If you would like further details, please contact Ann Dalziel, Age Concern Wellington on (04) 499 6646 or email: communitysup@acwellington.org.nz

Ann Dalziel

Community Support and Outreach Coordinator

STEADY AS YOU GO strength and balance classes.

Can you Help?

Age Concern Wellington are currently running 11 Steady As You Go classes throughout the region. Some are newly created but some are run by Peer Leaders, supported by Age Concern staff.

In July 2019 we will hopefully have further funding available to start some new classes. We are aware that some regions do not have close access to these classes, so we are looking for suggestions for venues. There are a list of criteria we need to cover.

The venue must have:

- Easy access,
- Good lighting and a non-slip floor.
- Be a comfortable temperature with sufficient ventilation.

- Have sufficient straight backed chairs without arms readily available
- Sufficient clear floor space for size of class
- Have First Aid resources available
- Emergency Evacuation Plan available.

In addition to the above factors (? phew...) we need a continuity of booking – i.e. the venue cannot close for the school holidays or often closes at very short notice (i.e. funerals).

If you can identify any possibilities I would be most grateful. We are particularly looking for sites in Porirua/Ti Tahī Bay/Upper Hutt, but are really open to suggestions!

Please contact:- Ann Dalziel, Community Support and Outreach Co-Ordinator. Telephone 04 499 6646 communitysup@acwellington.org.nz



Where community shapes the heart of your retirement

At Ryman villages, we want our resident experience to be just right



“You’ll hear a lot of laughter around the village”.

Katherine, Charles Upham resident

Remember when neighbours had time to stop for a chat, cared for each other, and waved a friendly hello in passing? That’s the community Katherine found at her Ryman village in Canterbury.

To find out more about our **five friendly villages** in the Wellington area phone Josie on 0800 779 626

www.rymanhealthcare.co.nz

Have you thought about or made plans for later in life? And have you had a discussion with your close family or children about your wishes and plans?

Eight out of ten Kiwis in the 'Sandwich Generation' (those with dependent children and aging parents) have no clear idea of their parents' future wishes, research reveals.

Do your close family know your wishes?

It's never an easy conversation to begin, says aged care expert Miranda Smith. But the sooner families discuss older family member's future care needs with them, the better equipped families will be to assist. Whether it's parents talking to children or children to parents, Miranda suggests starting the conversation before decisions are needed. Chat together about what the future might hold and what your wishes are for any care you might need. "And remember to stay positive throughout these conversations," she says. "Consider each person's input and ideas, and as much as possible support individuals to make key decisions for themselves - before an unexpected health crisis forces a decision that they might not be 100% happy with."

New research undertaken by Colmar Brunton has unearthed more detail about the 'Sandwich Generation' - the group of New Zealanders who are most likely to find themselves caring for both dependent children and ageing parents at the same time. Of the 500 current or future "Sandwich Generationers" surveyed, a staggering 80% had no clear idea what their parents' wishes were, should they require care at a later stage. And a third admitted that they had never had a conversation with their parents about the matter - things like what might happen if they became ill or were injured, who would look after them, if they would want supervised care in a village or retirement home, or would prefer to remain independently at home with tailored care coming to them.

Miranda says she herself is one of tens of thousands of Kiwis who are classed as belonging to the Sandwich Generation. "Our parents' life expectancies are greater, they're fitter and healthier than previous generations, and at the same time, we're the age group that has prioritised careers and started our own families later," she explains. "Now, we might find that while we're running around after our own children, we're also worrying about our parents and how they're managing day-to-day."

Miranda says it's "really normal" to put conversations about future care needs off as long as possible, "because - let's face it - they're hard to have! None of us wants to admit that we might one day become frail and fatigued, and adult children don't want to consider their much-loved parent may suffer the effects of a stroke, accident or other unexpected health issue. However, what we see at Miranda Smith Homecare are often the consequence of these missing conversations - a family completely caught off guard, with no idea what to do or what their parent would like to happen next."

