



AGE
CONCERN
PALMERSTON
NORTH & DISTRICTS

He Manaakitanga
Kaumātua Aotearoa

Age Concern Palmerston North & Districts

Tech Drop-in Sessions | Housing Advice Centre | What's On?
Manawatū Multicultural Council | Live Stronger for Longer



Message from our Manager

Welcome to the Spring magazine from Age Concern Palmerston North and Districts. In this issue of our magazine, we continue our focus on local activities and services. We also provide an update on changes for driver re-licensing, highlight our elder abuse response service, and take a look at the importance of healthy bones for older adults.

At Age Concern (the clue is in the name!) it is easy to focus solely on the problems and issues experienced by older people. To counter this tendency, we have introduced a new magazine section called Super Stars! Our first Super Star, Tania Kopytko, shows us that ageing can also bring challenge and fun and achievement!

As we move into Spring the country is increasingly focused on the upcoming General Election on Saturday 7 November. In the last Magazine I summarised the Age Concern New Zealand position statements on ageism, housing, affordability, community support, healthcare, and investment in support for older people. These issues all remain front-of-mind for all of us at Age Concern. You can read more about what we want our potential representatives to consider here: ageconcern.org.nz/our-impact/position-statements

There has already been a flurry of election-related news. Alongside worrying trends in inflation and the cost of living, we have also seen politicking on



immigration, local rates, unemployment, and a variety of human rights and wellbeing issues.

Whatever your political persuasion, it is important to be informed and understand what the various parties have to offer. This is especially true in an MMP environment where political parties will need to compromise to achieve their aspirations when in government.

Thanks to those of you who have been in touch with feedback and suggestions (and please see the feedback form in this magazine if you have more to share!). You are always welcome to email or phone to introduce yourself or have a chat. My email is Julie.macdonald@ageconcernpn.org.nz and the number at Age Concern is 06 355 2832.

Ngā mihi

Handwritten signature of Julie Macdonald.

Julie Macdonald - Manager

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Feilding Farmers Market - ManawatuNZ.co.nz

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Age Concern Palmerston North & Districts. The inclusion of any product or service does not mean that Age Concern Palmerston North & Districts advocates or endorses it.

Tech drop-in at Age Concern

Earlier this year Age Concern developed a partnership with Digits Charitable Trust to hold Tech-drop-in sessions at our Age Concern offices. Each fortnight Digits volunteers come along to help older people with their questions about phones, laptops, printers, and whatever else they need support with.

Bronwyn Ewens is the Manager of Digits and says "our goal is to support anyone who needs help with digital technology. We know that there is a lot to understand, and not everyone has people to go to for help."

There has been a steady interest in the sessions, which also provide the volunteers with opportunities to develop their skills in working with older people with a range of needs.

Some attendees have come along once with one specific question, and others have returned several times to improve their knowledge and confidence.

So far, attendees have asked for help with email, QR codes, passwords, photos, sharing files, texts, YouTube, various apps, software updates, sharing data, access to devices, installing printers, and basic functions for phones.

Feedback on the sessions has been overwhelmingly positive, with comments including:

"This was worthwhile for a tech-phobe"

"They were so patient"

"A huge thank you to [the Digits volunteer] for his patience and help. I am keen to come back. It is good to be able to build a rapport"

"The guys were easy to talk to"

"It helped me get on the right track"

"They gave me time to take notes and access the help myself"

"Will be back!"

"This was exceptionally helpful"

"Kind, friendly, knowledgeable"

If you or someone you know needs some support with digital technology, please come along to our drop-in sessions from 9.30am-12pm at Age Concern on Vivian Street.

- September 10 and 24
- October 8 and 22
- November 5 and 19



General Election

Saturday 7 November, 2026

To vote in a general election you need to be enrolled by midnight, 13 days before Election Day. For the 2026 General Election this means you can't enrol or update your details after midnight, 25 October 2026.

EasyVote card

If you enrol or update your details by 4 October, the Electoral Commission will send you an EasyVote card. You don't need an EasyVote card to vote, but if you take it with you, it makes voting faster and easier.

If we have your email address, you'll receive the card by email. If we just have your postal address or you are on the unpublished roll, it will be sent by post. **This is a change from other election years.**



As well as your EasyVote card, the email or letter will include a list of your electorate candidates.

You'll be able to find your closest voting place and the party lists on **vote.nz**.

Older Persons Rainbow Support Group

Kirsty Henderson (She/Her) the Community Outreach Coordinator for MaLGRA is working towards establishing a Rainbow Support Group for older people aged 50 and over.

This group will provide a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space where LGBTQIA+ individuals can come together, share their experiences, and support one another.

To express your interest or offer suggestions on venues and meeting times please email **outreach@malgra.org.nz**

MaLGRA

Manawatū Lesbian and Gay Rights Association

Hancock Community House
King Street, Palmerston North



Tania Kopytko – living to dance

According to Tania Kopytko, “you have to have a reason to get out of bed in the morning”, and Tania’s reason is dance.

Tania was born in Palmerston North into a small but tightknit community of people who came to New Zealand after World War II as displaced persons. Her heritage is Belarussian and New Zealand. Tania’s parents were dance-enthusiasts and supported her to study ballet and other forms of dance.

Tania left the city to study in Belfast in Northern Ireland, where she gained a PhD in anthropology of dance. Tania returned to Palmerston North in the late 1980s, and for a decade she was the city’s first Community Arts Adviser. One of the



projects she initiated was the Over 50s Dance Group, now run by Val Bolter. Tania did further work overseas, returning to New Zealand in 2004. She and her husband then moved south to Wellington, where Tania was the CEO of national dance service organisation DANZ for a further decade.

Since she was a child, Tania has lived and breathed all forms of dance and made it the centre of her life. She has taught dance wherever she has gone and is an advocate and enthusiast for all forms of dance. Just talking with Tania makes me want to sit up a little straighter – she is a living advertisement for keeping moving, whatever your age.

At 70, Tania teaches five dance classes each week. One of these is DanceXercise for mature women, which blends dance with strength, posture, and flexibility. Tania emphasises the importance of exercising the whole body and mind. She says dance is a holistic way to do this.

Tania also teaches the Crows Feet performing group. This weekly class works develops performances to tackle weighty topics, including climate change and fast fashion. Tania says dance is a wonderful way to tell stories about things that matter.

