

Shining a light on elder abuse and neglect



Minister for Seniors, the Hon Maggie Barry, with SuperSeniors champions Dame Malvina Major, Precious McKenzie and Dame Kate Harcourt.

Seniors Minister Maggie Barry is calling for a light to be shone on elder abuse over concerns the 2,000 documented cases each year represent only a small part of thousands more that go unreported.

At an event to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the Minister said it was time to bring the issue out of the shadows.

"It still is the secret a lot of people don't talk about and until we do shed light on this dark space, we don't really know the extent of the problem," Ms Barry says.

"We know there are many others that occur. Based on our population, if you look at international trends, there would be more than 17,000 cases a year."

The Minister was joined by three SuperSeniors Champions; high-profile advocates for older people.

Actor Dame Kate Harcourt told the audience "ageing is not for sissies" and advised seniors to appoint a power of attorney to keep their finances safe. Champion weightlifter Precious McKenzie recommended keeping fit to remain sharp while Dame Malvina Major, who said she was "retiring" next

week, outlined work commitments which will keep the international opera star connected to the community.

That connection is vital for seniors' self esteem and wellbeing as they age.

In launching a new survey, 'Attitudes Towards Ageing', the Minister revealed many seniors reported feeling lonely and isolated despite 8 out of 10 people having respect for older people.

"Social isolation and loneliness among our seniors is particularly concerning as it increases vulnerability to elder abuse and neglect.

"I want people to be aware of the many forms and nuances elder abuse takes.

"It takes a village and a very aware community, to ensure our vulnerable people are kept safe. We all need to be diligent and aware of what can go wrong."

The Government directly funds 27 elder abuse and neglect prevention services and last year the Minister launched Community Connects, an umbrella programme to encourage age-friendly communities, and reduce social isolation.



Keep warm this winter with energy efficiency tips and see if you're eligible for free home insulation.

From the Retirement Commissioner, find out the questions you need to be asking about retirement villages, while two well-known actors explain why inter-generational living works for them.

If you're travelling to Australia this winter, don't forget to take your SuperGold card.

If you're using public transport in Auckland, or planning to, we have the information you need to know about Auckland Transport AT HOP changes.

I hope you enjoy reading this latest edition of the SuperSeniors newsletter.

Regards,

Honourable Maggie Barry ONZM
Minister for Seniors

SuperSeniors Champions join fight against elder abuse

Advocates and representatives of older New Zealanders gathered at the Beehive on 15 June for a function hosted by the Minister for Seniors, the Hon Maggie Barry, to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.



The Minister for Seniors



Dame Malvina Major



Dame Kate Harcourt



Precious McKenzie



Coromandel MP Scott Simpson, with Precious McKenzie and the Hon Maggie Barry.



Bronwyn Groot from BNZ with Stephanie Clare of Age Concern.



Tusha Penny from the NZ Police, with Precious McKenzie, Dame Kate Harcourt, Emma Powell of the ACC.



Nilima Venkatakrishnan from the Shanti Niwas Charitable Trust, with Hanny Naus and Louise Collins of Age Concern.



Banking Ombudsman Nicola Sladden and Elliot Parker of Age Concern.



Malia Hamani of TOA Pacific International with Te Ati Heremaia from the Te Oranga Kaumatua Kuia Disability Support Services Trust.

It's all about respect

There is a high level of respect for seniors and they are valued across the generations, according to initial findings from the first ever 'Attitudes towards Ageing' survey in New Zealand.

Overall, eight in ten people said they had respect for older people, and the closer one got to senior status, the more that increased.

Millennials (aged 18 to 34) and Generation X (35 to 49) all showed positive attitudes with 80 percent saying they have great respect for seniors.

The number climbs even higher for Baby Boomers with 89 percent reporting great respect for the 75-plus. Older people were also viewed as an asset to society. More than half of those surveyed, 54 percent, considered that seniors brought benefits and were of value to society.

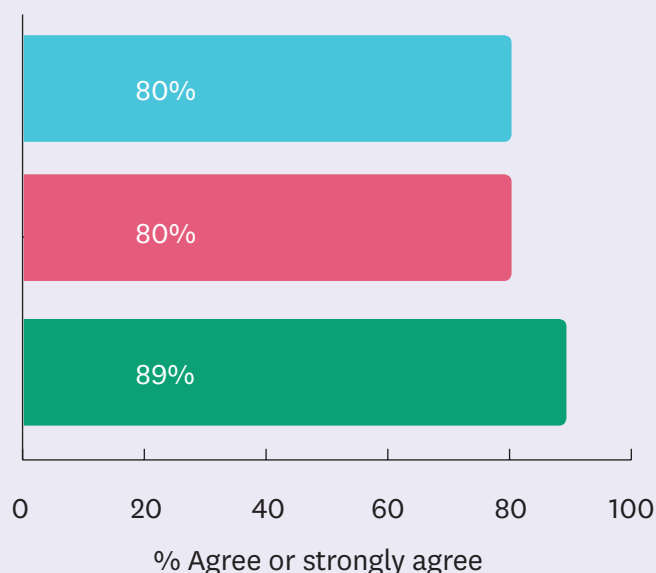
But one in ten people aged 75-plus reported feeling lonely or being socially isolated, and a higher number say they have at times felt invisible.

