

# SuperSeniors

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## From Minister Tracey Martin



Across the world, our populations are changing. People are living longer than at any other time in history – in the last 50 years, at least a decade has been added to our life expectancy. Today, many of us can expect to live well into our 80s.

As our draft ageing strategy ‘Better Later Life – He Oranga Kaumātua 2019 to 2034’ reflects, what we need is the planning and support to help people live and age positively. One aspect of this is creating age-friendly communities.

An age-friendly community puts in place the right policies, services and structure so older people are safe and secure, able to enjoy good health and can participate fully in their communities. And it empowers seniors to be part of the age-friendly conversation. Life is a journey, we are all ageing and we all have an interest and a collective responsibility to create the communities we want to be part of.

Making a community age-friendly doesn’t just benefit older people, it benefits everyone. It means that as people age, they can continue to live the lives they want and stay connected to the people and things that matter to them.

Developed by the World Health Organization, the Age-friendly cities and communities model has now been adopted by more than 830 cities and communities worldwide. In June 2018, New Zealand was accepted as an affiliate member of the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly cities and communities. As a member, New Zealand has agreed to promote the age-friendly approach, connect and support communities who are interested in it. Since then, Hamilton and New Plymouth have been included as cities in the network. Auckland and Nelson Councils have also indicated they are working to join the global network, and other communities are also developing plans.

These are local initiatives because they require responses and the involvement of central and local government, business, and the non-government and community sector. That means there’s a chance for you to help influence your region to get involved in this planning and approach.

### Community Connects

Last month the Office for Seniors announced the eight recipients of the latest round of the Community Connects grants. The one-off grants of up to \$15,000 help fund projects that promote the inclusion and contribution of older people in community life and support their community to prepare for an ageing population.

The latest recipients included: Nelson-Tasman Community Transport Trust, to research the transport needs for the older people in the district, and trial a community bus service; Chinese New Settlers Services Trust – to carry out targeted consultations with Chinese communities in Auckland to help develop an age-friendly action plan; and Hauraki District Council – to develop a feasibility study to establish an intergenerational and age-friendly social support hub for older people in Waihi.

There will be a second round of grants later this year so keep an eye on the SuperSeniors website.

### In this issue

Minister for Seniors, Tracey Martin, highlights the latest recipients of the Community Connects grants.

There will be a second round of funding later this year, so if you are part of a not-for-profit organisation keep an eye out in upcoming editions for more information.

Read more from the Commission for Financial Capability on the recent Spark phone scam.

You can find out more about the scam and what you can do if you are targeted.

Have you recently retired? You might need to change your tax code.

Read the story inside to find out more about how to find out your current tax code and what to do if you need to change it?

Looking for a new recipe? Try the delicious Cottage Pie recipe from the NZ Nutrition Foundation.

Make sure to have your say in the University of Otago survey which is looking to find out more about mental health of older people.

You can find out more about the research and how to take part in the story inside.

## Community Connects grant recipients announced

Developing a virtual-village model in Howick, and implementing a community outreach project to engage with older Pasifika people in Auckland, are among the latest projects funded by the Community Connects grants.

The Community Connects grants help fund projects that promote the inclusion and contribution of older people in community life, and support their community to prepare for an ageing population.

In the April funding round eight groups were successful.

The successful applicants and their projects include:

- Chinese New Settlers Services Trust – to carry out targeted consultations with Chinese communities in Auckland to help develop an Age-friendly action plan
- Hauraki District Council – to develop a feasibility study to establish an intergenerational and age-friendly social support hub group for older people in Waihi
- Horowhenua District Council – to develop an Age-friendly Communities strategy and review of Horowhenua District Council’s Positive Ageing Action Plan

- HBH Senior Living – to develop a virtual-village model to build an age-friendly community for the seniors of Howick and surrounding areas
- Kapiti Coast Grey Power – to engage with the four unique communities in the Kapiti Coast area to identify and prioritise age-friendly actions
- Nelson-Tasman Community Transport Trust – to research the transport needs for the older people in the district, and trial a community bus service to inform the development of an effective community transport service model
- New Plymouth Age Friendly Trust – to engage with key stakeholders in rural and remote areas of the district to identify and agree on the key priority areas for the Age Friendly New Plymouth Action Plan and to oversee implementation
- TOA Pacific – to facilitate an introduction to older Pacific people engaging and connecting with a range of age-friendly community-led and council activities, to help reduce social isolation and loneliness.

The fund makes one-off grants up to \$15,000. A second round will be held later this year.

For more information on the Community Connects grants go to [www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz](http://www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz)



## Are you paying too much tax?

If you have recently started getting your NZ Super, you will need to make sure you have used the correct tax code. If not, you could be paying too much tax.

If NZ Super is your only source of income, you should be on the “M” tax code, but there are other tax codes that could apply to you.