Tania's other classes range from gentle chair-based movement for arthritis and people with mobility issues, to the lively Vinok Ukrainian dance group, who support humanitarian aid for Ukraine.

Throughout all these activities is a theme of learning and continuing to adapt to changing circumstances and new challenges. Tania says she has every intention of carrying on doing what's she's doing: "You never stop learning. It's like a puzzle, how can I best respond to the people I work with? It's what they deserve".

Tania is the Super Star for this issue of our magazine. We hope you enjoyed her story.

If you are interested in any of the opportunities to dance, you can contact Tania at [**taniaasgmovement@gmail.com**](mailto:taniaasgmovement@gmail.com)

Photo credits: Rob Edwards and Tania Kopytko



Cognitive testing for senior drivers

Introduction

The NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) and the Office for Seniors recently commissioned a report to improve the understanding the utility of cognitive assessment within medical office-based driving assessment process. The report was prepared by Professor Ngaire Kerse and Dr Ruth Teh, Department of General Practice and Primary Health Care, of the University of Auckland.

The full research report is available on our website under the ***ageconcernpn.org.nz/news*** heading.

The following is a summary of what the research means for older drivers in the assessment process.

What senior drivers can expect

- Older drivers can expect to see a shift away from routine screening for cognitive impairment when attending for assessment of fitness to drive.
- It is best to see a health professional from your usual practice, who knows you and your medical history well for your fitness to drive assessment.
- If the general practitioner or nurse practitioner providing your assessment doesn't know you well, they may screen for cognitive impairment if they don't have enough information available to be certain there is no impairment.

- If screening identifies cognitive impairment, then there will be further assessment to decide if this affects your driving, this might be an on-road safety test or an occupational therapy driving assessment.

You can find the on road safety test guide here:

www.nzta.govt.nz/driver-licences/renewing-replacing-and-updating/renewing-for-seniors/on-road-safety-test-guide

The link to the occupational therapy driving assessment is here:

www.nzta.govt.nz/driver-licences/getting-a-licence/medical-requirements/occupational-therapy-assessments

What health practitioners might discuss with older drivers

- Safe driving depends on many factors – memory, attention, vision, physical abilities, reaction time and overall health. We look at these areas all together, not just one test result.
- Tests of thinking and memory can help spot concerns, but they don't tell the whole story about your ability to drive safely. We also consider your medical history, vision, physical abilities, and feedback from family or support people.
- If there's uncertainty about your safety on the road based on the tests we do here at the clinic, an on-road safety test is the best way to check your current driving skills. This gives us the most accurate picture of your driving ability.
- Driving is important for independence. If changes are needed, clinicians will

discuss alternative transport options and support you through any transitions. We understand how important driving is for you, and we'll help you explore other options if needed.

- The decision regarding fitness to drive is a clinical one, bound by statutory responsibilities. Your input and preferences matter in this process. We want to make decisions that are fair and safe.

FAQs for senior drivers

Why is my doctor talking to me about driving?

As we get older, changes in health, vision, and thinking can affect driving safety. Your doctor's goal is to keep you and others safe on the road while supporting your independence.

Does one test decide if I can keep driving?

No. Driving safely depends on many things such as memory, attention, vision, physical ability, and overall health. We look at all these areas together, not just one test result.

What happens if I do a memory or thinking test?

These tests can help spot concerns, but they don't tell the whole story about your driving ability. Your doctor will also consider your medical history, vision, physical abilities, and feedback from family or support people.

What if my doctor is unsure about my driving safety?

If there's any uncertainty, the best way to check is an on-road safety test or occupational therapy driving assessment. This gives the most accurate picture of your current driving skills.

Will I lose my licence if I have a health condition?

Not necessarily. Many people with health conditions can still drive safely. Decisions are made based on your overall health and driving ability, not just a diagnosis.

What if I can't keep driving?

We understand that driving is important for your independence. If changes are needed, your doctor will talk with you about other transport options and support you through any transitions. If you are not fit to drive your health practitioner is legally required to inform NZTA of this in writing.

There is information on NZTA's website about alternatives to driving:

www.nzta.govt.nz/driving-skills/senior-drivers/if-you-dont-want-to-drive-any-more

Can I have a say in the decision?

Decisions are made based on your overall health and driving ability. Health practitioners consider information from you, and fitness to drive assessments.

If you are unsure about the assessment process then talk with your doctor or give us a call at Age Concern.



Live Stronger for Longer

Community Strength and Balance

The Live Stronger for Longer (LSFL) programme supports older adults to stay active, healthy, and independent through strength and balance exercises, bone health promotion, and falls prevention. The programme is built around an important message: falls are not a normal part of ageing. There are simple, evidence-based ways to reduce the risk of falling, maintain confidence, and continue enjoying everyday activities.

Through the Live Stronger for Longer website (www.livestronger.org.nz), everyone can find an ACC – approved Community Strength and Balance class that suits their needs and ability level. Classes are available across three levels:

- Level 1 supports people who may use a walking aid, have reduced mobility, strength, or balance, or feel unsure about participating in physical activity
- Level 2 is suitable for those who can walk independently, move around comfortably, have average strength and balance, and feel confident taking part in exercise
- Level 3 is designed for people with a good level of fitness, strong mobility, and confidence with more challenging activities

For those who prefer exercising at home, Nymbly is a free balance training app designed for adults aged 50 years and over. Using a smartphone or tablet, adults can complete just 10 minutes of activity each day, combining simple body movements with brain-training games to help improve balance and reduce the risk of falls. Nymbly requires no special equipment and can be completed from the comfort of home. The app also includes Nymbly Bladder, a personalised programme that combines pelvic floor exercises, bladder training, and lifestyle advice to support bladder health, control, and confidence in daily activities.

Community Strength and Balance classes

Community Strength and Balance (CSB) classes are about much more than exercise, they are about connection, confidence, and staying steady on your feet. These ACC – approved classes help improve mobility, increase confidence, and reduce the risk of falls. CSB classes also provide a welcoming environment where people can meet others, build friendships, and encourage each other while working towards better health and independence.

There are a wide variety of ACC – approved Community Strength and Balance classes available, including aquatic programmes, Tai Chi, dance, chair yoga and Pilates, circuit training, Steady as You Go, and traditional strength and

balance classes using hand weights, resistance bands, and bodyweight exercises. Age Concern Palmerston North and Districts offers Steady as You Go, a Level 1 class with seated and standing exercises designed for those who need extra support with strength, balance, or mobility, and Shake, Rattle 'n' Roll, a fun Level 2 dance-based class that combines music, movement, and exercise. Whatever your starting point, there is a class to help you move with confidence while enjoying the physical, social, and emotional benefits of staying active.



