

**MS+PD**



Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's Society of Canterbury (Inc)

November 2014



**IN THIS ISSUE:**

**New MS Drugs Overview**

**Survive the Summer: Tips for Heat and Sun**

**Christmas Closing Dates**



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This year the approaching year-end coincides with the departure of the Society's highly respected, revered and very long serving Manager, Jenny Boyer.

Jenny will be retiring when the Society shuts for the Christmas holidays and the board are actively seeking a new Service Manager to nurture the organisation through the next period of development.

Jenny joined the Society staff almost 30 years ago and has been the manager for the past 10 years. During this time she has witnessed many changes in the sector and been involved in numerous initiatives to improve the availability and accessibility of services for people living with MS or Parkinson's, efforts for which we are tremendously grateful.

I'm sure I speak on behalf of staff and members when I say that it is with great sadness that we say farewell to this Society stalwart and that you would join me in wishing Jenny endless days of joy and sunshine.

Jenny, we hope and fully expect that you will remain in close contact with the Society in the coming years and we are looking forward to a retrospective article from you in the February 2015 Newsletter!

Members are invited to drop in during normal office hours to say farewell personally to Jenny in the week starting Monday 15 December.

## BAYER SPONSORSHIP

I'd like to acknowledge Bayer New Zealand for their continued financial support of the Society. This relationship has now been in place for over a decade, during which time Bayer New Zealand has provided grants annually to the Society. These very generous grants have greatly increased our capacity to educate and support members.

## HOME VISITS

The Society encourages all members to make use of the Home Visit and other services as required and to know that your requests for information or support are welcomed by Society staff.

New members particularly need to be reminded that they are responsible for booking home visits from Resource Nurses. While the nurses might call you occasionally to check how you're doing, this generally happens when they haven't heard from a particular member in a while rather than it being a scheduled call.

Staff contact details appear on Page 4 of the Newsletter. You can also easily contact a staff member by email by clicking on their name at [www.ms-pd.org.nz/contact-us](http://www.ms-pd.org.nz/contact-us).

## BECOME A REGULAR DONOR

The Giving Season is upon us and it is at this time of the year that we ask members to consider making a regular financial donation to the Society.

As you might be aware, it is becoming increasingly difficult to source the level of grant funding required to fill the Society's budget shortfall (the difference between the actual cost of running the organisation and the income received from annual subscriptions and contracts).

Annual subscriptions provide only 9% of our annual budget, so if you feel you're able to give more towards the programmes the Society provides then others with MS and Parkinson's would receive the benefit.

The security of knowing that a donation will be coming in regularly allows us to better plan for the future and make important decisions on programmes and services.

Your regular donation makes a huge difference to the lives of others living with MS or Parkinson's. This donation may be as little as \$1 a week or as much as you feel you are able to give; every little bit truly makes a difference.

To set up an automatic payment, please complete the enclosed form and post it back to the Society. Remember, all donations of \$5 or more are tax deductible and will be receipted every March. Thank you for your support!

You will find a downloadable Automatic Payment Authority for Regular Giving form at: [www.ms-pd.org.nz/apform.pdf](http://www.ms-pd.org.nz/apform.pdf) or you can ask Annette to send you one by calling 03 366-2857 ext.6.

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

On behalf of the board and the staff, I'd like to wish you an enjoyable and relaxing festive season and all of the very best for the coming year.

Please be aware of our upcoming events:

- 9 December – The Society's Christmas BBQ
- March – Court Theatre Fundraiser
- March – AGM

Yours sincerely,



**Malcolm Rickerby, President**

**03 338 1770, [president@ms-pd.org.nz](mailto:president@ms-pd.org.nz)**



## PARKINSON'S SPOUSES GROUP

The final meeting for 2014 of the Parkinson's Spouses Support Group is on **Tuesday 2 December at 10.30am** at Terra Viva, 196 Roydvale Ave, Burnside.

Details for Group meetings in the first months of 2015 will be made available closer to the time.

Contact Bronnie at:  
**b.alexander@ms-pd.org.nz** or on  
**03 366-2857 ext. 4** for more information.

