

Our Green Prescription (GRx) team has been working non stop to service just over 330 scripts received from you all during the months of January to June alone.

The annual Green Prescription patient survey results are out and Southland is leading the way! Read on to find out more about patient satisfaction rates, changes in physical activity levels and changes in health of Green Prescription patients.

This newsletter also includes information on the latest physical activity guidelines for children and young people (page 1) as well as an overview of a Green Prescription resource for you to use – *How Active are You?* (see page 2).

This month's patient success story is Ray O'Brien (see page 2), a patient of Dr Nick Terpstra, Invercargill.

## SOUTHLAND COMES OUT ON TOP!

The annual GRx patient survey results for 2007 are out and Southland is leading the way.

Punching well above our weight, our patient satisfaction rates came out at 92% - well above the national average of 85%.

Results showed that patients thought our service was helpful, activities were appropriate, information and advice was relevant and that the support they received was motivating for them to get or stay physically active.

79% of patients reported a positive change in health after a Green Prescription – with changes including feeling stronger / fitter, weight loss, increased energy levels and general improvement in feeling well.

69% of Green Prescription patients also reported an increased amount of time spent in physical activity compared with their levels prior to receiving support from our GRx team.

## NEW ZEALAND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (5-18 YEARS)

SPARC, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, in consultation with the Ministry of Youth Development, have developed physical activity guidelines for children and young people in response to mounting international evidence.

The evidence has consistently shown the need to develop specific physical activity guidelines for children and young people in order to gain health benefits, as well as providing direction about what the minimum levels of physical activity should be.

"The evidence on this topic is relatively new, but overwhelming," said Deb Hurdle, SPARC's Push Play Manager. "Increased physical activity levels in children and young people lead to improved physical and mental health.

The guidelines are as follows:

"New Zealand children and young people should:

- throughout each day, do 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity;
- be active in as many ways as possible; for example, through play, cultural activities, dance, sport and recreation, jobs, and going from place to place;
- be active with friends and whanau, at home, school, and in your community; and
- spend less than 2hrs a day (out of school time) in front of tv, computers and game consoles."

One way Sport Southland is helping to promote physical activity in this age group is through our Active Families HYPE programme. This targets young people aged between 5 – 12 year olds. It uses whanau and family as role models while providing positive experiences in both nutrition and physical activity.

Find out more about our Active Families HYPE Programme on [www.sportsouthland.co.nz](http://www.sportsouthland.co.nz)

## A reason to get up and get going

Ray O'Brien fell victim to a knee replacement 2 years ago.

As Ray convalesced, he became more and more sedentary. This was especially tough for a father of nine, who had been physically active all his life.

Ray was house-bound, his hips were painful from the constant sitting and he struggled to find the energy to get up in the morning. At times he was struggling to walk, let alone get back onto the bowling green and enjoy his sport. Ray's confidence was knocked badly.

Ray admits, that as you get older, you start to 'shuffle' rather than lift your feet. He attributes this to the fear of falling, and the stiffness through lack of use of the joints.

As a follow-up to his knee replacement, Ray visited his GP, Dr Nick Terpstra, who suggested that a Green Prescription would be of great assistance to regaining his independence.

Ann Robbie from Sport Southland's Green Prescription team, made contact with Ray. With Ann's encouragement, Ray signed up for Sport Southland's Movement for Health (Modified Tai Chi) classes, which are funded by ACC.

Ray is full of praise for the Green Prescription Programme. "Sport Southland deserves a huge pat on the back for the work they do outside of the sport area".

Within a short time, Ray's friends and family noticed a huge improvement in his mobility. His wife Val has now joined the Movement for Health classes so she can keep up with him. Val and Ray thoroughly enjoy the classes, "You laugh lots, but best of all it gives you a reason to get up and going. It's one of the best things we have ever done and we look forward to each and every day. Our son Paddy has actually regularly commented about the huge improvement that physical activity has made to our lives."

Ray's confidence is back, he's up early each morning and, best of all, he's playing bowls again!

Ray's advice to anyone out there contemplating the future... **Use it or Lose it!**

*Consent given to publish story*



## HOW ACTIVE ARE YOU?

### RESOURCE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR PATIENTS



To find out how active you are tick one of the boxes below that best describes your current amount and level of physical activity.

**Q** Are you "regularly physically active" according to the definition shown here?

- No, and I don't intend to be in the next 6 months
- No, but I am thinking about starting to be in the next 6 months
- No, but I intend to begin in the next month
- Yes, I am but only began in the last 6 months
- Yes, I am and have been for more than 6 months

**Q** If you ticked numbers 2 or 3 above, would you like help getting active?

Yes, I would like help to get active

**Hold onto this form!**

Give it to your GP or Practice Nurse during your next consultation and ask for a **FREE** Green Prescription.

- You will be contacted by a Green Prescription Support person in your area
- You choose your activity and we help you develop an activity plan that fits into your lifestyle - either on your own or in a group
- We keep in contact with you over a 3-4 month period
- We help you set realistic goals to get you on your way to a more active lifestyle
- We help you to overcome your barriers to physical activity
- We send you a newsletter every 3 months
- We report your progress to your GP or Practice Nurse

**Regular Physical Activity**  
Means at least 15 minutes of **vigorous activity**, or a total of 30 minutes or more of **moderate activity** each day for 5 or more days each week.

**'Vigorous' activity** includes things like jogging, fast cycling, vigorous waka ama, oe vaka, aerobic classes and swimming laps. Any activity that makes you breathe a lot harder than normal (huff and puff) and lasts 20 minutes at a time should be counted.

**'Moderate' activity** includes things like brisk walking, gardening, slow cycling, dancing or hard work around the house. Any activity that makes you breathe a little harder than normal and that lasts 10 minutes or more should be counted.

**SPARC**  
Te Rongoa Kōkiri  
**Green Prescription**  
Pharmaceutical Management Agency

These are pads that sit in your practice reception areas and allow your patients to fill in their details in their own time.

How Active Are You is designed for your patients to help them identify their own readiness for change. This identification will help you to assess whether your patient is ready for a Green Prescription!

To order please contact:

Sport Southland  
0800 ACTIVE or (03) 211 2150

[www.sportsouthland.co.nz](http://www.sportsouthland.co.nz)



**PUSH PLAY**