



Media release

FUNDING BOOST SECURES FUTURE OF GREEN PRESCRIPTIONS

PHARMAC and SPARC have boosted funding of the Green Prescriptions programme that last year encouraged nearly 6,000 Kiwis to improve their health through physical activity, bringing total funding to \$1.4 million this year.

The SPARC initiative involves General Practitioners and practice nurses giving a “Green Prescription” to patients whose health could benefit from increased physical activity. The patient is then eligible for support and advice from their regional sport trust for up to four months. Patients that benefit most are those with conditions such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and obesity.

A study published in the British Medical Journal last year showed the Green Prescriptions programme is effective, and a recent follow-up analysis by a health economist showed the programme also offers excellent value for money.

SPARC CE Nick Hill says, “Increased funding means more people will be able to benefit from the programme. We estimate that nearly 10,000 Kiwis will avail of it in the next year, which will lead to greater physical activity throughout the country.”

PHARMAC Medical Director Dr Peter Moodie says there are real health benefits to be gained from physical activity, such as reducing people’s weight, and reducing their chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

“We’re pleased with the results that we are seeing from Green Prescriptions and are delighted to be able to agree to this funding increase,” says Dr Moodie.

“We feel that Green Prescriptions has established an important role in healthcare, and it is also being incorporated into other programmes such as PHARMAC’s One Heart Many Lives campaign, which aims to reduce people’s risk of having a heart attack or stroke.”

Over 70% of Green Prescription patients surveyed in the past two years had noticed a change in their health since getting their Green Prescription.

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