## HOLIDAY CLOSING DATES

The Society will be closed during the Christmas Holidays.

The last day of operation will be **Friday 19 December** and we will reopen on **Monday 12 January 2015**.

If you need medical assistance during this time, please contact your GP.

If you attend Gym at the Society or any of our Exercise Classes then please note down the following last class dates:

GROUP	LAST CLASS
Open Gym	Wed 17 Dec
Parkinson's Exercise Groups	Thur 18 Dec
Yoga	Thur 11 Dec
Nordic Walking	Fri 19 Dec
MS Thursday Group	Thur 18 Dec
MS Friday Group	Fri 19 Dec

All groups apart from Yoga will resume at their normal times in the week of **19 January 2015**. Yoga classes recommence on **Tuesday 10 February 2015**.

## MS LUNCH CLUB

This group is for members with MS, who have been living with the condition for many years. If you would like to join this group, please contact **Judy on 366-2857 ext. 3**.

The Lunch Club meets on the first Wednesday of the month at noon with the final Club meeting for 2014 on **3 December**. The Club recommences following the Christmas break on **4 February**, with upcoming dates of **4 March and 1 April**.

# NOTICEBOARD

## TOTAL MOBILITY UPDATE

The new smart cards have been sent out to members who have paid their annual subscription and Total Mobility annual administration fee.

If you require your smart card to be visible, Gold Band taxis have kindly provided our Society with a limited stock of smart card holders attached to a lanyard necklace.

If you require any information regarding the smart card, please contact Annette on **366-2857 ext. 6**.

## PODIATRIST

Podiatry visits are the first Tuesday of the month with upcoming dates of **2 December, 3 February, 3 March and 1 April**. The cost for this service is \$20 a visit and is significantly subsidised by the Society for our members.

As this service is very popular, it is essential to book. If you make an appointment and find you cannot attend, you **MUST** phone to cancel. Otherwise the Podiatrist will charge you for the missed appointment.

To book or cancel an appointment, please contact Annette at **support@ms-pd.org.nz** or on **03 366-2857 ext. 6**.

## HAVE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS CHANGED?

If so, please email Annette at **support@ms-pd.org.nz** to ensure we have the most up-to-date contact details for you.

Email is an important and cost-effective (FREE!) way for the Society to communicate, so please let us know if your email address changes.



Like us on  
**Facebook**

[www.ms-pd.org.nz](http://www.ms-pd.org.nz)

## DUO COOKBOOKS NOW JUST \$15!

DUO Cookbooks make great Christmas presents... especially for those friends or family members who seem to have everything.

We have a number of copies of this popular item for sale at the much reduced price of **\$15, almost half their original price!**

DUO features over 160 recipes, including special contributions from renowned chef Jo Seagar and past NZ MasterChef winner Brett McGregor!

You can buy copies in the office or order them online at [www.ms-pd.org.nz/duo](http://www.ms-pd.org.nz/duo).

A small postage fee applies and all proceeds raised go towards the support programmes offered by the Society. If you have any questions please contact Annette on [support@ms-pd.org.nz](mailto:support@ms-pd.org.nz) or on **03 366 2857 ext. 6**.



## CHRISTMAS BBQ

Our good friends from the Papanui Club will again provide members and their families with a delicious BBQ lunch. It also gives you the opportunity to say farewell to the Society's manager Jenny Boyer, who will be retiring at the end of the year. Jenny started working here in 1988 and has been the Society's manager for over 10 years.

The Christmas BBQ will be held at the Society offices on **Tuesday 9 December at noon**.

If you would like to celebrate the upcoming festive season with us, please contact Annette on **03 366 2857 ext. 6**. **Booking is essential.**



## BIG SAVINGS AWAIT

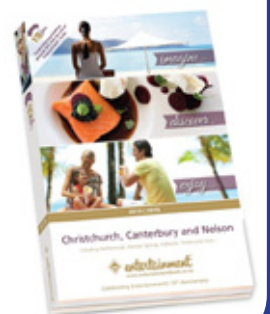
The Society will be selling the very popular Entertainment Book again for 2015 for the 10th year. It provides you with great savings to the most popular restaurants, attractions, shopping, travel and more, while providing the Society with much needed funds as we receive \$13.00 for every book sold.