To find out what your current tax code is, please visit Inland Revenue at [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz) and search ‘work out my tax code’.

You’ll need to contact Work and Income if you need to change your tax code, eg, if you stop working, so they can pay you the right amount of NZ Super or Veteran’s Pension.

To do this, you will need to complete a Tax code declaration (IR330) from Inland Revenue (you can do this online at [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz)) and then print it off and drop it off to reception at your Work and Income local service centre, or post it to your local service centre.

To find out more about changing your tax code for NZ Super and Veteran’s Pension go to [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)

## Beware of the Spark phone scam



Bronwyn Groot

Seniors are being warned to be on the alert for scammers contacting them by phone trying to trick them out of money.

Bronwyn Groot, Fraud Education Manager at the Commission for Financial Capability (CFFC) says a scam involving fraudsters claiming to be from

Spark and the Police is on the rise, and many people have had thousands of dollars stolen.

The caller typically claims they are from Spark, claiming there is a security or internet issue with their computer or router.

They are then told they are the subject of identity theft through their emails and are transferred to a member of the “Police Cyber Crime Unit”, where they are spoken to by a person claiming to be a police officer.

The victim is then told that Police need their assistance “to set a trap to catch the criminals”. They are convinced to withdraw large sums of money – often around \$10,000 to \$15,000 – and given an address to post the money to or a bank account number to transfer it to.

Groot says a telco, the Police or your bank would never ask for your bank details over the phone, or ask you to send money this way.

“Other red flags are if the caller pressures you with a sense of urgency, or asks you to keep the call secret,” says Groot.

“They will try to fluster you, but the best thing you can do is stop and think ‘Is this for real?’. Hang up and if you want to check, call your telco, the bank or the Police directly and ask if the call you just received was genuine.”

If you’ve been a victim of this scam, or know someone who has, contact your local police station or call the new Police reporting number, 105.



### Scammer on the phone

Stop and think – is this real

*Hang up*

*Call your telco, bank, or the Police and ask if the call you received was genuine?*

## Have your say on draft Carers’ Strategy Action Plan

The Ministry of Social Development wants your feedback on the draft Carers’ Strategy Action Plan 2019–2023.

One in ten New Zealanders is a carer, supporting friends and family who have a disability, health condition, illness or injury and need help with everyday living.

The new Action Plan seeks to support carer wellbeing and make sure that caring is sustainable.

The draft Action Plan was developed in partnership with the Carers Alliance and other government agencies, including the Ministry of Health. It also looked at research on carers, previous action plans, and what people said when the new Action Plan began development in 2018.

Now MSD want carers to tell them whether the draft Action Plan reflects what matters most to you.

MSD knows that many older New Zealanders are caring for people at home, and want to hear what you think.

You can find out more about the Action Plan at [www.msd.govt.nz/carers](http://www.msd.govt.nz/carers) and fill out an online survey.

You can email MSD at [carers.strategy@msd.govt.nz](mailto:carers.strategy@msd.govt.nz) or write to MSD Carers’ Strategy, Level 9, P O Box 1556, Wellington 6140, New Zealand.

Submissions close on 16 August, 2019.



## Cottage Pie

Looking for a simple but hearty meal to cure the Winter blues? Try this delicious Cottage Pie recipe from the NZ Nutrition Foundation.

Serves 2.

### Ingredients

1 tablespoon oil

½ onion, finely diced

250g beef or lamb mince

1 tablespoon flour

2 teaspoons tomato sauce

2 teaspoons chutney or relish (optional)

1/3 cup liquid stock

1 ½ cups frozen or fresh vegetables

2 potatoes boiled and mashed

2 teaspoons butter

¼ cup cheese, grated

Salt and pepper to taste

### Method

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Heat oil in a large fry pan. Add onion and cook until tender.

Add mince and cook until browned. Stir in flour and cook for 1 minute.

Add tomato sauce, chutney, and stock. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the vegetables, simmering until cooked.

In a separate bowl, combine mashed potatoes, butter, and cheese. Mix until smooth.

To assemble place mince on the bottom of oven proof dish and top with potato mixture.

Bake for 20 minutes at 180°C.



## Telecommunications Commissioner



Dr Stephen Gale

Remember when TV went from analogue to digital? A similar evolution is underway with New Zealand transitioning from the old copper telephone and broadband network to new technologies via fibre and mobile networks. More than 700,000 homes have already made the switch to fibre and by 2020 around three quarters of the country is expected to have access to fibre.

Once fibre has been rolled out to your area, the copper network can be phased out. This means your landline will run through the internet using a new technology – a bit like when TV went from analogue to digital.

### So, what does it mean for you?

Switching to a fibre connection will result in increased download and upload speeds and a more reliable internet connection. You will still have access to your landline and the internet, but it will run through a new technology. As more people switch to fibre, telecommunications network provider Chorus will be able to stop offering certain copper services. But, before Chorus can do this, the Commission will be

developing safeguards to protect consumers.