Fun Day Friday

Fun Day Friday (Age Concern LS4L Promotion) is all about bringing older adults together, trying something new, and adding a little extra fun to staying active. These events complement Live Stronger for Longer and Community Strength and Balance classes by creating opportunities for participants to socialise, connect with others, and take part in activities they may not have experienced before. They are a great reminder that exercise can be enjoyable, inclusive, and a wonderful way to strengthen community connections.

We have already held two Fun Day Friday events this year, on 13th March and 29th May, with participants enjoying the opportunity to connect, laugh, and participate in new activities. There are two more events planned for this year:

- 4th September, featuring indoor bowls and a chair yoga CSB taster class
- 27th November, including aqua activities

Live Stronger for Longer, Community Strength and Balance, and Fun Day Friday, continue to support older adults to stay active, build confidence, reduce the risk of falls, and remain connected within their communities.

For more information contact Adele O'Byrne at Age Concern at adele.obyrne@ageconcernpn.org.nz or (06) 355 2832.

Worrying about our future generations

I am very lucky to have five healthy, talented, active, teenage grandchildren all living in Wellington. But I worry about their future. Maybe grandparents have always worried, (for example mine worried about me when the Beatles suddenly became famous all with long hair, as they thought I might let my hair grow long too!).

Given the current problems we have on planet Earth, maybe for today's senior citizens, there is greater cause to worry about what is in store for the future generations.

The changing climate is of grave concern

Over-riding the concerns many of us have around the future of democracy, politics, Trump, Putin, China, social media, AI (artificial intelligence), food supply systems, water quality, biodiversity, health services etc., the main concern that I have revolves around Climate Change.

Below is the view of the authoritative Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change:

We are certain there is a man-made greenhouse effect. Emissions from human activities are substantially increasing the atmospheric concentrations of the greenhouse gases carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane and nitrous oxide. These increases will result, on average, in an additional warming of the surface of the Earth. We calculate with confidence that CO₂ has been responsible for over half the enhanced greenhouse warming effect.

Long-lived gases including CO₂ will require immediate reductions in emissions from human activities of over 60% to stabilise their concentrations at today's levels.

This is actually a quote taken from the "Summary for Policymakers" of the IPCC's First Scientific Assessment Report in 1990 – 36 years ago!

Since those clear words of warning were published, few policy-makers have taken notice and global annual greenhouse gas emissions have since risen by well over 50%. Therefore, it is no wonder that I am worried about climate change, as we are certainly experiencing more floods, droughts, forest fires and sea level rise, not only in New Zealand, but all around the world. This is exactly what the scientific analysis predicted. It is also the main reason why the costs of insuring our houses, commercial buildings, and businesses have drastically increased, and in some locations houses and infrastructure have become uninsurable.

Increasing damage to buildings and infrastructure as a result of sea level rise

Of course, there have always been major extreme weather events as many climate deniers correctly point out. However, what was once defined as a "1 in a 100-year event" has become, as predicted, far more frequent and intense.

So, who pays for all the damage being regularly imposed by floods, storms, droughts, related fires and increased sea levels on our houses, buildings, roads, infrastructure, and farms? This has yet to be determined.

Owners of properties, those paying rates to local governments, those paying taxes and GST to the national government, and insurance companies, may all have to share the huge costs involved from climate events due to increased damage. In addition, New Zealanders will have to pay for adaptations to climate change threats by investing in projects designed to increase resilience. The longer we put off such investments, the higher the costs will be for future generations who, somehow, will have to pay.

So, what can us older members of society do to help with the problem?

We may not expect to experience the worst aspects of climate change during our remaining lifetimes, but reducing our

own greenhouse gas emissions will help reduce the risks that will impact on future generations. Even small things can help, like replacing incandescent light bulbs with more efficient ones¹; reducing the hot water temperature if above 60°C; filling up dishwashers and washing machines before turning them on; not heating rooms where nobody goes; avoiding food waste; eating less animal protein (milk and meat products involve far higher greenhouse gas emissions than gaining the same nutrition from vegetable products); driving a car more smoothly to save petrol or diesel by avoiding major acceleration and braking; checking the tyre pressures; and taking public transport and walking short distances, where feasible, so as not to rely totally on the car. These, and many other simple examples, can reduce your carbon footprint but also can save you money.



Some of us can also aid our whānau to reduce their carbon footprints, for example by encouraging our children and grand-children to turn the lights off when they leave a room; to only fill a kettle to provide just enough hot water as needed; and even help pay for bicycles and E-bikes for them to use, or to help insulate their homes to reduce heat loss in winter and avoid over-heating in summer.

There is currently a lot of interest in adding solar panels to a house in order to reduce electricity bills. I did this on my house several years ago and, as a result, have received a far higher return on investment than if I had put the \$10,000 involved in Kiwisaver or a term deposit.

Charging my electric car gives added benefits - instead of electricity surplus to my house demand being sold to my power company, I put it into my car batteries. It then costs me only around \$3.20 for "fuel" to drive from Palmerston North to Wellington and return.

Helping whānau add solar panels to their own house is also an option for those willing and in a suitable financial position to do so (and to give a part of their inheritance early). Evidence shows adding solar panels often adds to the saleable value of a house and potential buyer interest. There are also stand-alone, mobile, solar systems coming on to the market more suitable for rental properties so that they can be relatively easily moved from house to house.

¹ [Note that our electricity system is already around 85-90% low-carbon renewable generation. So saving electricity will reduce our power bills but will have a lower carbon reduction benefit than if directly reducing demands for natural gas or vehicle fuels.]

Domestic solar systems

It should be noted that not all house roofs are suitable for solar panels (ideally sloping around 20-40 degrees, facing north, and not excessively shaded by neighbouring trees or buildings). Also, the best return on investment comes when homeowners can use many of their electric appliances during the daytime when the sun is shining. As a simple example, I have put a timer on my deep freezer so that, when a freezing top-up is needed, it only turns on between the hours of 10am to 4pm.

Buying a battery for storing the electricity generated in the daytime for use in the evening is an option, but although battery prices have declined in recent years, it can be an expensive option. Power generated in the daytime, that is excessive to the demand at that time, can also be used to heat water and hence save on electricity heating bills.