The survey, commissioned by the Office for Seniors, shows the importance of connecting generations which the Office is working towards through its Community Connects programme and promotion of age-friendly initiatives.

For more information on this survey, go to the **SuperSeniors website**.

I have great respect for older people

■ Millennials ■ Generation X ■ Baby Boomers



AT HOP changes from 1 July

As a SuperGold Cardholder in Auckland you are entitled to travel free on local trains, selected buses and ferries, after 9am weekdays and all weekend.

The Government's commitment to the SuperGold Card transport concession has not changed.

But, from July, Auckland Transport will require you to use an AT HOP Card to access your free off-peak public transport.

Auckland Transport advises its AT HOP Card will cost \$10 plus \$5 credit for a total one-off cost of \$15.

The SuperGold Card concession will then be loaded onto the AT HOP Card at an AT Customer Service Centre.

If you already have a blue AT HOP Card, you can swap it for a gold AT HOP Card in the next 12 months.

AT HOP Cards can be bought online and from retailers.

To get an AT HOP Card and for more information about what's happening and for seniors travelling to Auckland:

- call Auckland Transport on **09 366 6400** or **0800 AT GOLD** (0800 28 4653)
- visit an Auckland Transport Customer Service Centre
- go to **www.at.govt.nz/supergold**

Queen's Birthday Honours

Congratulations to Lance Girling-Butcher, Margaret Dando and Billie Jordan who were all recognised in the Queen's Birthday honours list.

Lance, who was awarded a Queen's Service Medal for services to the blind and seniors, was our first SuperSeniors Champion and has been a tireless campaigner for the disabled, as well as advocating the shift to an age-friendly community in New Plymouth.

Margaret received a Queen's Service Medal for services to senior citizens. She established the 'Steady As You Go' exercise programme in Dunedin to help older people stay mobile.

Billie was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her services to seniors and dance. She is well known for establishing NZ's Hip Op-eration crew.

Retirement villages – what you need to know

Diane Maxwell, Retirement Commissioner

Home is where the heart is. It has memories, familiarity and the neighbours you know.

But at some point you may look up and decide it is too big, takes too much work, and start looking at where to next.

One of the downsizing choices is a retirement village. Village residents tell me they start thinking about it around two years before they actually move in, then often it was a life event that drove the final decision; maybe a fall or an illness.

The second thing residents tell me is that when you look at a village there is a lot to take in. There's your Occupation Rights Agreement (ORA), code of practice, code of residents' rights and the disclosure statement.

You'll be required to get independent legal advice to help you with all of that before you can become a resident.

We're working with the industry on simplification of those documents but in the meantime let's look at what you need to be thinking about.

When you buy into a village you typically buy an ORA which means the right to live there. You're not buying the land or the building, and you won't get capital gains.

After a period of time, usually between two to five years, you will be charged a deferred management fee (DMF), usually 20-30 per cent of the amount you paid.

I talk to many residents who are happy and see the DMF as the price for being where they want to be, and others who want to move but don't have enough left after paying the DMF to buy into another village or get back into the property market.

There are some key questions to consider. Will you be able to take your pet? Are all the amenities in the sales materials actually built, are any under construction?

Many modern villages have a pool and a gym, some have a cinema, hairdressers, and happy hour in the bar.



Diane Maxwell

Always check the village is registered and a member of the Retirement Villages Association. Both offer you protection.

We'd like to hear from you

The Retirement Commissioner is carrying out a three-yearly review of retirement income policies and would like to hear from you.

The answers you give to this short survey will feed into the recommendations she makes to the government. Go to the Commission for Financial Capability website: www.cffc.org.nz



Always Respected

ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS WEEK

15 - 22 June

Two actors, one roof – how does that work?

Living in an extended family clan can be challenging but Dame Kate Harcourt and daughter Miranda have turned it into an art form.

The actors share a house in Wellington with Dame Kate in a self-contained apartment downstairs, which works well for her.

“I’m never lonely for a start,” says the recently announced SuperSeniors champion. “I could be down here all day and not speak a word to anybody but I know that there’s company upstairs if I need it, and there’s noise sometimes.

“It’s just nice to know that you’re not on your own – that’s the principal thing for me. I could be alone but I’m never lonely.

“I’m the family taxi, especially for my grandson. If I had a dollar for every time I’ve had to take him to school, I’d be a wealthy woman!”

Miranda Harcourt says there are advantages living at the same address.

“The benefits are many for Kate because she feels wanted and needed and she has constant communication. It’s great for her.”

Sometimes the family eats together, other times not.

“Kate often comes up for dinner, but not always,” says Miranda.

“Sometimes we’ll come down and say, ‘Kate come up for dinner’ and she’ll go, ‘No thank you very much, I’m quite happy with [what] I’ve got down here’



Dame Kate Harcourt and Miranda Harcourt

or she’ll say, ‘What’s on the menu?’ ”

Dame Kate’s advice for others considering similar arrangements?

