

**SPRING 2017 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**  
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# Age Concern Wellington

*Serving the needs of older people*

COMPLIMENTARY COPY



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 Wellington 6142

**OFFICE HOURS**  
 9.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Friday

## Executive Officers Report

It is with a heavy heart that I have to tell you that the end of September 2017 marks the end of an era for Age Concern Wellington. After nearly 25 years of delivering Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention services in the Wellington, Porirua and Hutt Valley areas, the Government has decided it wants a change and has awarded the contract to another provider. That provider is expected to be fully operational on 1 September and we will transition any unresolved cases to its case workers.

I want to pay tribute at this time to the fantastic job that Sheila Reed, our Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Coordinator, and her predecessors have done in providing this service to the people of the Hutt Valley, Wellington and Porirua over the years. They are, indeed, unsung heros.

The future is unknown but we assure you that we are continuing our accredited visitor service and remain the first port of call for information on services for seniors in our area.

If you have any concerns about the changes please take them up with the Minister for Senior Citizens – email: Maggie.Barry@parliament.govt.nz or write to Maggie Barry, Parliament Buildings, Wellington (no stamp needed).

Alternatively you can contact the Office for Seniors - email: osc@msd.govt.nz (PO Box 1556, Wellington 6140) or give us a call on 499 6646 and we will do our best to help.

The changes will be a challenge for us as a small organisation and will increase our dependence on donations, support from gambling organisations and philanthropic organisations. We welcome any support you are able to give us to continue our work.

*Marion Cowden*  
 Executive Officer

## The Grandmother Hypothesis - why grandmothers are essential for society

I first came across this hypothesis listening to National Radio, Kim Hill probably, and have since followed it up with some research on the internet\*.

The idea was posited by G.C. Williams that menopause might be an adaptation that allows older females to redirect their reproductive efforts into increased support of existing offspring - i.e. the children of their children. This way they would avoid the age related risks of reproduction and avoid depriving any new offspring of their own of a mother's nurture and thereby possibly decreasing their chance for survival.

By providing support to their families, grandmothers can better ensure the continuation of their genes through the next generation and help with social connections for both of the generations.

So evolutionary adaptation may be the reason for the misery of the menopausal years and yet again prove the old adage that "A Woman's Work is Never Done."

*Sheila Reed*  
 \*Wikipedia:  
 Grandmother Hypothesis



## Driving Miss Daisy - We are not just for seniors!

Over the years Driving Miss Daisy has built up a reputation for providing a high quality service to senior citizens who no longer drive. They are a regular at retirement villages and rest homes across the country and senior citizen clients form the largest proportion of their client base. But did you know that they also provide our services to younger people who don't drive?

Some clients have a disability or medical condition which means they can't drive, however this doesn't stop them from being very active in other areas of their life; they work in a professional capacity, run businesses, attend school or tertiary education and enjoy socialising with friends. Driving Miss Daisy drives these clients to their place of work or business meetings, assists them to their lectures and social occasions, ensuring they are where they need to be in plenty of time.

They treat every client as an individual, no matter what their personal circumstance. Every client has different needs, and they make sure they discuss this with their clients so that they fully understand them and provide them with the absolute best support and service.

For Driving Miss Daisy, it's imperative that all their clients are treated with dignity and respect. They are committed to helping their clients get out and about, so they can live life to the full and enjoy every moment.

If you have an activity you would like them to help with please call them today to discuss - they look forward to seeing you soon!

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- Lower Hutt - Andrew Dykes**  
 (04) 568 2254 027 280 0668
- Mana-Porirua - Jo Rangiwai**  
 (04) 235 7985 021 503 520
- Wellington City - Therese Lloyd**  
 (04) 470 7523 021 503 102
- Wellington East - Ermanno Lubich**  
 (04) 384 8344 021 215 3014
- Wellington North - Ange Morris**  
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## Puppy Love

We have recently bought a puppy, a Woodledor, which is a cross between a Wheaten Terrier, Poodle, and Labrador, and her name is Wilma.



Here she is photographed above (difficult to see as she is black and curly, looks rather like a large lamb). We think this is a good idea to have a dog which will keep us active and engaged!