In summary

In spite of 194 countries signing the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement and committing to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in order to hold "the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C", our planet is already close to exceeding this level. Politicians, including in New Zealand, who now say that this is a greater challenge than anticipated and that their country only emits a small proportion of total global emissions anyway so reducing them will make little difference, are so wrong.



Staying within the planetary boundary of 1.5°C requires all nations, citizens, and businesses to reduce their carbon footprints, with a higher commitment required by those living in developed countries such as New Zealand. Given we have been cutting down native forests, burning coal and gas, and driving petrol and diesel vehicles for well over a century, and that the resulting CO₂ emitted stays in the atmosphere and warms the planet for hundreds of years, our historic as well as present annual emissions per person are far higher in NZ than for those living in many other countries.

So, to give greater hope for future generations, including my grandchildren, there is an urgent need for everyone, including senior citizens, to play a major part in solving the problem by aiming for a lower personal carbon footprint by changing our behaviour, investing in new low-carbon technologies, and encouraging friends and whānau to do the same.

Ralph E. H. Sims CNZM CRSNZ
 Professor Emeritus, Sustainable Energy
 and Climate Mitigation
 Massey University

Contact us for more info
P: 06 355 2832
E: info@ageconcernpn.org.nz
4/251 Broadway Ave
Palmerston North

What's on at Age Concern?

Palmerston North & Districts



September

- 01 TUE** **Men's Group**
1.30pm - 3.30pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 02 WED** **In Knit Together - Knitting/craft group**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 04 FRI** **Fun Day Friday - Live Stronger for Longer**
1pm - 2:15pm | Barber Hall
- 08 TUE** **Tea & Talks**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 10 THU** **Tech drop-in - Digital literacy sessions**
9.30am - 12pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 10 THU** **Staying Safe Driver Refresher - Feilding**
10am - 2pm | Call or email to register
- 15 TUE** **Men's Group**
1.30pm - 3.30pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 16 WED** **In Knit Together - Knitting/craft group**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 22 TUE** **Tea & Talks**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 24 THU** **Tech drop-in - Digital literacy sessions**
9.30am - 12pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- WEEKLY MONDAY** **Kōrero & Kai - Social connection in Halcombe**
11am - 1.30pm | Halcombe Community Hall
- WEEKLY TUE & WED** **Shake, Rattle 'n' Roll - Dance exercise class**
1.30pm - 2.30pm | Community Leisure Centre, PN
- WEEKLY MON - FRI** **Steady As You Go - Strength & Balance classes**
See back page for all times and locations

October

- 01 THU** **International Day For Older Persons**
The Age of Longevity: Rethinking systems for Longer Lives
- 06 TUE** **Men's Group - Pub Lunch**
1.30pm - 3.30pm | The Hilltop, Palmerston North
- 07 WED** **In Knit Together - Knitting/craft group**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 08 THU** **Tech drop-in - Digital literacy sessions**
9.30am - 12pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 13 TUE** **Tea & Talks**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 20 TUE** **Men's Group**
1.30pm - 3.30pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 21 WED** **In Knit Together - Knitting/craft group**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 22 THU** **Tech drop-in - Digital literacy sessions**
9.30am - 12pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 22 THU** **Staying Safe Driver Refresher - Ashhurst**
10am - 2pm | Call or email to register
- 27 TUE** **Tea & Talks**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- WEEKLY MONDAY** **Kōrero & Kai - Social connection in Halcombe**
11am - 1.30pm | Halcombe Community Hall
- WEEKLY TUE & WED** **Shake, Rattle 'n' Roll - Dance exercise class**
1.30pm - 2.30pm | Community Leisure Centre, PN
- WEEKLY MON - FRI** **Steady As You Go - Strength & Balance classes**
See back page for all times and locations

November

- 03 TUE** **Men's Group**
1.30pm - 3.30pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 04 WED** **In Knit Together - Knitting/craft group**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 05 THU** **Tech drop-in - Digital literacy sessions**
9.30am - 12pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 10 TUE** **Tea & Talks**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 17 TUE** **Men's Group**
1.30pm - 3.30pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 18 WED** **In Knit Together - Knitting/craft group**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 19 THU** **Tech drop-in - Digital literacy sessions**
9.30am - 12pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 24 TUE** **Tea & Talks**
1pm - 3pm | Age Concern Meeting Rooms
- 27 FRI** **Fun Day Friday - Live Stronger for Longer**
1pm - 2:15pm | Lido Aquatic Centre
- WEEKLY MONDAY** **Kōrero & Kai - Social connection in Halcombe**
11am - 1.30pm | Halcombe Community Hall
- WEEKLY TUE & WED** **Shake, Rattle 'n' Roll - Dance exercise class**
1.30pm - 2.30pm | Community Leisure Centre, PN
- WEEKLY MON - FRI** **Steady As You Go - Strength & Balance classes**
See back page for all times and locations



Housing Advice Centre

Occasionally a person in their sixties, seventies (or even older) will come to Housing Advice Centre looking for advice to help get a new rental – sometimes after more than a decade in one place.

Often they may not be that familiar with the new computer-based system for applying to view or rent a property. We can help with this: we can show people how to use their phone to set up a profile on Renti or Tenancy Portal.

They can also talk to the relevant real estate firm who will often accept a written application. Sometimes I think the personal approach works best although this can vary by the Tenancy Manager or the person in charge of the rental-viewing.

In my experience older people have good social and presentation skills and tend to do well when talking to the landlord or Tenancy Manager. It pays to have a reference from previous landlords along with how long they were there. References from friends, past employers, or community contacts (volunteer position?) also help. Plus they will need to see the applicant's I.D. such as a driving licence. It also helps if the applicant can share details about your income so the landlord knows you can afford the rent.



The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) can give a statement showing what rent can be afforded – this includes a copy of how much Superannuation, Accommodation Supplement, Winter payment, and Temporary Additional Support is available. MSD can also set up an appointment so you can apply for social housing. MSD can help with bond, rent in advance and moving costs – although they will want this paid back. Terms and conditionals apply for government help – including that you cannot have more than \$8,100 or \$16,200 in savings to get the Accommodation supplement.

MSD can provide a Tenancy Cost Cover letter. This gives than landlord another four weeks cover in addition to the bond if the tenant leaves owing more than four weeks rent. This really helps when looking.

If you live in Palmerston North, ring the Council to apply for Palmerston North City Council Housing. There is a waiting list.