Daily calls are received from older New Zealanders and their families needing emergency care. "We find there is often an assumption that the Government will pick up the pieces and provide all the care that the older person needs. While it would be lovely if that was the case, it's not the reality anymore. And that is when we will often get an -> understandably - panicked and distressed call!"

Miranda says it's "so important" for families to talk, and adds that older New Zealanders have usually spent time thinking about the matter already and might have some ideas about they want, need, and can afford.

"If they decide they'd prefer to stay in their own home, that option can be more cost-effective than people might think," she says. "It pays to weigh up the cost of full-time residential care against homecare, which can begin at just a few hours a week and be scaled up or down according to need."

Miranda also offers some great advice on how to broach the topic with your family. "Have the conversation somewhere you feel comfortable and relaxed - and where each person can hear easily. Jot down some ideas on paper - a bit of an outline to organise your thoughts before you begin. Consider discussing who will help make key decisions, who might offer support when a health issue arises, what long-term care options might work, and whether the current residence is suitable and has easy access to support services". She also advises adult children and close family to empower parents to make their own choices. "Centre the discussion on their freedom, their safety, and their own peace of mind, rather than yours! Be respectful of their views, and don't overwhelm them with too much information to begin with - plant the seed, but give Mum or Dad some time to digest and think about the options."

Helen Swiney, Miranda Smith Homecare

There's no doubt that older people are vulnerable to loneliness and social isolation - Age Concern research, amongst others, show that very clearly.

Their vulnerabilities arise from the loss of a spouse, loss of mobility, loss of income, the children have moved away, or perhaps they're all by themselves in a big house and everyone else in the street's out at work.

This is important, not just because loneliness is painful, but because having inadequate social relationships has been shown to be as bad for health as smoking. British research suggests that lonely people are more vulnerable to chronic diseases, eat less well and give up on themselves, are more likely to be smokers, overweight or underweight though poor diets, drink heavily and are less likely to engage in physical activity.

Breaking the cycle of loneliness takes conscious effort. Break the cycle by making a plan - talk to your local barista or call someone rather than sending a text. Volunteering and hobbies are almost certain ways to make new friends. Pets offer a good antidote - it's important to think beyond oneself.

The vulnerabilities above often trigger a move to a village. It's a great opportunity to make new friends in a community of like-minded people. Villages often have a vast array of new activities, events and entertainment designed to pique residents' interests and encourage involvement.

From time to time we survey our residents to see how we're going in meeting their needs and expectations. The last survey asked 1,300 randomly-chosen residents about their life in the village.

66% reported a greater sense of security and confidence, one third said they enjoy better physical health, and a satisfactory 67% said their social life had improved. So we can tick all those boxes!

editorial supplied by Retirement Villages Association

Harbour City Funeral Home, Proudly Locally Owned and Operated

Harbour City Funeral Home personnel are available to serve families throughout Wellington and greater Wellington region with premises in Wellington, Lower Hutt, Upper Hutt, and later this year will be open in Paraparaumu, Kapiti Coast.

Started in 1989 by Simon Manning, the business is still locally owned and overseen by Simon's keen eye for innovation, passion and excellence in funeral service. Whilst many funeral companies are under the ownership of multi-national funeral chains Harbour City has proudly remained locally owned.

Harbour City Funeral home looks after all aspects of funeral care including at-need, pre-planning and pre-payment, monumental work (headstones and plaques), online memorials at www.tributes.co.nz, bereavement support services as well as being certified to carry out natural burials.

Please contact us for a copy of our free, no-obligation funeral information booklet. Our location phone numbers are listed in the advertisement below.

www.harbourcityfunerals.co.nz

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FREE about funerals booklet.

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Upper Hutt Ph: (04) 528 8924
Lower Hutt Ph: (04) 570 0111
Kapiti Coast Ph: (04) 298 4888



www.harbourcityfunerals.co.nz

Editorial supplied by Harbour City Funeral Home

Wrist/Ankle Weights for Steady As You Go classes.

During our Steady As You Go strength and balance exercises it is sometimes suggested that class members use ankle weights.