Dog owners over the age of 65 have fitness levels a decade younger than their biological age. A study by St Andrews University in Scotland of more than 500 pensioners found that those with dogs were 12% more active than those without. Dog owners also have significantly lower levels of anxiety and depression the study found. Throughout the study the activity of 547 elderly people in Tayside were monitored with an average age of 79. Over a 7 day period participants wore an accelerometer which measured their movements - the dog owners were found to match the levels of activity of those without a dog who were ten years younger.

Dr Feng, a senior lecturer at the School of Geography and Geosciences said "Our results suggest dog ownership may motivate personal activity and enable older people to overcome many potential barriers such as lack of social support, inclement weather and concerns over personal safety."

He suggested that public health officials should consider setting up schemes to lend dogs to those without them, or to set up walking groups to encourage people to take more exercise.

*Ann Dalziel*  
Community Support Coordinator

## Serving the Wellington/ Kapiti area since 1993

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# 6 Friendly Villages

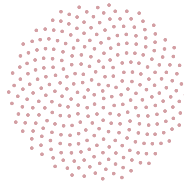
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# WELLEIDER WORKS



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

## Taming Anxiety

At times we all worry about some things in our lives, but when this become a continuous state of anxiety, and when we experience tension and discomfort it can be very disabling.

Although anxiety is a healthy response to danger and threat, at times our anxiety response can become overactivated. Even when there is no actual imminent danger, our bodies can begin to pump adrenaline into the blood stream, in preparation for “fight or flight”. We can become hyper-aware of any potential problems, and feel tense and anxious.

Sometimes we begin to avoid particular situations, places, or activities in an effort to avoid uncomfortable feelings, and consequently find our lives becoming more and more restricted.

Panic attacks, episodes of high anxiety which often start and finish quite suddenly, are relatively common. About 1 in 10 people will have experienced an attack at some point, and whilst they are unpleasant, they are not life-threatening.

We often feel shame about our anxiety, and don't want others to know or notice. However, talking to trusted friends or family, or to a WellElder counsellor, can often be the first step in accepting and managing anxiety.

Many things can be helpful, and WellElder clients often find that practising slow, calm breathing, marks the start of a new way of coping. Meditation, Mindfulness, Tai Chi, Yoga, and Pilates can all be helpful, as can the deep breathing that comes with exercise such as swimming, walking and gardening. It helps to make slow, deep breathing part of your daily routine, so that it comes more naturally when anxiety levels mount.

When we are anxious we often exaggerate possible negative outcomes, or ruminate on problems without effective problem solving. A counsellor can help you to identify worrying thoughts and reframe these, putting them into perspective again. Worry and indecision often go hand-in-hand – getting on with life again, rather than procrastinating, allows you to keep moving forwards.

When we notice anxiety levels creeping up, it is often a cue for re-evaluating whether our lives have become unbalanced. Perhaps diet or exercise have been neglected, or there is too little time for refreshment and connecting with others. Even if we are busy carers, it is important to have down-time as well as stimulation, in order to keep ourselves well.

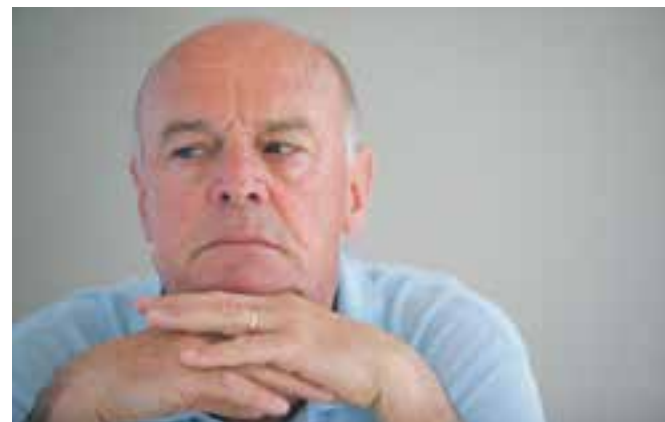
Dr Alice Boyes' useful book, “The Anxiety Toolkit” is in the Wellington City library system. The author poses the questions:

‘Can you think of anything you want more than you fear?’

And ‘What is a meaningful life from your perspective?’

Your goals, she explains, are the compass to guide you towards meaning, even if some emotional vulnerability and anxiety bubble up from time to time.

Anxiety can feel very uncomfortable but does not have to limit your life – if you would like to talk to a WellElder counsellor about this, call 380 2440. We are open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and are available to people over 60 in Wellington, Porirua and Kapiti.