Sometimes people will have other problems that make getting a rental more difficult. The Tenancy Manager will do a check on applicants – including their Facebook, and credit rating plus any other publicly available information about them. When there is a problem it is worth getting help from a support agency which can then be named in the rental application. Often I introduce people to Moneywise (There is also Financial

Freedom) or to another agency who can help. I think it is worth mentioning support agencies as this lets the landlord know that the applicant has help to manage their life and rental obligations.

You can come and visit us at Housing Advice Centre in Hancock Community House. We're open from 10 to 3pm Monday to Friday and although we take appointments many people just pop in.

Nigel Fitzpatrick
Service Coordinator
Housing Advice Centre



Bones, joints, and muscles

This article is by Healthify He Puna Waiora. It is the third in our series about 'normal' ageing and when you should seek medical advice.

As you get older your body changes, which affects your body systems and organs.

These changes happen because of damage to your cells which builds up over time. Gradually your ability to do things mentally and physically slows down and your risk of illnesses gets higher. These changes are not only to do with your age in years, but also the places you've lived and the people and events in your life.

Here's what's happening in different parts of your body as you age, and what you can do to stay fit and healthy for longer.

Bones tend to shrink and lose their density, meaning they become less strong and can break more easily. You might notice you're not as tall as you used to be. Joints repair more slowly. Muscles lose strength and become less flexible impacting on your co-ordination, balance and stability.

It will help if you:

- Get plenty of calcium
 - good sources of calcium include dairy foods such as milk, yoghurt and cheese

- other food sources include calcium fortified milks – such as soy milk – leafy green vegetables and some nuts
- Get enough vitamin D
 - Vitamin D is sometimes called the sunshine vitamin because we make it when the sun shines on our skin
 - it can also be found in some foods like fish and eggs
 - it can also be taken as a supplement
- Stay physically active including weight-bearing exercise
- Don't smoke and limit alcohol

Osteoporosis (kōiwi ngoikore) is a condition where your bones are thinner and weaker than normal, which means they can break more easily. It happens because your bones lose important minerals and so they become less dense.

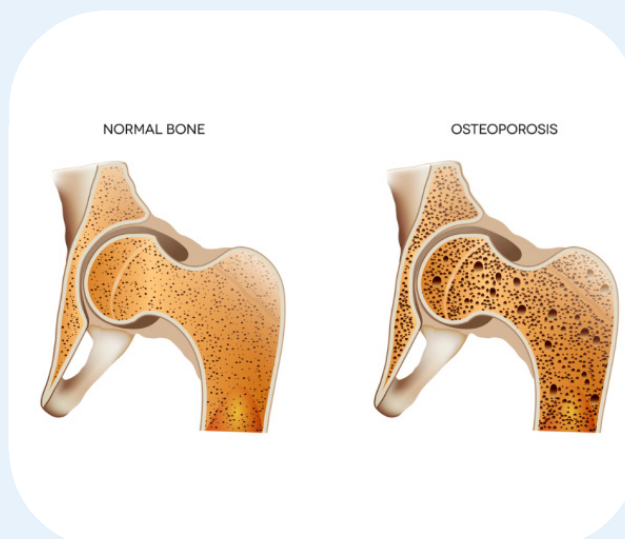


Image credit: Depositphotos

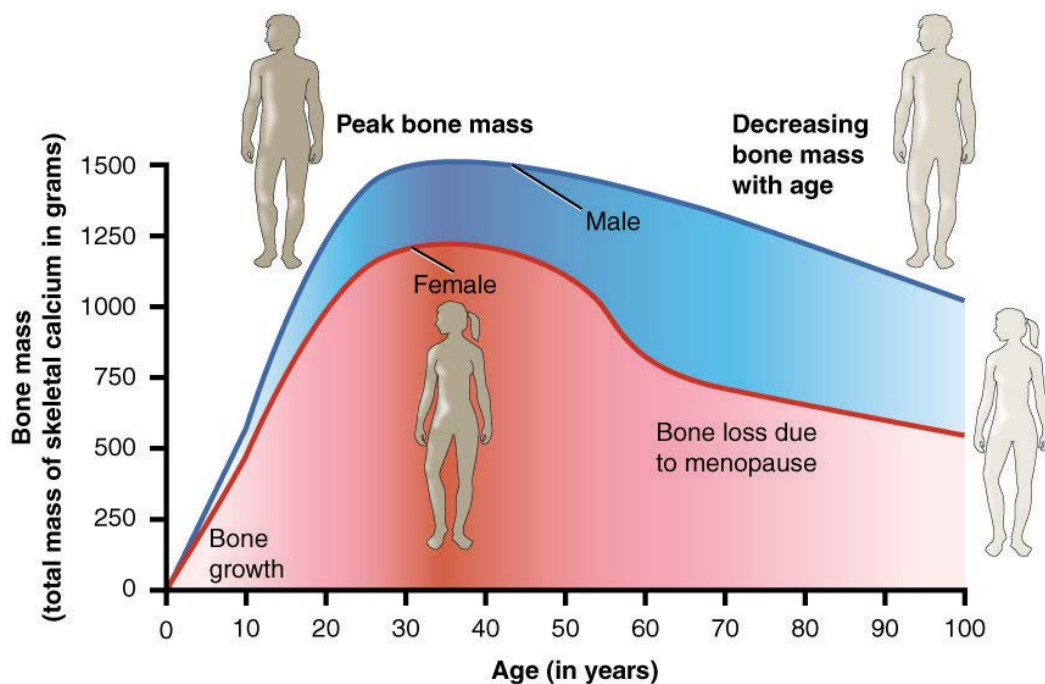


Image credit: Anatomy & Physiology Connections via Wikimedia Commons

You may not know you have osteoporosis until you break a bone. Osteoporosis is the main cause of broken bones (fractures) in postmenopausal women and older men. Fractures are most likely to happen in your hips, the vertebrae of your spine and your wrists, but other bones can break as a result of low bone density.

Osteoporosis affects more than half of women and about one third of men over 60 years, as well as some younger people.

What causes osteoporosis?

Bone is a living tissue, and your body is always breaking down old bone and rebuilding new bone. You gain bone by building more than you lose.

- Bones contain the protein collagen and minerals, such as calcium and phosphorus, that make the collagen hard and dense.
- For healthy bone density (to keep your bones strong), your body needs enough calcium and other minerals and certain levels of hormones, including oestrogen in women and testosterone in men.
- Your body also needs vitamin D so you can absorb calcium from food and build it into your bones.
- Physical activity (especially weight-bearing exercise) also helps your bones become denser and stronger.