**We're holding the 2013 price of \$65.00 to make it as widely accessible as possible.**

Please help us to sell more books by telling your friends and family.

Order forms will go out with the first Newsletter in 2015.

If you would like more information, please contact **Annette on 366 2857 ext.6**.



## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR ANNUAL APPEAL

The Society is tremendously grateful to all the volunteers who braved a chilly and often inhospitable Friday in September to help with our annual Street Appeal.

The Street Appeal was held across Canterbury over two days, Friday 5 September and Saturday 6 September. It attracted the support of over 450 volunteers, including high school students, local MPs, Society members and community volunteers. Together they collected almost \$39,000 at 68 locations.

The money collected goes directly towards providing support programmes for our members, like the Home Visiting Programme and the Gym and Exercise Programme.

While the amount raised was short of this year's collection target it was nonetheless a fantastic result given the challenge presented by the weather and society's relentless move to trading with Eftpos and Credit Cards, which we are unable to process.

The growing number of people no longer carrying cash is becoming problematic for all organisations conducting street appeals across multiple sites because of the cost of renting appropriate devices and the time taken to train collectors to use them, but the Society will be investigating the deployment of electronic payment methods at key sites in the future.

We are very grateful for those who spread the word about our online donation campaign. Online donations are always accepted through [www.givealittle.co.nz/org/MSPD](http://www.givealittle.co.nz/org/MSPD).

The Society would like to thank the individual members and volunteers who acted as team leaders for Carnation Day.

We would also like to thank the following schools and organisations for their generosity in organising collection points throughout the region:

- Altrusa International**
- Cashmere High School**
- Christchurch Boys' High School**
- Christchurch Girls' High School Interact Group**
- Kaiapoi High School**
- Kiwanis Club of North West Christchurch**
- Lions Club of Akaroa & Bays**
- Lions Club of Ashburton Pakeke**
- Lions Club of Christchurch Pegasus**
- Lions Club of Christchurch South**
- Lions Club of Hanmer Springs**
- Lions Club of Kaikoura (Seaward)**
- Lions Club of Lyttelton**
- Lions Club of Malvern (Darfield)**
- Lions Club of Rakaia**
- Lions Club of Riccarton Waimairi**
- Lions Club of Rolleston & Districts**
- Lions Club of Woodend**
- Lions Club of Malvern (Darfield)**
- Rangiora High School**
- Rotary Club of Christchurch South**
- Rotary Club of Hornby**
- Rotary Club of Lincoln**
- St Andrew's College**



A very big thank you also to the **Lions Club of Methven** and the **Oxford and District Lions Club** for their generous donations, as well as to the students from **Hagley Community College** and the **University of Canterbury** who volunteered independently.

We hope to see you all again next year for our Street Appeal, because without your help none of this would have been possible!



## A POSITIVE STEP FOR MS COMMUNITY

By Judy McKeown, RN (MS Resource Nurse)

**PHARMAC's announcement that it will fund two new treatments for Multiple Sclerosis has been described as "a momentous day for thousands of people" living with the condition by MSNZ Vice President Neil Woodhams.**

After years of funding submissions, culminating in a campaign this year led by MSNZ, PHARMAC has approved funding for two new treatments and increased access to those currently funded for New Zealanders diagnosed with relapsing remitting forms of Multiple Sclerosis.

PHARMAC is the New Zealand Crown entity that decides which medicines and pharmaceutical products are subsidised for use in the community and public hospitals.

"This is a big step forward for people with Multiple Sclerosis in New Zealand," said Mr Woodhams.

"It means that many of those living with MS will no longer be subjected to a level of disability before their treatment is approved... The majority of these people are young women, many of whom are mothers. Earlier access to treatments has shown to greatly reduce relapse rates and halt disease progression."

Biogen Idec's Natalizumab (trading as Tysabri) and Novartis Fingolimod (Gilenya) will be funded from 1 November 2014. PHARMAC has also approved increased access to currently funded treatments in today's announcement and people will be able to switch between drugs if one or other drug doesn't suit them.