## Age Concern Volunteer Joins Good Bitches Baking



Carole Lynskey has been a volunteer for the Age Concern visiting service for over 18 months. The gentleman she visits has been on his own for some time and does not keep good health. He really appreciates her visits as he does not get out often and Carole provides a welcome interest in his week. She has also kindly ‘stood in’ for another client when his regular visitor was overseas.

I spoke to Carole recently and she spoke most enthusiastically of her new volunteer role having recently joined ‘Good Bitches Baking’! This is a network of people who want to show kindness to those in their communities having a tough time in the form of home baking. Carole not only bakes each week but she also delivers the baking. According to the website this organisation has gone from 15 people based in Wellington to a national registered charity with 10 chapters throughout New Zealand and growing.

Carole epitomises what being a volunteer is all about and I have a number of visitors who are involved with other volunteer organisations at the same time. I have often heard the phrase ‘once a volunteer always a volunteer’ and this is certainly true of the great volunteers we have here at Age Concern.

If you would like to become an Age Concern volunteer ring (04) 499 6646 or email Monica Robinson at avswgtn@acwellington.org.nz for the Wellington and Porirua area or Melva Howard at avshutt@acwellington.org.nz for the Hutt area.

You can also learn more about Good Bitches Baking on their website [www.goodbitchesbaking.co.nz](http://www.goodbitchesbaking.co.nz)

*Monica Robinson*  
AVS Coordinator



*Miranda Smith Homecare*  
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## CARE AT HOME A SENSIBLE CHOICE

Deciding what support you need to maintain independence as you age can be challenging. Miranda Smith, owner of New Zealand's longest running private homecare agency knows how difficult these decisions are.

*“Sometimes people in crisis contact us, other times our services are used to help someone recover from illness or injury. Whatever the reason, we believe that accessing the right support, especially for those living alone, is critical. Peace of mind comes with knowing the right care is in place”.*

The daughter of one of the agency's clients shares her experience when her mother was diagnosed with Alzheimers. *“Miranda Smith was reassuring and supportive and I was given the opportunity to meet and interview potential carers. Being able to still live in her own home, despite needing 24 hour care, meant my mothers dignity and independence were maintained.”* Miranda Smith Homecare has the personnel and experience to ensure supporting someone doesn't become overwhelming. Why not talk with them today?

## Get the most out of your Super Gold Card

Don't underestimate the uses to which your Gold Card can be put! A lot of people don't realise that it can be worth its weight in gold in the range of discounts to be had. (Thank you Winston!)

Unfortunately the MSD doesn't publish a hard copy of the Super Gold Discount Directory for Wellington, the argument being that all older people have grandchildren who will help them access it on line. This is a fairly daft argument we can all see through but alas the only way to get the information is on line\* - or by phoning Age Concern of course! Or you could sign up for the Super Seniors newsletter\*\* which is emailed out regularly and gives all the latest special offers.

However, the Table of Contents tells me that in Wellington, I could use my card to get a discount on Accommodation, Automotive, Computers and

Electronics, Financial and Professional Services, Food and Drink, Funeral Services, Health and Beauty, Home and Garden, Office Services and Supplies, Property, Retail, Sports and Fitness, Trades, Transport and Travel.

My advice would be to look for a sign near the checkout which says that discounts are offered or simply extract your Gold Card when you come to pay and ask if a discount is available.

I of course use my card to travel by bus when I can and also love the half price reserves I get at Wellington libraries. But I have also bought a new heater at Noel Leeming, paid my dentist and had coffee and lunches at Karori Park Café with my card.

If I wanted to, I could buy a computer, go to an optician, have a haircut, arrange travel insurance, pay for a funeral or visit a pharmacy and show my card - to mention but a few.

My very favourite however must be my Mobil Petrol Card which gives a super seniors discount of 11c per litre on all petrol purchases and not just those over \$40.

So don't be shy, give it a try.

*Sheila Reed*

\*[www.supergold.govt.nz/directory](http://www.supergold.govt.nz/directory)

\*\*[super.seniors.msd.govt.nz/superseniors-newsletter](http://super.seniors.msd.govt.nz/superseniors-newsletter)



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## Magnesium - supplement or not?

A commonly asked question. "Do people with low bone density need extra magnesium?"

