

# SPOTLIGHT ON OUR HEALTH

## HEALTHY AGEING

Growing older is something we should all celebrate. The wealth of skills, knowledge and wisdom that older people bring to our community is invaluable. So rather than focusing on the mental and physical decline that can come with ageing, many older members of our community are focusing on how they can remain active physically, emotionally and socially.

It's vital we stay connected to our community and loved ones, that we adapt to change, and we find new things to enjoy. Doing so helps us stay healthy and engaged in the world around us. While most older people enjoy living healthy, active and independent lives in their own homes, it is recognised that older people do, on average, have higher health needs.

As a community, we need to work together to address the health and social needs facing our region's older people by ensuring they have easy access to convenient transport, affordable healthcare, appropriate support services, and safety measures such as mobility devices and good social contact.

Whanganui District Health Board (WDHB) is encouraging older residents and their families/whānau to tap into the wealth of information and resources available and to not hesitate to ask for help when needed.

Age Concern Wanganui (**06 345 1799**) can guide older people and their families/whānau towards the many support groups we have available in Whanganui. They are certainly a good first point of contact for sourcing information and advice. Community House also keeps a comprehensive list of current organisations working in the local community to support older people.

The WDHB has many agencies offering advice and practical help for our older residents. The WDHB's website is a good starting point. If you go to [www.wdwb.org.nz](http://www.wdwb.org.nz) > Patients & Visitors > Our Services > WDHB Older People Health Services you will find the following:

- Ageing well
- How to access health services for older people
- Specialist services for older people
- What every older person should consider
- HOPE e-learning tools (for dementia, depression, anxiety and personality disorder)
- Health of Older People – Local Advisory Services
- Health of Older People – Related Links.

Another helpful resource is the Ministry of Senior Citizens' website: [superseniors.msd.govt.nz](http://superseniors.msd.govt.nz).

ElderNet publish a very good book called *Where from here*. They publish them for five regions. Whanganui is included in the publication for the lower North Island. They can be accessed from community agencies such as Age Concern, libraries and Access Ability (**0800 758 700**) as well as DHB social workers. Topics covered in the book include housing options, equipment and other support, emergency planning, scam watch, emotional wellbeing and depression, dementia, equity release, end of life planning, superannuation and financial assistance, getting help at home, retirement villages and residential care.



Russell Simpson | WDHB Chief Executive



Dot McKinnon | WDHB Board Chair

**1**  
Home  
(Self Care)

## UNWELL OR INJURED? Where should I be?

**2**  
General  
Practice (GP)  
& After Hours

- Call Healthline 0800 611 116 – for free medical advice 24hrs/day.
- Home for rest, regular fluids and pain relief, if required.
- Talk to your pharmacist – they are a good source of information.
- Contact your general practice team first.
- For urgent or after hours care, contact your general practice in the first instance for advice. Or visit the Whanganui Accident & Medical (WAM) service located at Whanganui Hospital. Open every day from 8am-9pm.
- Emergency Department for emergencies.

**3**  
Emergency (ED)