By also allowing general physicians to apply for MS treatments, PHARMAC have taken a more

person-centred approach making treatments more accessible and not restricted, Mr Woodhams said.

It is essential, however, that people considering these drugs have accurate information about them and understand that extensive screening needs to take place before commencing treatment.

It is important to note that disease modifying drugs do not cure MS but are designed to modify the course of the disease. They interact with different parts of the immune system and help to calm down the inflammation that causes relapses, affecting both the rate and the severity of the relapse.

Currently, there are three drugs that are funded for use by PHARMAC in NZ. Some have shown positive results in slowing the disability progression and lengthening the time before secondary progressive MS develops. The remainder of the article will explore in detail the two new drugs Fingolimod (trading as Gilenya) and Natalizumab (trading as Tysabri).

People who wish to switch from injectable treatments to the new treatments must be assessed under the new criteria set out by PHARMAC as being 4 or less on the Expanded Disability Status Scale (EDSS) by a Neurologist.

People who are on injectable treatments before November 1, 2014 and do not require switching treatments will continue to be assessed at 5-5.5 on the EDSS.

As is the case with all medications, it is important to weigh the risks and benefits carefully. Talk to your Neurologist/Doctor to determine if either of these treatments is right for you.

## TYSABRI

### How does it work?

Tysabri is administered by IV infusion four weekly in either a hospital or a specially designated clinic in outlying areas of NZ.

A monoclonal antibody that works in a different way to injectable therapies, Tysabri is an 'antibody', just like those found naturally in the immune system (where antibodies help fight infection). By attaching itself to receptors on the outside of certain immune cells, Tysabri prevents these cells from leaving the blood stream and entering the brain and spinal cord where, in MS, they can cause inflammation and damage.

### How effective is it?

According to Michael J Olek, Associate Professor of Neurology at Loma Linda University Medical Centre, Tysabri is twice as effective as Copaxone, Avonex and Betaferon in reducing relapses. Some experts believe that Tysabri is more effective than any other available MS disease modifying treatment and therefore routinely use it early in the course of RRMS, rather than reserving only it for people who have a high level of early disease activity or for those who are unresponsive to other agents.

### What are the side effects?

Most people taking Tysabri tolerate it well, but there can be side effects, including a very rare but potentially fatal infection called PML (progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy) which is caused by a viral infection in the brain. PML can cause severe neurological symptoms, which may at first be mistaken for MS relapses. Meticulous monitoring for this rare infection will limit the incidents of it occurring.

Monitoring also includes specialised blood tests and regular MRI scans. All nurses will be trained in administration of the drug and infusions occur under the supervision of a Neurologist or in regional centres by General Physicians.

Common side effects include joint pain, fever, fatigue, a runny or blocked nose, sore throat, feeling or being sick, headache or dizziness.

During the infusion of Tysabri, and up to an hour afterwards, some people shiver, or feel sick or dizzy.

Around one in 25 people who take Tysabri may have an allergic reaction to taking it.

People on Tysabri may be more susceptible to infections, and should take measures to avoid them, including applying good hand washing habits and avoiding people who are sick, when possible.

## GILENYA

### How does it work?

A specialised type of immune cell, called a T-cell, is thought to be responsible for much of the damage caused in Relapsing Remitting MS. Gilenya, which is an oral tablet, acts by trapping these T-cells from the bloodstream into organs in the body called lymph nodes. This prevents the T-cells from getting into the brain and causing damage to the protective myelin sheath, which causes the symptoms in MS.

### How effective is it?

A two-year study comparing Gilenya to a placebo showed that it reduced relapse rates by 54 to 60 per cent, and reduced disability progression.

### What are the side effects?

Gilenya is generally well-tolerated, although some people may experience side effects, some of them potentially quite serious.

Common side effects of Gilenya include headache, diarrhoea, back pain, cough and dizziness. These milder side effects affect around one in ten people taking Gilenya.

