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Pharmaceutical Management Agency

Media release

Do the mahi and it will pay off, says Gisborne man

Modifying his diet and becoming physically active have had a profound effect on Gisborne man Don Taylor.

The 58-year-old grandfather has lost 52kg in the last six months after being put on the Green Prescriptions programme, an initiative jointly funded by PHARMAC and Sport and Recreation NZ (SPARC).

Now down to 90kg, Don says his goal is to get to 76kg, which would be nearly half his weight at its peak in May last year.

With the help of staff at Sport Gisborne, Turanga Health, Turanga Health Men's Group and his family, Don has seen his life turn around thanks to dieting and regular physical activity.

“Having reached 142kg in May 2003 I was definitely obese, and feeling extremely lethargic and unhealthy,” Don says. “Reality struck when I was having a bath and my 10-year-old granddaughter concluded that I resembled a stranded whale. That was very much the turning point for me.”

Don saw his GP and was given a Green Prescription, and referred to Sport Gisborne's GRx co-ordinator Kathy Sheldrake. He also linked up with the men's health group at Turanga Health and personal trainer Alan Hogarth for advice on diet and fitness. Physical activity came in the form of aqua-aerobics, gym training, walks with the men's health group, and Tai Chi.

Weight loss hasn't been the only benefit.

“I have now regained my self esteem, looks, pride and respect which inevitably leads to continual weight loss,” Don says.

His concluding message is simple: “Do the mahi (work) and it will pay off. It already has for me.

“Be 100 percent focussed on what you are doing and kick obesity into touch.”

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