The use of the weights doesn't start until about the third week and they are not for everyone. We suggest selecting the lighter weight – it is better to do more repetitions with a lighter weight, than struggle with a heavier one. The weights can also be used in the hand while doing the reaching exercise.

My colleague Sheila Reed has sourced some weights. They are called `Active Intent` and are 0.5 kg each (two in a box).

Currently they are available from the Warehouse and K-mart, but it is worth checking before you go to buy. The cost of these is only around \$5.00 which is an incredible bargain.

Below is a photograph of the box of weights, so you know what you are looking for!

Ann Dalziel

Community Support and Outreach Coordinator



Most of the problems in life are because of two reasons, we act without thinking or we keep thinking without acting.

Get password smart

These days we access and share some of our most important information online – about ourselves, our family and our finances. Keeping in touch via email and social media, and managing our finances online, does make life easier but it also can open us up to cyber attack.

Cyber attacks can have profound, negative impacts on our lives, so it's really important to improve our cyber security and protect our online accounts from attack. One of the best ways to do this by being password smart.

There's strength in numbers

Use a string of words to create a strong password.



Long passwords are strong passwords. Use four or more words to make up your passwords. Not only will this be easier to remember,

it's as strong as a password that uses a mix of numbers, letters, and symbols. Use a sentence or fun phrase that is unique to you. For example, popcornwithbutterisbest

Avoid using names, birth dates or addresses – this type of information is easy for people to find or guess.

Embrace your uniqueness



Have a unique password for every online account.

Set up a different password for each account. That way, if an attacker gets hold of one of your passwords, they won't get access to all of your accounts.

Start with the most important ones first – like your email, banking and social media accounts.

Mum's the word

Keep your passwords a secret.

Store your passwords somewhere safe. We all struggle to remember multiple passwords. It's OK to write them



down – just make sure you keep them somewhere safe, separate from your computer and mobile phone.

A password manager is another option – you only need to remember one password to access all your passwords.

From Over 60 NZ.....for your amusement

The perks of reaching 60 or being over 70:

- 1 Kidnappers are no longer interested in you.
- 2 In a hostage situation, you are likely to be released first.
- 3 No one expects you to run anywhere.
- 4 People call at 8pm and ask "did I wake you?"
- 5 People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
- 6 There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
- 7 Things you buy now won't wear out.
- 8 You can eat supper at 5pm.
- 9 You can live without sex but not your glasses.
- 10 Your supply of brain cells is finally down to a manageable level.

And remember, never under any circumstances take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.

Serving the Wellington/Kapiti area since 1993

Here at **Courtenay Hearing Centre** we focus on providing solutions that best meet people's needs and budget. We source products from all the major hearing instrument manufacturers - from whom we are independent, allowing us to provide unbiased professional advice, and to offer the best solution to maximise your hearing potential.

Courtenay Hearing Centre provides a full range of audiology services including tinnitus assessment and treatment, ear protection solutions, assistive listening devices as well as batteries, hearing aid repairs and accessories.

If you or a family member are having problems hearing, call and make an appointment today to see the team at Courtenay Hearing Centre, for caring, professional advice.

Visit our website www.courtenayhearing.co.nz for more information.



Dear John

My family have decided to move out of Wellington as my son in law has just got a new job in Hamilton. It's been great having them around me the last few months as I lost my husband recently after a long illness and it's taking me a while to adjust to living on my own. I was telling them how much I'll miss them when they go but then they suggested I move up with them and find a little place of my own nearby.

I feel so torn about this and am in an agony of indecision. Shall I go or shall I stay? All my friends and social activities are in my suburb and yet family are family. What do you think I should do?

Dear Lorraine

I truly sympathise with the decision you have to make and I must try not to be too partisan. I've seen too many cases of people moving TO Wellington to be near family, even from overseas, only to have family shift out again to a new job elsewhere leaving their elderly relative stranded and bereft in Wellington.

However the first thing to say is that it's standard advice to people who've had a bereavement to suggest that they wait at least a year before making any major decisions like moving house. After a loss we're simply not in the right head space to make any big decisions.