Your bones grow more and more dense until about the age of 30. After about the age of 40, your bone breaks down slightly faster than it's replaced, and your bones slowly become less dense. If you lose too much bone, your bones become thinner (less dense) and weaker and are more like to break – this is osteoporosis.

What are the symptoms of osteoporosis?

One of the challenges with osteoporosis is that there are no early warning symptoms or signs. You may not know you have osteoporosis until you have one of the following:

- A fracture of your wrist, hips, spine or other bones that happens more easily than it should, eg, after a slight bump or a simple fall. This type of fracture is also known as fragility fracture.
- Loss of height – the vertebrae (bones) of your spine weaken because of bone thinning and they compress and your spine curves.
- With more severe osteoporosis, fractures occur when you're doing routine things such as bending, lifting or just getting up from a chair. This happens because brittle bones have trouble supporting your body weight.

Ask your healthcare provider for an osteoporosis check if any of these have happened to you.

Taking steps to keep your bones healthy and strong (see above) is the best way to prevent osteoporosis from developing.



Treatment for osteoporosis

Treatment for osteoporosis is decided on a case-by-case basis and depends on the results of bone density scans and other factors such as your age, gender, medical history and how severe it is.

To help decide which treatment is suitable, you and your doctor may use a FRAX score or a Garvan score. This shows your risk of having a fracture due to osteoporosis in the next 10 years.

Treatment most commonly involves lifestyle changes, such as exercise, and medicines (including bisphosphonates and menopausal hormone treatment) that aim to increase bone density and reduce the risk of bone fracture.

Exercise for osteoporosis

If you've already been diagnosed with osteoporosis, you need to include physical activity into your daily life. Apart from strengthening your bones, exercise may relieve pain, make everyday tasks easier to carry out and help maintain or improve your posture. The 3 types of activities most often recommended for people with osteoporosis are:



- **Strength-training exercises:** These include the use of free weights, weight machines, resistance bands or water exercises to strengthen the muscles and bones in your arms and upper spine. Strength training can work directly on your bones to slow bone mineral loss.
 - **Weight-bearing aerobic activities:** These involve doing aerobic exercise on your feet, with your bones supporting your weight. Examples include walking, dancing, low-impact aerobics and gardening. These types of exercise work directly on the bones in your legs, hips and lower spine to slow bone mineral loss.
 - **Flexibility exercises:** These can help increase the mobility of your joints, another important part of overall fitness. Being able to bend, extend and rotate your joints helps you prevent muscle injury. Increased flexibility can also help improve your posture.
- Ask your healthcare provider which of these exercises are suitable for you. The main thing is to find an activity that you enjoy and that works for you depending on any medical condition you might have.
- For more information about bone health and other aspects of ageing can be found at:

healthify.nz/health-a-z/a/ageing-what-is-normal

Meet the Senior Safety and Support Team

We have recently had two new staff members joining our Senior Safety and Support Team here at Age Concern Palmerston North and Districts, so it seems like a good opportunity to introduce the team and share a little bit about the work that we do.

Our primary role is to support older people who have experienced elder abuse or neglect. This can take many different forms, including emotional or psychological abuse, financial abuse, physical abuse, neglect or being taken advantage of by someone they trust.

Our Senior Safety and Support team work alongside older people in our community, offering support, information and advocacy. We help people access the right type of support when they need it.

Klara is the Team Leader and has been working at Age Concern for five and a half years. She is a registered social worker and has experience supporting people and families across a range of areas.

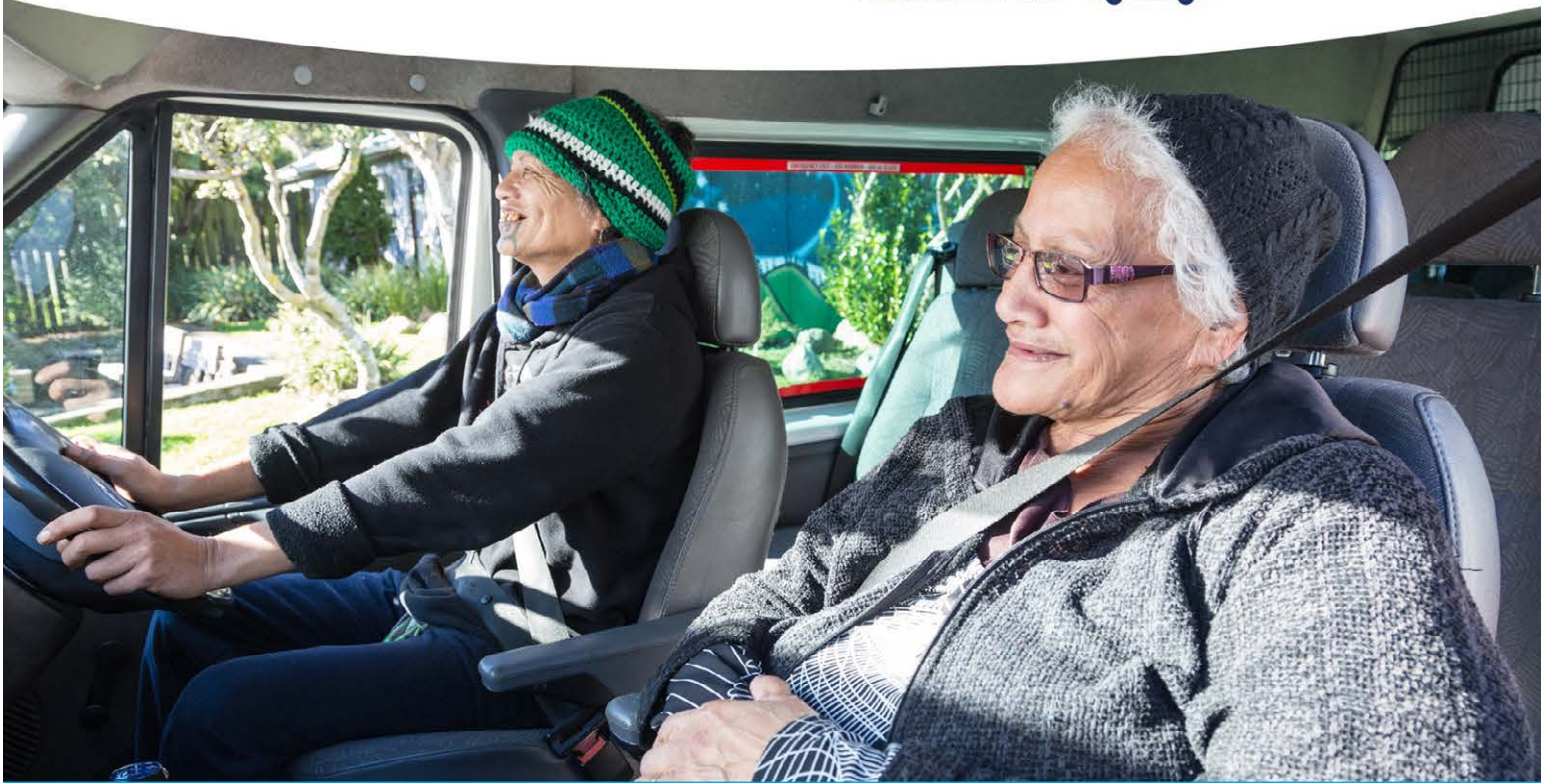
Marjorie is an experienced social worker who comes to the team with a background in health social work and working alongside children, young people and families. Renee is our Senior safety community worker and brings more than five years' experience working in the family harm sector.