“You need to be totally self-sufficient but within calling distance.

“We’ve got a door between floors but we always say knock, knock and ask if we can enter. They do the same with me and it’s just a common courtesy.”

You can find out more about how the Harcourts live together on the **SuperSeniors Website**.

Keep active and stay fit for life

Professor Matthew Parsons, University of Auckland

‘Use it or lose it’ is as true today as it always has been and as relevant to keeping your brain going as it is to keeping your body in good shape.

However, what does it actually mean - do we need to go to the gym every morning?

Our peak muscle mass occurs in our mid 20s and there’s a gradual decline from that point. If we’re inactive, we lose muscle mass by around three per cent per day. What’s interesting is that it doesn’t occur if we remain fit and active.

We now know these declines are not an age-related change. They occur as a consequence of social change – children, time pressures, parking the car close to the shops so that we can get home quicker to make dinner.

We don’t usually notice the reduced fitness until much later on, often in our early 50s and 60s, and then often fail to do much about it until it becomes a problem.

If we don’t notice until our 80s, then it becomes a real issue.

A decline increases the risks of falling or injuring ourselves. If we become ill, low strength increases the time it takes for us to bounce back.

If we want to remain independent and in control, then we need to remain fit.



Professor Matthew Parsons

Some easy tips for keeping fit

- instead of parking at your destination, park further away and walk
- take stairs where you can
- go for a swim at your local pool
- take an aqua-aerobics class
- take a walk to a local park.

Insulating for healthy homes

A couple on the Kapiti coast say having their home insulated has made it much easier to heat. Laurie and Evelyn have lived in their home for more than 25 years and knew it was too cold.

They became aware they might qualify for free ceiling and underfloor insulation through EECA, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority.

From July, the insulation is offered to tenants with a Community Services Card. The programme may also accept referrals from low-income households with health conditions related to cold, damp housing.

Further details will be available by 1 July 2016. Check the Energywise website below.

Laurie says getting the insulation installed was quick and easy and the house is much cosier.

“The house is much warmer and retains heat at the end of the day.”



Evelyn and Laurie

If you are renting, visit www.energywise.govt.nz to find out if you qualify for the free insulation.

Evelyn says she's a fan of EECA tips:

- Make sure you ventilate your home, even in winter, by opening doors or windows for about 20 minutes a day. Having lots of moisture in your home makes it harder to heat.
- Dry washing outside or in the garage or carport. Drying them indoors or with a clothes dryer that is not ducted to the outside will increase the moisture in the air, making your home damper.
- Unflued gas heaters are bad for your health as they release large amounts of moisture and toxic combustion gases into your house. They can also be a fire hazard. Never use them in a bedroom. A cheap electric heater costs less to run and won't make your house damp.
- Consider using a dehumidifier together with a heater. Having a warm room makes it easier for a dehumidifier to extract moisture.

Pack your SuperGold Card when you cross the ditch

If you have a SuperGold Card make sure you take it with you when visiting Australia.

There are a number of discounts you'll be able to take advantage of, for example:

- Thinking of visiting Sydney's Taronga Zoo? The standard rate is \$46 (AUD) but if you show your SuperGold Card, you'll be able to get a ticket for \$36 at the gate.
- A trip to Melbourne could include checking out the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) and the adjacent National Sports Museum. Turn up with your SuperGold Card and pay only \$25 (AUD) for the combined tour instead of \$31.50.
- Or if you're going to Queensland and want to visit Fraser Island, mention you're a SuperGold Cardholder when booking to get 15 per cent off the tour.

There are different discounts on offer so check out what's available before you go, on the info for cardholders' page at: supergold.govt.nz

You can also look out for the 'Seniors Card welcome here' stickers in Australia and ask if they accept our SuperGold Card.

Check out the state websites for more details:

Victoria: seniorsonline.vic.gov.au

Queensland: qld.gov.au/seniors

New South Wales: seniorcard.nsw.gov.au

South Australia: seniorcard.sa.gov.au

Western Australia: seniorcard.wa.gov.au

Tasmania: dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/csr

Northern Territory: nt.gov.au/community/seniors

ACT: actseniorcard.org.au

Links to the stories in this newsletter can be found in the electronic version

» www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz > News and Events (purple circle) > Newsletter > June 2016

SuperGold Card Special Offers

Check out the latest special offers for our super seniors through the SuperSeniors website.

Tell us you're a SuperGold member during July 2016 and receive a \$50 discount* on your Enduring Powers of Attorney.

*Offer available 1-31 July 2016 and is not to be used in conjunction with any other offer.

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Disclaimer: The SuperGold Card programme enables independent businesses to offer discounts and benefits to older New Zealanders. The Ministry of Social Development is not associated with any seller and does not guarantee any representation made by a seller and any future dispute will need to be taken up with the seller not the Ministry of Social Development. Offers range in size and nature and cardholders should always check to see if a better offer is available locally.

SuperGold

New Zealand Government

 **Office for Seniors**
Te Tari Kaumātua

Administered by the Ministry of Social Development