Magnesium is certainly an important mineral that our body needs in small amounts. It is needed by the heart, muscles and kidneys, and is especially important for our teeth and bones. Magnesium also has a role in regulating calcium levels in the body. Our daily need for Magnesium cannot be met by a single food but you should be able to get all the magnesium you need by eating a varied and balanced diet. Men need 300mg and women 270mg daily.

However, certain medical conditions can upset the body's magnesium balance and may necessitate magnesium supplementation. Examples are kidney disease, and gastrointestinal conditions such as Crohn's and coeliac diseases. These can reduce the absorption of magnesium from the gut.

Dietary sources of magnesium include green leafy vegetables, nuts, beans and unrefined grains and dairy food, all of which should be part of a well-balanced diet. These foods are also good sources of calcium.

So, do you need supplementation?

Only if you suffer from the conditions mentioned above, otherwise a good balanced diet should provide all your magnesium needs.

Source: *Bone alert newsletter, November 2016*

## Could you get a better deal from your power company?

There are more electricity retailers offering more deals than ever - but that can make things confusing.

Fortunately there's one easy, two-minute check you can do to see if there might be a better deal out there.

A quick visit to [www.whatsmynumber.org.nz](http://www.whatsmynumber.org.nz) will tell you if there's savings to be had.

It's a free, independent website that compares the electricity prices available in your area and lets you know what your potential savings are.

If you don't have access to the internet Citizens Advice can help you run the check, or you could do it with your family - and get them to check too.

Even if you're happy with your current company you might learn something to help you have a chat with them about improving their deal.

You could also ask them about different plans and payment options they offer.

*Well-installed insulation is always the top priority for a warmer, healthier home. Get your insulation checked to make sure it is up to scratch - free phone ENERGYWISE on 0800 749 782 or visit [www.energywise.govt.nz](http://www.energywise.govt.nz) for information about subsidies and funding options.*

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## First District Health Boards start bowel screening

The first national cancer screening programme in New Zealand for both men and women is now underway.

Residents in Wairarapa and Hutt Valley who are aged 60-74, and are eligible for publicly funded health care, are the first to be invited to take part in the free National Bowel Screening Programme (NBSP). Other District Health Boards will join in stages over the next three years.

The screening test, along with any further investigations (such as colonoscopy) and treatments organised within the public health system, are free.

Bowel screening is for people who have no symptoms of bowel cancer. It aims to save lives by detecting bowel cancer at an early stage, when it can often be successfully treated.

Auckland businessman David Vinsen completed a test through the Waitemata District Health Board bowel screening pilot in 2015, and was shocked when it came back positive.



“I was sent for a colonoscopy, which found an early stage cancer. I was very fortunate that it wasn’t invasive and hadn’t spread widely,” David says.

David had surgery to remove the cancer, and two years on is doing well. He’s delighted that bowel screening is going to be available nationwide,



Dr Susan Parry

and is urging those who are invited to take up the opportunity.

“Do the test; don’t be scared about it. It’s not at all embarrassing or awkward. There’s no inconvenience. All you’ve got to do is take one small sample at home, post it off in the envelope and that’s it.

“We look after our vehicles and have them regularly serviced and inspected. We should do the same for ourselves.”

The Clinical Director of the National Bowel Screening Programme, Dr Susan Parry, says about 3,000 New Zealanders are diagnosed with bowel cancer every year.

“Bowel cancer is the second highest cause of cancer death in New Zealand. Every year, more than 1,200 people die from it.

“The introduction of the National Bowel Screening Programme is a significant step forward for New Zealand. Once it is fully rolled out, it is anticipated that the screening programme will initially detect about 500 to 700 cancers each year. These are cancers which in many cases would have gone undetected until a later stage, when the chances of successful treatment are much lower.

“There’s also an element of prevention. For those who go on to have a colonoscopy after a positive test result, the removal of polyps - or growths - during this procedure can prevent cancers from developing in the future.

“Those eligible to take part will be sent a personal invitation letter, a consent form and a free bowel screening test kit. Eligible participants should receive their invitation within two years of the programme starting in their DHB area. They’ll then be invited to take part in regular screening every two years.

“I would like to encourage people to do the test, but to talk to their doctor now if they have any bowel symptoms that they’re worried about. Common symptoms of bowel cancer can include blood in your bowel motion, or a change in your normal pattern of going to the toilet that continues for several weeks. Although these symptoms are usually caused by conditions other than cancer, it is important to get them checked out.”