People can self-refer to our service for support, or concerns can be raised by family members, friends, neighbours or other services. If you are worried about an older person, you are welcome to contact us for a chat. You do not need to know exactly what is happening or whether it is serious before getting in touch.

An important part of our work is that we work alongside people and with their consent. If someone contacts us because they are worried about an older person, we will generally encourage them to have a conversation with that person first and let them know about our service. The older person's wishes and what is important to them are central to the work we do.

As well as supporting people experiencing elder abuse, we can provide information and advocacy support and help connect people with other services when needed. Sometimes people simply need someone to talk things through with, and we are happy to have that conversation and see what might be helpful.





Staying Safe

A REFRESHER COURSE
FOR OLDER DRIVERS

DATE: Thursday 22nd October 2026
TIME: 10am - 2pm
VENUE: RSA Ashhurst, 74 Cambridge Avenue

**Enrolments essential - Contact Age Concern PN to register
Call 06 355 2832 or email info@ageconcernpn.org.nz**

- Had your licence for decades but never refreshed your Road Code knowledge?
- Feeling unsettled because you have a medical coming up to renew your licence?
- Curious about what all these changes to road layout and signs mean?

Come to our FREE classroom –based driving refresher. It's less than an hour for every decade you have held your licence. We promise it is engaging and not boring!

Light lunch provided





MMC Monthly Senior Lunchtime – Participants enjoying the opportunity to connect, share experiences, and build friendships in a welcoming multicultural environment.

Connecting cultures, building friendships, supporting older people

For many people, growing older is an opportunity to stay active, continue learning, meet new people, and remain connected to the community. At the Manawatū Multicultural Council (MMC), we believe everyone deserves those opportunities, regardless of their cultural background or where they were born.

MMC is a community organisation that works to build an inclusive and welcoming

Manawatū by bringing people together through programmes, events, education, and community connections. While many people know us for supporting migrants, former refugees, and international students, our activities are open to everyone, and we are proud to have many older adults participating in our programmes.

One of our valued partnerships is with Age Concern Palmerston North and Districts through the Steady As You Go (SAYGO) strength and balance programme.

Supporting healthy ageing together

MMC has proudly collaborated with Age Concern since 2023 to deliver the Steady As You Go programme. Since 2025, MMC has been hosting weekly SAYGO classes every Friday from 10:30 am to 11:30 am at Hancock Community House.

The programme focuses on improving strength, balance, confidence, and mobility, helping older adults remain active and independent while reducing the risk of falls.

Beyond the physical benefits, the class has become an important social gathering where participants catch up with friends, encourage one another, and enjoy being part of a welcoming community. Many participants tell us they look forward to Friday mornings not only for the exercise but also for the companionship.

We are grateful to Age Concern for their ongoing partnership and support in making this valuable programme available to our community.



Steady As You Go (SAYGO) – Older adults participating in MMC's weekly strength and balance class, delivered in partnership with Age Concern.



MMC Monthly Senior Lunchtime – Seniors from diverse cultural backgrounds enjoying a guest speaker presentation, followed by the opportunity to socialise, learn, and build community connections.

Monthly Senior Lunchtime

Another programme that has become a favourite among many of our older community members is our Monthly Senior Lunchtime, delivered as part of MMC's Community Connectors Programme, which aims to reduce social isolation and strengthen community connections.

Each month we invite seniors from all cultural backgrounds to enjoy lunch together in a relaxed and friendly environment. Every session includes a guest speaker who shares useful information on topics that support healthy ageing and independent living.

Previous speakers have covered a variety of subjects, including health and wellbeing, community services, personal safety, financial wellbeing, emergency preparedness, and other topics relevant to older adults.

While the information sessions are valuable, the social connection is equally important. Many participants enjoy the opportunity to meet new people, reconnect with friends, and reduce feelings of loneliness or isolation. The conversations shared over lunch often become just as meaningful as the presentations themselves.

Bringing communities together

At MMC, we believe that multiculturalism benefits everyone.

Our organisation offers a wide range of free activities throughout the year, including free English classes, yoga, arts and crafts, cultural celebrations, workshops, and community events that bring together people of all ages and backgrounds.

Many local New Zealanders join our programmes to learn about different cultures, make new friends, and enjoy being part of a diverse and welcoming community. Likewise, many newcomers to New Zealand appreciate the chance to meet local residents and build lasting friendships.

Our volunteers also play an essential role in everything we do. Many of our volunteers are retired members of the community who generously share their time, skills, and life experience. Volunteering is a wonderful way to stay active, meet new people, make a meaningful contribution, and learn about the many cultures that make up our community.

Looking ahead

This year marks an exciting new chapter for the Manawātū Multicultural Council (MMC) as we prepare to move into the new Manawātū Multicultural Hub. This purpose-built space will enable us to expand our programmes, strengthen our partnerships with community organisations, and create even more

opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to connect, learn, and celebrate together.

Communities are strongest when people know one another, learn from one another, and support one another. Through our partnership with Age Concern and the many programmes we offer, we are proud to play a part in helping older adults stay active, connected, and engaged in the vibrant multicultural community that makes Manawātū such a wonderful place to live.

