

JOINT SUPPORT

DONORS NEWSLETTER
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SEPTEMBER FOCUS: SPREADING THE WORD

September is a special month for us...

Not only is it Spring, but it is also our Annual Appeal Week. There are two targets for our Appeal. One is very definitely a financial one – we need the money the Appeal generates. The second is equally important – this is our opportunity to raise awareness of arthritis in the community.

An amazing arthritis sufferer who is helping us with both of these targets is Christchurch's Catherine (Cate) Grace.

Cate is the fourth generation on her maternal side with rheumatoid arthritis (RA). She was just 30 years old when she was diagnosed with RA. After years of denial, depression and gaining large amounts of weight, Cate met Sue (an Arthritis New Zealand Educator), who gave Cate support and information about her condition and equipped Cate with the ability to listen to her body and accept when time off was necessary.

Cate feels with the help of Arthritis New Zealand her journey has been less painful: "I'm so glad to have the support of the Arthritis Educators and Arthritis New Zealand, it really does make the journey easier."



"I am no longer in denial. I am not even in remission. I have learnt to manage and live with my chronic conditions. It might sound strange, but being diagnosed with arthritis was one of the best things that ever happened to me. I continue to live with my chronic health condition and it makes me appreciate life and live it to the fullest."

Cate is now the joint owner of Leap Fitness & Motivation Ltd, a company dedicated to helping people with chronic health conditions get back to leading a healthy life. Through the company Cate aims to prove that arthritis sufferers can be physically active and not destined to a life on the couch. She holds exercise classes for those who have arthritis which include exercises like squats that don't hurt the knees and boxing without connecting therefore no impact on the joint.

One of the newest initiatives that Leap Fitness has started is a walking

group for people with chronic conditions. The group meets every Monday and aims to walk a marathon. So far they have walked nearly 10k's.

Cate hopes to get a group together for a Walk for Arthritis Appeal event during the Annual Appeal to help generate donations. For more information visit www.everydayhero.co.nz/event/walkforarthritis

Recently at the New Zealand Rheumatology Association Annual Scientific Meeting, Cate spoke about 'Collaboration with a holistic approach and how it really does work'.

Cate shared how through her own journey she discovered that in order to get control of her life back after being diagnosed with arthritis, she needed the collaboration of her surrounding support team which consisted of family, friends, doctors and Arthritis New Zealand. She also needed to learn the skills to self

manage her condition and ask for help. Cate recommends:

- taking every referral and opportunity
- exercising and resting regularly
- body weight training and low impact cardio
- learning what you can and can't do with your type of arthritis
- acceptance of arthritis and being positive

Having a team working with you and supporting you is key to the self-management of arthritis. With the support of your GP, specialists, friends, family and Arthritis New Zealand you can learn to live with arthritis rather than be controlled by it. For more information on how to do this phone 0800 663 463.



Sandra Kirby,
Arthritis New Zealand Chief Executive

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FROM THE

Chief Executive's Desk

Kia ora tatou

I read the paper and sometimes you can just about see the steam coming out of my ears.

Every day there are stories about health and the cost of good health. But what makes me steam is that for many of the news items the health system begins and ends at the door of the local hospital.

A Rheumatologist was talking recently about treatment for arthritis - it used to be that long term hospital admissions were the norm because warm water, wax and plaster casts formed the basis of treatment. Those times are behind us – thankfully. Most people with arthritis require limited hospital stays as earlier diagnosis, better drugs and treatment options have come on stream.

Health is about more than hospitals.

I don't envy the politicians trying to balance our seemingly insatiable appetites for more health treatment, more hospitals, more of everything and yet less tax. I am grateful that we have gathered around a group of MPs that have a particular interest in arthritis – our Parliamentary Friends of Arthritis. We aim to work with these MPs and their colleagues to ensure that our messages about improving the quality of life for people with arthritis

are not lost in the barrage our MP's face on a daily basis.

Arthritis, we tell people can strike anyone at any age. Every family is likely to have a person in their midst with arthritis. One of the challenges that goes hand in hand with being common is that we are so normal that we can be overlooked.

Health is an important commodity for people with arthritis and with the support of our services and excellent community and outpatient services people with arthritis enjoy a quality of life that people in earlier times couldn't contemplate. For us to build on this, we need to continue to advocate so that the public debates about health include our issues – hospitals are important but health is more than hospitals.