As you have a roof over your head and there don't seem to be any other factors that might make a move essential, I suggest that you wait for the family to move and get well settled. This will give you more thinking time and to find out what it is like being on your own without immediate family support.

Once they're settled, they could look into the activities you're interested in. You don't say what your interests are, but you could direct them to, for example, find out about local exercise classes or if there's a thriving Community Centre etc. Is there a GP or medical practice you can enrol with? What are the support services for older people like in the area?

By then your son in law will know whether he's likely to stay in the job or move on and you can ask direct questions about this. You could also ask how much you're likely to see them. I remember someone like you who was horrified to discover that family only had time to pop in briefly on Saturdays between the grandchildren's activities!

Consider what your current health and mobility issues are. Do you still drive or are you dependent on others for rides? How easily do you make friends? How do you feel about the chance of being alone without much company?

So my advice is basically to take your time to make this decision. There's no pressing reason to rush into it so go slowly and mindfully.



Enjoy your life with Enliven

Some things make for happier, healthier living, no matter what your age or ability. At Enliven, we create elder-centred communities where older people have companionship, choice and control, meaningful activity as well as quality care.

Cashmere Home
51 Helston Road, Johnsonville.
Phone: 04 477 7067

Longview Home
14 Sunrise Boulevard, Tawa.
Phone: 04 232 6842

Cashmere Heights
16 Helston Road, Johnsonville.
Phone: 04 478 9051

Huntleigh Home
221 Karori Road, Karori.
Phone: 04 464 2020

Free phone 0508 ENLIVEN or visit www.enlivencentral.org.nz

Metlink Accessible Concession



- ### 1 What is the Accessible Concession?

Wellington residents with a Total Mobility card or Blind Foundation membership card get a 50% discount off the adult Snapper fare on Metlink buses, trains and harbour ferries. If you require assistance for your travel, a carer can come with you and travel for free.
- ### 2 How do I get the discount?

For bus, you can use your Total Mobility card or red Snapper card (for Blind Foundation members) to tag on at the start of your journey and tag off at the end of your journey. Blind Foundation members can load their Snapper card with the Accessible Concession by phoning Snapper on **0800 555 345**.

The Total Mobility card is like a Snapper card that also has the Accessible Concession preloaded onto it. You will need to have some credit on your card before you can use it.

For train or ferry, there are two types of discounted tickets you can buy: a 'Concession 10-Trip' ticket that is good for regular travel and needs to be purchased prior to travel. The second type is a 'Single Child Cash' ticket good for one-time trips. Single cash tickets cost slightly more because they are rounded up to the nearest 50c.
- ### 3 How do I top up my Total Mobility or Snapper card?

Visit any designated Snapper retailer (most dairies, mini marts or local libraries), or top up your Snapper card at a Snapper kiosk or online. For more information, visit snapper.co.nz or call **0800 555 435**.
- ### 4 When can I travel using Accessible Concession?

You may travel on an Accessible Concession at any time of the day on Metlink's buses, trains and harbour ferry, except the after midnight services.
- ### 5 How 'accessible' are the buses and trains?

Most Metlink services are wheelchair accessible, and have green priority seating areas. Metlink buses have wide aisles suitable for wheelchair use with high contrast grab rails. Real Time Information signs located at bus stops will indicate whether a service is wheelchair accessible.

Talk to your local Age Concern co-ordinator, or contact us:

0800 801 700
 metlink.org.nz



Staying Hydrated

Why it's so important for us to drink and ingest enough liquid

During the height of the heatwave in February (perhaps a distant memory by now in this Autumn issue!) I came across an interesting blog* all about the importance of making sure you stay hydrated. I then consulted Dr Google and found yet more information.**

First of all, what is dehydration? Dehydration is when the body doesn't have as much fluid in its cells and blood vessels as it should. When it's low in fluid, the body should signal thirst to the brain to prompt us to have a drink. The kidneys are also then supposed to start concentrating the urine so that less fluid is lost this way.