When you first take Gilenya it can cause your heart rate to slow down or become irregular. This may make you feel dizzy or tired.

Because of the risk of cardiac toxicity, international requirements are that the administration of the first dose of this drug requires careful in-hospital cardiac monitoring for six hours.

Because this drug is in tablet form the drug can be administered by you at home once it is safe to do so.

Gilenya lowers the numbers of white blood cells in your blood. As white blood cells fight infection, you may find that you pick up illnesses and infections more easily while taking Gilenya.

Very rarely, Gilenya can cause a problem with your vision, known as macular oedema. People taking this medication will routinely require a number of other screening tests, including a specialised eye test known as Ocular Coherence Tomography or OCT.

It is too soon to know about other possible long-term side effects from Gilenya, but people taking the drug are being monitored, which should give a better picture for the future.

# HEAT AND MS – SURVIVING THE SUMMER

By Judy McKeown, RN (MS Resource Nurse)

Sensitivity to heat is a recognized symptom of Multiple Sclerosis (MS). External and internal increases in body temperature alike can cause either a block or the slowing down of messages moving along a nerve. This can temporarily cause the symptoms of MS to become worse. Elevating body temperature, even by ½°C, is enough to have a dramatic effect.

Symptoms usually settle again when the nerve returns to its normal temperature by resting or cooling. Internal causes of increased body temperature include fever and infection, having a very hot drink, and menstruation.

External causes include hot weather and hot showers or baths. Heat sensitivity is also closely related to fatigue.

This article presents several tips to survive the summer by avoiding increases in body temperature.

## Food and Fluid Intake

- Keep up liquid intake to help the body cool. Carry a water bottle whenever you leave home.
- Aim for at least an extra couple of large glasses of cool fluid a day. This helps restore body fluids lost by sweating and will help the fatigue that comes from heat. If you have problems with your bladder, just take sips of water at a time, say 2-3 mouthfuls. Even sucking on an ice cube can help.
- Drinks with caffeine such as coffee and colas increase the metabolic heat in the body and therefore should be avoided.
- Eat small meals and more often. The larger the meal, the more metabolic heat your body creates breaking down the food. Avoid foods high in protein as they also increase metabolic heat.
- Try chrysanthemum tea, which is reputed to be a cooling herb which clears the head.

## Clothing

- Wear a hat with a wide brim when out in the sun.
- Carry a small handheld portable fan when on outings.
- Wear a wet bandana around the neck.
- Keep a face flannel in a plastic bag in the fridge or freezer and place between your back and the car seat; this is a great way of staying cool while on the move.
- Use cotton wherever possible for trousers, skirts, shirts, tops, etc.
- T-shirts are cool, easy to put on and off if you buy a slightly bigger size; they also absorb sweat, thereby keeping you cool.

- Light colours are best, they reflect the sunlight and stop you from heating up.
- Wear cotton underwear, especially if you sit a lot and if possible wear knee highs rather than pantyhose.
- Men should avoid nylon socks; cotton is much cooler.
- Choose light, open shoes or sandals.
- Wear cotton nightwear. Lots of nightwear come in synthetics which will make you feel even hotter in bed.

## Miscellaneous

- Woman could replace their usual body moisturizer with a cooling aloe vera after-sun product. This will help lower your skin temperature
- Many people report positively on the benefits of wearing a cooling collar. They are available from Koolnek Products Ltd (03 327-9909).
- Sleep on a feather or down pillow with a cotton pillowcase. Synthetic pillows will retain the heat.
- Try using a chillow. This is a thin, soft, thermo-regulating leather device that pops into your pillow to cool it down. The Fishpond website often have them for sale.

## Planning Your Day

- Use the cool of the morning and the evening to do essential chores such as meal preparation, household chores, and gardening.
- Be aware of your particular reaction to activities and heat; recording this information in a diary can help you to discern patterns and hence to plan your daily routine to avoid overheating.
- A cooling shower in the mid/late afternoon with a short sit down period after works wonders.
- Cool down after exercise.