Information on the National Bowel Screening Programme is available at [www.bowelscreening.health.govt.nz](http://www.bowelscreening.health.govt.nz)

## Au Revoir but not Adieu - reflections from your EAN coordinator

As Marion has written in her editorial, the MSD in its inexplicable wisdom has given the Elder Abuse Response contract for the Wellington region to another agency. The government wanted a change and four Age Concerns nationwide have found themselves in this position. Furthermore it is to be a Response Service with no Education or Awareness component.

So as your soon-to-be ex EANP Coordinator, a few words of thanks.

Thank you to the staff and Board at Age Concern - it’s been great to work in a supportive and stimulating environment - we’re a dream team!

Thank you to the wonderful members of the Advisory Group, who were always unstinting with help and advice; to all the health professionals who referred cases or who took referrals; the community agencies who work tirelessly for the wellbeing of older people; the police in the Safety and Violence Prevention teams who are so supportive of older people experiencing domestic violence or safety issues - in fact all people who trusted me with their referrals.

And thanks also go to you Dear Readers and the entire senior population in our area. You trusted me with your most difficult situations and allowed me to work on your behalf. I’ve been able to right some wrongs and improve the quality of life for people in their retirement years. It has often been challenging work, but the sense of achievement from working on your behalf has made it always worthwhile. So thank you everyone.

What next? The new contracts don’t have an education component which is going to leave a major gap in the elder abuse scene. We might be able to help fill this gap. I shall still write educational and informative articles for this magazine and continue the Dear John column. I shall still be at the end of the phone. Things will evolve over the coming months so Watch this Space!

*Sheila Reed*

Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Coordinator  
July 2012 - October 2017

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[www.enlivencentral.org.nz](http://www.enlivencentral.org.nz)

DEAR JOHN...



## Dear John...

Last week I got an email from the IRD to say that I had a refund of \$230.70.

I thought it was a bit odd as I haven't sent in my forms yet to get a rebate on my donations and would be expecting more than that.

What do you think? You hear all these warnings about not opening suspicious looking emails. I'd already deleted one that said it was from the ANZ as I don't bank with them and now the IRD seems to want to give me money!

## Dear Ron

You are wise to be cautious and a lot of heart ache would be avoided if everyone took this approach.

It is a phishing scam, where the writer is hoping the "sucker" i.e. the recipient of the email, you, will reveal their bank account details.

Delete it immediately! Do not click on *Refund Me Now!* Report it!

It would actually be very helpful to report it as the IRD likes to be aware of current scams and the scale of them. Forward it to [phishing@ird.govt.nz](mailto:phishing@ird.govt.nz) with as many details as possible.

On the IRD website, it explicitly says **"We will never advise you that you are due for a tax refund through email."**

The online way to communicate with the IRD

is through myIR, a secure on line service. All correspondence from them is available on your myIR account and is accessed by logging into your account that you have set up on line.

And really, it is highly unlikely that the IRD would willingly and unsolicited give you money. We have to beg for our rebates by filling in forms.

## More Tea Vicar?

"What led you to set up this beautiful tea trolley?" was the first question I asked Annelize Steyn, Recreation Officer at Enliven's Kilmarnock Heights Home, the moment I set eyes on it.

The answer was simple - the Recreation Officers wanted the trolley all set up and ready to go for diversional purposes.

Up until then, the home's beautiful china had been in a cabinet and only used occasionally for High Teas. All older people respond to High Teas that evoke memories of the past when afternoon tea at meetings or family occasions was served formally. I myself have been a helper at these recreated High Teas and love to watch the pleasure handling the china and the dainty portions gives. Reminiscences flow nonstop! Drinking tea out of fine china rather than a chunky mug is a whole different experience.

At the end of a day, Annelize said the residents can feel more restless and anxious. A cup of tea with others using this china, has a calming and therapeutic effect. The problems can be discussed and fears allayed. This is why the trolley is all ready to go with crockery and teapot accessible - it's for immediate everyday use and not just for show or special occasions.

"What do the residents think about it?" I asked. Annelize replied that it makes the day special for them. "It must be a special celebration, whose birthday is it?" they often ask.

With my own memories of my grandmother's china, I asked whether they worry about breakages.