Unfortunately these two mechanisms don't work as efficiently as they used to when we get older, so that the thirst signal doesn't get through as it should and the kidneys don't concentrate the urine as they should.

If you add into this mix of the body signals not working as they once used to things like forgetfulness, immobility, diuretics and laxatives, worry about not getting to the toilet in time, tummy upsets or being dependent on others to bring one a drink, you can see why it might not take long for dehydration to occur.

"Does this matter?" you may ask. Well yes it does because dehydration can lead to low blood pressure resulting in dizziness and falls, a sense of confusion and even a state of temporary delirium. So it's definitely best avoided as a preventable state of affairs we can manage ourselves.

So what can we do for ourselves to keep upright and mentally alert?! Obviously most of our fluid comes from drinks but about 20% comes from the food we eat. Soup, yogurt, custard, ice cream and smoothies contain liquid. Casseroles and stews cooked in liquid, or anything with an accompanying sauce or gravy contain liquid. These can be consciously added in to the diet.

Older people can find water rather dull – so how about putting a jug of water in the fridge so it's icy cold and more palatable. Or adding Water Drops to your glass of water – these come in 4 fruity flavours from the supermarket.



Sports drinks are good because they contain electrolytes, or you can make your own by dissolving ¼ to 1 teaspoon of salt in 1 ½ cups of boiling water and then adding 2 ½ cups of fruit juice and ¼ cup of lemon juice.

If the fear of having a little accident stops you drinking, seriously there are some excellent continence pads for both women and men that would soak up small amounts of urine.

These can be bought from the supermarket or the pharmacist could advise you. They might be a small price to pay for staying hydrated. And apparently, if you take a diuretic like Frusemide, you can take your daily dose when you get back from your outing rather than before you go out – but double check this with your doctor.

Offer everyone who visits a cup of tea, or get them to make one for you.

If you are visiting someone in care, make sure there is always a water jug available in their room within their reach, and encourage drinking while you're there. Some facilities have areas where visitors can make cups of tea or coffee, so utilise those. Or take in a takeaway of what used to be their favourite latte or hot chocolate and reminisce about your favourite cafes.

Does all this make you feel like something a bit stronger? There are so many new things to consider as we get older so feel free to pour yourself a wine, beer or your favourite tippie, remembering of course to stay within the safe alcohol limits for older people!***

Happy Hydrating!

Sheila Reed

*[thepurefoodco.co.nz/blogs/ask a dietician](http://thepurefoodco.co.nz/blogs/ask-a-dietician)

**betterhealthwhileaging.net

***ALAC recommends no more than 1 or 2 alcoholic drinks a day for those over 65

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Their support enables the production of this newsletter, so please support them.

FIVE Questions to Ask About Your Medications When You See Your Doctor, Nurse or Pharmacist

1. CHANGES?

Have any medications been added, stopped or changed and why?

2. CONTINUE?

What medications do I need to keep taking and why?

3. PROPER USE?

How do I take my medications and for how long?

4. MONITOR?

How will I know if my medication is working and what side effects do I watch for?

5. FOLLOW-UP?

Do I need any tests and when do I book my next visit?

Keep your medication record up to date

– remember to include:

- ✓ Drug allergies
- ✓ Vitamins and minerals
- ✓ Herbal/natural products
- ✓ All medications including non-prescription products

Ask your Doctor, Nurse or Pharmacist to review all your medications to see if any can be stopped or reduced. Visit www.hqsc.govt.nz for more information

editorial sourced from
Age Concern North Shore



Helping you make the best decisions

- Customised advice that best suits you and your loved ones needs.
- Practical help with the transition to supported care.
- In depth knowledge of local aged care services.
- We are with you each step of the way.
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"We bring our friendly service to your door providing extra help at either end of the journey as needed. For medical appointments, we make sure you get to the right place and will wait if necessary or pick you up after the appointment. Travelling with Freedom is like travelling with friends or family - you build a relationship with a driver you get to know and trust."

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For more information

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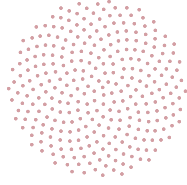
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www.freedomdrivers.co.nz

WELLELDER WORKS



WellElder is a specialist counselling service for older people in Wellington, Porirua and Kapiti.

