

# Health Of Older People

CONSUMER REFERENCE GROUP NEWSLETTER

March 2016



## Health of Older People Strategy

On 25 November 2015, Joel Gapes and Amanda Hinkley from the Ministry of Health (MOH) facilitated a seminar at the New Plymouth District Council Chambers for residents of the Taranaki region. The purpose of the seminar was to seek feedback for the National Health of Older People Strategy Review.

The seminar was well attended by approximately 50 people who were asked by MOH for their views on:

1. What health services and supports are working well?
2. What are some of the difficulties that older people have with health services? What isn't working well?
3. What changes or improvements do you think would make a difference to your health, and the services older people receive? What new things would you like to see?

The attendees gave detailed responses and examples, providing MOH with the information to inform the development of the Strategy Review. Common themes for improvement included access to transport, elective surgery and GPs. Attendees also praised the work of the Needs Assessment Coordination Service (NASC) in addition to the service provided by our Emergency Department.

Part Two of the Strategy Review has recently commenced and will continue until late-March and involves further engagement with consumers. Two members of the Health of Older People Consumer Reference Group, Margaret Vickers and Mary Garlick attended the workshop in Palmerston North to provide further feedback to the Ministry.

It is expected the National Strategy will be available mid 2016. Once this has been published, Taranaki Portfolio Manager Older People, Channa Perry, will turn her focus to the development of the regional strategy which will align with the National approach.

### Meeting Schedule for the remainder of 2016

Stratford District Council Mayoral Chamber 10.30am – 12noon	Taranaki Base Hospital Corporate Meeting Room 1 10.30am – 12noon
Tuesday 5 April <i>Outpatient Transport to Waikato - Rosemary Clements in attendance</i>	Tuesday 3 May <i>Alcohol-related Harm - Jason Matthews and Jill Nicholls (Health Protection Unit)</i>
Tuesday 7 June	Tuesday 5 July
Tuesday 2 August	Tuesday 6 September
Tuesday 4 October	Tuesday 1 November
Tuesday 6 December	

New members with an interest in health of older people are welcome. For further information contact Carly Innes – Associate Portfolio Manager Older People on [carly.innes@tdhb.org.nz](mailto:carly.innes@tdhb.org.nz) or 06 753 7777 ext. 8618.



## Utilisation of Pharmacists:

Our visits to the pharmacists to obtain and/or renew our medications, is a great time to learn and ask questions.

This should never be seen as taking up time, as we are being responsible for our own health.

It makes good sense to plan with our medication collection at the pharmacy.



- 1 Ask what the medication is for.** Did you know that you can ask for a printed information sheet on your medications to take home with you? The sheet provided includes the side effects and adverse risk of drugs. (You may have to phone ahead for this to save time.)
- 2 If you have many medications to take,** you may be given the chance to have a private session with the pharmacist, to see where drugs can be reduced or better choices made for you personally.
- 3 Safety is a big issue with medication.** Where we store them, how we take them and keeping to the correct time of day and dosage is important. Various safety features are established to overcome risks in taking medications and keep you safe. How can you improve safety with medication?
- 4 Should you need time with the pharmacist,** why not ring ahead, so you can visit at a less busy time in their day and have your discussion.
- 5 Pharmacists are a great resource for you.** Ask their advice on what to use for minor conditions and save that doctor's appointment and money. Pharmacists know the best and latest substance to use for such ailments.

So P.L.A.N. with your medication and your pharmacist. Be a wise kiwi!

*By Agnes Lehrke*