But no, the washing up can be another occasion for residents to combat boredom and loneliness by washing and drying the cups and saucers which cannot go in a dish washer. They are connected with each other with a task.

Kilmarnock Heights Home, and all Enliven care facilities, have adopted the Eden Alternative Philosophy to make living in a rest home congenial and interesting rather than a boring stretch of interminable days. At Enliven homes, staff strive to ensure residents have companionship, fun, variety, meaningful activity and purpose in their lives.

Over my cuppa with Annelize she told me more about the therapies they use with residents, so there will be more articles to come. I have a lot of learning to do and pass on.

Before I finish, I must also tell you about another aspect of my visit to Kilmarnock Heights Home. I'd taken my two grandchildren with me as I thought seeing a rest home, after I'd told them all about being in residential care, would be beneficial all round.

When we went into the lounge, there in one corner was a children's area with toys, games and books. The two of them played happily, Annelize and I talked, two ladies listened to iPods with personalised music selections, and I introduced 7 year old Harry to seventy something John who was busy with his jigsaw puzzle. This is real life - all the ages doing their own thing alongside each other and accepting and respecting each other.

*Sheila Reed*

EAN Coordinator



E Morris Jnr

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Manager Andy Ellis, a fully qualified FDANZ-associated funeral director says "These days there are inevitably costs to consider. There's no question funerals have become more expensive with rising costs in cemetery and cremation fees, so we have four pricing plans available to suit people's individual needs".

E Morris Jnr Simplicity Funerals also offer options for prearranging and prepaying towards funerals in a safe, secure manner, through the FDANZ Funeral Trust. They are always willing to offer obligation-free assistance so for more information or to talk to Andy, simply free call 0800 222 155 - calls answered 24 hours, 7 days or visit our website:

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

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## Seniors look forward to Library outings

A partnership between (AVS) Age Concern Accredited Visiting Coordinator and the local Council Community Facilitator in the Hutt Valley has implemented monthly morning tea sessions at local libraries. Last month a group of AVS Seniors were transported to the Naenae Library and shared the culture of one of their Seniors in the group with attempting flax weaving. The history about weaving with strips of flax, and there are many varieties, is by far the best New Zealand plant material to use to learn basic weaving. Articles made from flax is a simple and easy craft to learn as discovered by our group who left with a pretty flax rose each.

*Melva Howard*

Accredited Visiting Service Coordinator - (Hutt Valley)



The Flax Plant



A flax rose develops



Introducing Tutor Rangī with AVS coordinator Melva to a flax weaving session



Our Naenae Library Age Concern Seniors group with their creation, a flax rose



How to treat the flax

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If you enjoyed reading this copy of Seniority and would like to receive it regularly, you can join Age Concern for only **\$20?** and receive your copy every quarter in the mail!

## Cold houses and impact on health

The World Health Organization recommends a minimum indoor temperature of 18°C, and ideally 21°C if babies or elderly people live in the house. The average daily indoor temperature in the winter for most New Zealand houses is just 16°C.

### How do cold houses affect health?

If house temperatures fall below 16°C, the risk of respiratory illness increases. This is because cold houses are also usually damp, which can lead to respiratory symptoms.

House occupants produce a significant amount of moisture in their day-to-day activities, for example, cooking, showering and drying laundry. Even breathing has an effect - each person produces one litre of moisture per day this way. Moisture condenses on cold surfaces, such as uninsulated walls.

As well as dampness being a health risk in itself, it can lead to mould growth, which may also contribute to respiratory problems. Mould growth is worse when there is also poor ventilation, such as when a house has well-sealed aluminium windows that are kept shut, or doesn't have an extractor fan in the bathroom.

Living in a cold environment is also physiologically stressful for people who are old, sick or very young.



### Concert in Lower Hutt

**24 October 2017, 11am**

**P: 0508 266 237 (toll free)**

**E: [bookings@operatunity.co.nz](mailto:bookings@operatunity.co.nz)**

**W: [www.daytimeconcerts.co.nz](http://www.daytimeconcerts.co.nz)**

**WIN** a double pass to the Fabulous 50's show by simply filling in the details below and posting to Pukeko Print & Design, 927 Cameron Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga 3112, by the 13 October 2017 to go into the draw.

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Alternatively email your details to:

[monique@pukekoprint.co.nz](mailto:monique@pukekoprint.co.nz) and quote ACWELL 3/17



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