This includes ensuring that your copper landline and internet connection cannot be taken away until an equivalent fibre service is readily available at no additional cost. We're also working to ensure vulnerable consumers have an alternative way of contacting 111 in the event of a power cut, as landlines provided by a fibre connection will not work.

You can find out more about this work on our website at [www.comcom.govt.nz](http://www.comcom.govt.nz)

On a different topic, we're also on the hunt for more volunteers for our Measuring Broadband New Zealand programme. The programme is designed to provide consumers with independent information on broadband performance across different providers, plans and technologies.

You can find out more and register to be a volunteer at [www.measuringbroadbandnewzealand.com](http://www.measuringbroadbandnewzealand.com)

If you have a complaint about your telco you can contact the Telecommunications Dispute Resolution at [www.tdr.org.nz](http://www.tdr.org.nz)

Once these protections are in place, your retailer will be able to advise on the best options for you. However, if you have any questions in the meantime you can email [regulation.branch@comcom.govt.nz](mailto:regulation.branch@comcom.govt.nz)

## Unreal reality at Auckland rest home

Virtual reality is taking Auckland rest home residents from their chairs and transporting them to exotic places around the globe.

The technology is being piloted at Lady Allum rest home in Milford, run by Oceania Healthcare, and is proving a big hit with residents.

The virtual reality (VR) technology creates a realistic 3D image that gives residents a 360-degree view of their surroundings.

Each VR experience can be tailored to the resident's interests and history.

That means they can travel to places they never thought they'd see and revisit the familiar stomping grounds of their youth.

Personalised VR experiences even make it possible for residents to visit with family in far-away places or return to the neighbourhoods where they grew up.

For some that has meant seeing their 12-week old grandchild for the first time, while others are able to take that long-awaited visit to Peru.

Lady Allum resident, Jenifer Plummer, said the experience was unique.

**“It’s fantastic. I had the Andes mountains last week and you feel like you’re really there.”**

An Oceania spokeswoman said that VR helped prevent boredom, anxiety and depression in its residents

“While some of our residents may be physically frail, they have not lost their love of travel or their desire to learn and explore,” she said.

“VR gives them the ability to do this and it’s more than just entertainment.”

You can find out more about the initiative at [www.oceaniahealthcare.co.nz](http://www.oceaniahealthcare.co.nz)



## Mental Health and Ageing Survey

The University of Otago is conducting a Mental Health and Ageing Survey to better understand the needs of people who use mental health services as they grow older.

They are looking for people aged 55 years and older who are currently seeing someone for their mental health. That can include people using a community mental health service, seeing a counsellor or seeing a GP for mental health.

The study involves filling in a 30–40 minute survey that can be undertaken in your own time, and is entirely anonymous. The survey is available online or as a hard copy.

At the moment there is limited availability of good national data relating to the quality of older adult's mental health services so the research team hopes this nation first study will “lead the way towards improving mental health and wellbeing in New Zealand”.

For more information, please go to [www.otago.ac.nz/mental-health-and-ageing](http://www.otago.ac.nz/mental-health-and-ageing)



## Find us online

Want to know more about the Office for Seniors and what we do? Then take a look at the SuperSeniors website.

There you can find out the latest news and events happening across New Zealand.

You can also find out information about our age-friendly programme, order elder abuse resources and see the latest on the draft strategy for an ageing population.

You can also sign up to our SuperSeniors newsletter and check out new SuperGold Card deals.

Find us at [www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz](http://www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz)



## Medical alarm service cost changes

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) funds the costs of medical alarm services to its eligible clients through the Disability Allowance.

As part of this funding, MSD regularly negotiates with medical alarm suppliers to make sure their clients continue to get a quality service at a competitive price. This supports people to stay safe and independent in their own homes.

From 19 August 2019, there'll be a small change in the weekly cost for medical alarm services. The amount may increase, decrease, or stay the same depending on the supplier.

To make sure people stay safe, there'll be no interruption to people's medical alarm service. MSD will write to people letting them know about the change and will automatically adjust the Disability Allowance payments of people affected.

If you have a medical alarm provided by a non-accredited supplier you can still get the cost of the alarm covered by your Disability Allowance. If you choose to change to a different supplier, you'll need to choose an accredited supplier.

The assessment and application process for the Disability Allowance hasn't changed.

***The MSD-accredited suppliers of medical alarm services are:***

**ADT Security Ltd** ☎ 0800 111 238 or 0800 238 272

**Chubb New Zealand** ☎ 0800 20 30 40

**Freedom Medical Alarms** ☎ 0800 380 280

**St John Medical Alarms** ☎ 0800 502 323

**Red Wolf High Level Monitoring** ☎ 0800 673 252

MSD is also adding more accredited suppliers soon. This will give people more choice when choosing a MSD-accredited supplier.

For more information, go to [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)



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