Whether you have lived in Manawātū all your life or have recently made it your home, we warmly invite you to become part of the MMC community. Join us for a Steady As You Go class, enjoy our Monthly Senior Lunchtime, volunteer, attend one of our multicultural events, or participate in one of our many community programmes. We would love to welcome you.

Find out more

To learn more about our programmes, events, and community activities, visit our website or follow the Manawatu Multicultural Council on Facebook.



Manawātū Multicultural Council

 06 358 1578

 info@mmcnz.org.nz

 <https://mmcnz.org.nz/>

 Manawatu Multicultural Council

We'd love to hear from you - please share your feedback with us.

We want to learn more about our Age Concern community and hope you can take the time to email **info@ageconcernpn.org.nz** with your feedback, or fill in this form and return to us (either in person or through the post).

Name: _____

How would you like to receive this magazine?

☐ By email (please provide your email address)

☐ In the post (please provide your postal address)

What sorts of things would you like to be included in our future magazines?

Post to: Age Concern Palmerston North & Districts, PO Box 5063, Palmerston North 4441

Drop in to: 4/251 Broadway Ave,
Palmerston North 4414
(Entrance on Vivian Street)

Tech drop-in

Thursday
10th & 24th September
8th & 22nd October
5th & 19th November

Call in anytime between
9:30am - 12:00pm

Digital literacy sessions



Come along to our casual drop-in sessions for one-on-one support with your mobile phone, laptop, or tablet.

No booking required.



Age Concern Meeting Room
4/251 Broadway Ave
Palmerston North

P: 06 355 2832
E: info@ageconcernpn.org.nz



centrepoin^{THEATRE}
Production of

Fiddler on the Roof SR.

Based on Sholem Aleichem stories by special permission of Arnold Perl

Book by Joseph Stein **Music by** Jerry Bock **Lyrics by** Sheldon Harnick

Produced on the New York Stage by Harold Prince

Entire Original Production Directed & Choreographed by Jerome Robbins

Licensed exclusively by Music Theatre International (Australasia)

**2-6
September**



centrepoin^{THEATRE}

06 354 5740

centrepoin^{THEATRE}.co.nz

Support our work by becoming a friend of Age Concern Palmerston North & Districts

In 2024 our organization changed from being an Incorporated Society to a Charitable Trust. This means supporters are no longer required to join as 'Members', but instead can choose to support our activities through a donation. If you would like to be a 'Friend' of Age Concern in this way, then we would appreciate your donation in support of our activities.

We are a registered charity and donations of \$5 and over are eligible for a tax credit through myIR or by submitting a Tax credit claim form (IR526) to Inland Revenue.

Age Concern Palmerston North & Districts

(Registered charity no. CC57368)

Yes, I'd like to become a friend of Age Concern Palmerston North & Districts!

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

My contribution:

\$20 ☐ \$30 ☐ \$ _____ ☐

How to make payment:

You can pay by internet banking online or cash payment will be accepted at our office at 4/251 Broadway Ave.

Online Banking:

Age Concern Palmerston North & Districts Charitable Trust Ltd
03-1522-0158520-00
Particulars: Your name
Ref: Friend

Postal Address: Age Concern
Palmerston North & Districts, PO Box
5063, Palmerston North 4441

For more information, please contact us.

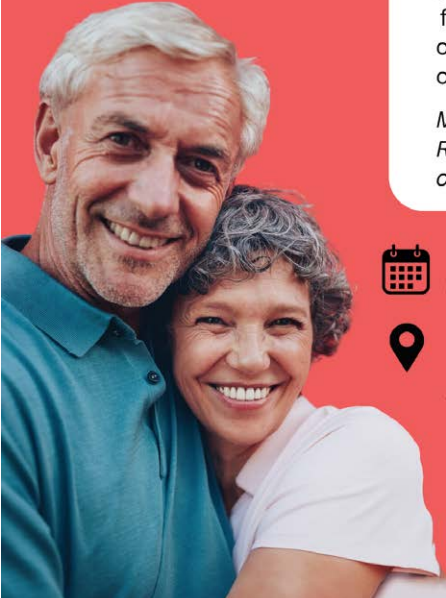
P: 06 355 2832 or 0800 652 105

E: info@ageconcernpn.org.nz

Thank you for your generous support.


LOVE
your eyes
EDUCATION EVENT

Palmerston North



FREE event in your community
Hear about **glaucoma** from eye health professionals.
Sick Khim Taylor & Lynn Mascarenhas from Naylor Palmer and Sean Mahendran from Specsavers.

Learn how it's diagnosed and treated.

Get **trusted information** from ophthalmologists & optometrists on how you can live well with glaucoma.

*Morning tea will be served.
Register at glaucoma.org.nz or free call 0800 452 826*

 Friday 11th September
10-11:30am

 Palmy Conference and Function Centre
354 Main Street
Palmerston North


Sign-up today.

Steady As You Go[©]

ACC accredited, gentle exercise classes to improve your balance, strength and flexibility. Specifically designed for kaumātua for falls prevention. No booking required, just show up on the day.

Phone: 06 355 2832 **Email:** info@ageconcernnpn.org.nz



**AGE
CONCERN**
PALMERSTON
NORTH & DISTRICTS

He Manaakitanga
Kaumātua Aotearoa

**LIVE STRONGER
FOR LONGER**
PREVENT FALLS & FRACTURES

MONDAY

11am - 12pm | Halcombe

Halcombe Memorial Hall, 77 Willoughby St

TUESDAY

10am - 11am | Rongotea

Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre, 1 Wye St

10:30am - 11:30am | Feilding

St John Community Hall, 33 Bowen St

11am - 12pm | Square Edge

Level 1: Evelyn Rawlins Room, 47 The Square, Palmerston North

WEDNESDAY

10:30am - 11:30am | Rangiora Community Centre

102 Rangiora Ave, Palmerston North

THURSDAY

9:30am - 10:30am | Awapuni Community Centre

22 Newbury St, Palmerston North

10am - 11am | Baptist Church

190 Church St, Palmerston North

10am - 11am | Ashhurst

Otangaki Lodge, 69 Oxford St

1:30pm - 2:30pm | St Albans Church

339 Albert St, Palmerston North

FRIDAY

10am - 11am | Senior Citizens Hall

309 Main St, Palmerston North

10:30am - 11:30am | Manawatu Multicultural Council

Hancock House, 77-85 King St, Palmerston North

**\$3 koha
per class**