Keeping fit for life

Keeping an active lifestyle in our older years is a key to maintaining energy and zest for life. Exercising and being physically active in a way that suits our level of mobility and fitness, helps us to maintain our health and participate fully in the things that matter to us.

The benefits of exercise for older adults are well documented, and include increased strength, improved energy, higher libido, resistance to disease and to physical accidents, improvement in chronic conditions and reduced blood pressure. In addition to physical benefits, exercise is known to enhance mood, increase focus and help with managing stress.

Older people are a diverse group in both health status and mental and physical ability, but the Ministry of Health recommends that we should stay active, even if we have health conditions. The Ministry recommends the following mix of aerobic, resistance, flexibility and balance activities for older adults:

1. Spend more time being physically active and less time sitting down. Do daily activities such as walking to the shops or washing the car.
2. Aim for at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity which makes your breathing and heart rate increase, on 5 days each week. Some examples are cycling, swimming, or brisk walking.
3. Aim for 3 sessions of flexibility and balance activities, (such as gardening, and bowls) and 2 sessions of resistance activities (such as carrying shopping) each week.
4. Speak with you doctor before starting or increasing physical activity.
5. Start off slowly and build up.

Of course, as with any age-group, fitness and health vary from person to person. Some people can be extremely active, whilst it can be difficult for others to move at all without help. If you have a health condition

or illness, it may affect how much and what you can do, but seated exercises may be an option. Physical activity does not have to be strenuous to bring benefits – in fact, it can be moderate, as long as it is regular. It is never too late to get moving in some way.

The key to finding motivation to exercise, is to find exercise that fits in to your life and that you enjoy. If you enjoy companionship, a “Steady-as-you-go” or aqua-jogging class may suit; or tramping or walking with companions through a Community walking group or tramping club, may be an option.

Gardening seems to be particularly beneficial. Dan Buettner has studied the habits of people who live in areas of the world known as “blue zones”, where residents are known for their longevity. People in these areas have certain factors in common – social support networks, daily exercise habits, a plant-based diet, and also the practice of gardening well into their 80s, 90s and beyond. It is well-known that an outdoor lifestyle with moderate physical activity is linked to longer life, and gardening combines both these things. “If you garden, you’re getting some low-intensity physical activity most days, and you tend to work routinely”, Buettner says.

Any exercise is better than none, so starting with something easy and enjoyable is key. Over time, exercise can help you maintain your balance, strength and flexibility whilst enhancing your mood. So, next time you’re feeling down, anxious, or stressed, try some movement.

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STEADY AS YOU GO PEER SUPPORT TRAINING DAY.

Age Concern Wellington run a number of Steady As You Go classes. Currently we have classes in Mount Victoria, Wellington, Johnsonville, Seatoun, Stokes Valley, Brooklyn, Eastbourne, Karori, Cuba Street, Petone and Tawa.

The programme is based on developing strength and balance and the initial classes are led for the first 10 weeks by an Age Concern Co-Ordinator. Over the weeks people within the classes are identified as potential `Peer Leaders`. This involves probably two or three people taking over the running of the classes. They will set up the room, bring along the CD, take the register (and money!) and generally run the class. Age Concern Wellington continues to offer support and will go along to classes to assess new class members and see that the courses are being run in accordance with the Age Concern guidelines.

The photograph below shows the group that met on 27th February at Wellington Central Library. The training day consisted of introductions from the different groups – although it is the same programme each group is unique in both attendance numbers, but also level of fitness. There was a questions and answer session, followed by a practical exercise going through the programme.

In the afternoon Wellington Free Ambulance did a presentation on CPR – Amy who led the class was both very amusing and gave really good advice. Everyone was given the opportunity to practice their CPR skills. Below is Lee McKenzie from Seatoun practising CPR. Many thanks to the Lloyd Morrison Foundation for providing this service.



Ann Dalziel
Community Support and Outreach Coordinator