Nga mihi

Sandra Kirby
Chief Executive

Fundraising update

2010 has seen the launch of some exciting new fundraising opportunities

Walk for Arthritis Appeal

Fancy a challenge? We are looking for keen kiwis to be sponsored to walk during our Annual Appeal. So grab those trainers and warm up it's time to move together!

We have made it easy by setting up an online tool for you to create your very own

fundraising page, which you can then email to your friends and family so they get donating and support your challenge!

For more information visit arthritis.org.nz and click on 'Walk for Arthritis Appeal' under the 'How You Can Help' section.

Fundraising update continued...

Looking for a way to support Arthritis New Zealand?

530,000 Corporate Gerbera Club

There are now more than 530,000 New Zealanders living with arthritis. We need you to help us reach our challenge of gaining donations of \$100 from 5,300 businesses to support Arthritis New Zealand's services.

The dollars raised will then represent the 530,000 people we are advocating for. In return, your business will be listed on our website with a direct link to your website, showing just how community-focused and supportive your business really is!

You can check out our progress and join

your business up by visiting arthritis.org.nz and click on 'Corporate Gerbera Club' under the 'How You Can Help' section or by calling 0800 663 463.

Arthritis New Zealand Lottery

Arthritis New Zealand will be running another lottery in 2010 with a draw just prior to Christmas. So for some lucky person, Santa will come a few days early or alternatively they may not have to shop for gifts for the family!

Tickets will be \$10 each and there will be a range of prizes (being finalised as Joint Support went to print) so watch our website.

Prizes will include motor vehicles, boat and trailer, travel with smaller prizes for early bird and multi-ticket buyers.

Our lottery programme is an important part of our fundraising strategy and we value the support and interest New Zealanders have in this.



The True Cost of Arthritis

Arthritis New Zealand commissioned Access Economics late last year to update a 2005 report with estimates of the prevalence and costs of arthritis in New Zealand in 2010.

Sandra Kirby, Chief Executive of Arthritis New Zealand, comments on just how expensive arthritis is: "The report shows that the financial cost of arthritis in New Zealand is estimated to be \$3.2 billion".

"To put this in perspective – that's the equivalent of all of the forestry export for last year being spent on people with arthritis. This is the message we still need to keep bringing to the attention of people because we are under the national awareness radar," Ms Kirby says.

The report shows that the prevalence of arthritis is expected to grow to more than 650,000 people in the next decade, largely

due to demographic aging.

The report also stated that:

- People with arthritis are 5% less likely to be employed than those without arthritis, based on New Zealand Health Survey data.
- Over 25,000 New Zealanders will not work in 2010 due to arthritis, costing around \$1.48 billion in lost productivity in 2010.
- Health sector costs of arthritis are estimated to be \$695m in 2010, 22% of total financial costs.
- Hospital costs represent around one third of health sector costs (\$237m).

- Public inpatient costs are 42% of hospital costs, and are dominated by osteoarthritic knee and hip surgeries.
- Pathology and imaging together are estimated to be 12% of health sector costs.
- The indirect costs of arthritis (\$2.50bn) outweigh health costs around 3.6 to 1.

If you would like a copy of the Executive Summary and the Report, please visit arthritis.org.nz and click on 'Research'.

Workplace Education on Gout

The Northern Region Arthritis Educators are getting a new name for themselves as the 'Gout Busters'

as they continue to develop and provide workplace education programmes focused on gout in Auckland.

Since 2008 one of the main focuses of the workplace education programmes was to meet the needs of Māori and Pacific people affected by gout. Gout is the third most common form of arthritis in New Zealand and results in high rates of sick days as people grapple with excruciating pain.

Gout can occur in anyone but is more common in Māori and Pacific people.

Where possible, these programmes include the testing of uric acid levels (which is an indication of gout risk) by using a Reflotron Machine. These machines are a valuable resource for engaging the client and raising awareness of gout education and self management of the condition.

Results of Education/Testing Clinics in 2010:

- 126 clients – 68% male, 32% female

- 91% between 25-65 years old
- 31% Māori & 27% Pacific
- 20% had a prior diagnosis of gout
- 77% had no previous diagnosis of gout and 30-60% of these were found to have elevated levels uric acid levels

Our 'Gout Busters' will continue to develop programmes for Māori and Pacific communities in the Northern region and are planning a research study to measure outcomes of these initiatives including reduced work absences.

The workplace education programmes can be tailored to suit each workplace's requirements.

If you are interested in finding out more about the workplace education programmes please contact:
Jane Messer on (09) 523 8906 or 027 294 0995 or email jane.messer@arthritis.org.nz



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