## Your Environment

- Install air-conditioning in the home and car.
- Keep your bathroom cool.
- It is possible for you to control aspects of the environment. Planning and making choices in regard to heat management will help you to stay as independent as possible and allow you to make the best use of your energy

There are many websites that provide cooling clothing or products. You can locate them easily by simply Googling the phrase: **cooling clothing/products for people with MS.**

*All information is for the reader's interest only and does not constitute medical advice.*





## CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

Christmas gifts come in all shapes and sizes but all too often they end up unused as they're not fit for purpose.

Here is a small selection of affordable and useful products that make excellent gifts at any time, all of which definitely would be a welcome inclusion in Christmas stockings this year!

These and many other practical items are available from the Aspire Shop or their online store at [www.aspirecanterbury.org.nz/Shop](http://www.aspirecanterbury.org.nz/Shop).

The Aspire Shop operates from the same premises as the Society and is open weekdays from 8.30am to 4.30pm.

### 1. Book Buddies – \$45

These are filled with polystyrene balls so that they can rest on an uneven surface such as a bed. The plastic strip holds the base of the book in place, allowing for hands-free reading. There is also a phone pocket at the back of the book rest. Add a book for an ideal Christmas gift!

### 2. Wheat Bags – From \$19

Wheat bags provide gentle heat for those aches and pains, and heat rapidly in the microwave (remember to place a half mug of water in the microwave). You can choose between two- and four-section bags; there is also a neck bag.

### 3. Humphrey Law Socks – From \$15

These cotton and merino socks contain no elastic at the top of the leg so are useful for diabetics and people who have circulation problems. The range caters for both men and women.

### 4. Suction Foot Brush – \$33.15

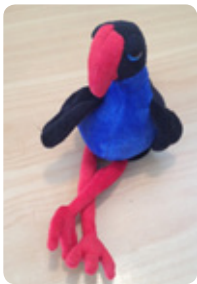
The perfect gift for people who have difficulty bending! The suction foot brush has a suction base for fixing to a shower cubicle, providing a gentle, effective and safe way to clean feet.

There are many online places to shop these days but the Internet is beset with scams and security is an obvious concern for anyone considering shopping online.

If you're thinking of buying online or are already doing so, find out how to stay safe online by downloading the Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment 'Get Online Savvy' guide to protecting yourself online and offline at [www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/pdf-library/publications/Get-Online-Savvy.pdf](http://www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/pdf-library/publications/Get-Online-Savvy.pdf). Although published with older people in mind, it is a useful guide for anyone active on the internet and it also includes a section on the neighbourhood scams that plague today's society.

Compiled by Jill McChesney, Disability Information Service Co-ordinator.

## SOCIETY MASCOT CARRIES THE COLOURS



We have recently become aware that we should have a symbol or sign to help new members identify where Society meetings are taking place when we are out and about.

Enter our new mascot, Percy the Pukeko. Percy has our Society colours of red and blue and will be on display at gatherings like Men's

Happy Hour, Suburban Morning Tea, and the Parkinson's Spouse Group.

We welcome new people to our social/support groups and encourage you to look out for the table with the Pukeko!

Check the Noticeboard on **page 3** of the Newsletter or call **Annette on 03 366-2857 ext. 6** or email **support@ms-pd.org.nz** to find out more about our regular group meetings.

## CHRISTMAS CAKE RAFFLE

One of our fabulous members has generously donated a homemade Christmas Cake for us to raffle. We have raffle ticket sheets (10 tickets per sheet) that we would like to ask our members to help us sell. Each entry costs \$2 and all proceeds go to the Society.

If you would like to sell these on our behalf, please pick up a ticket sheet from Annette at the Society.

If you would like to purchase tickets but are not able to make it into the Society, please contact **Annette on 03 366 2857 ext. 6** or at **support@ms-pd.org.nz** to let her know how many tickets you would like.

Online payment for the tickets can be made into the Society's bank account: **03 0802 0077413 00**. So that we can identify your online payment, it is essential to use as a reference your **surname and XR**, for example, Jones XR.

## FOOTLOOSE FUN WALK

The Footloose Fun Walk, Run & Wheel event was back this year during Parkinson's Awareness Week, promoting the role of regular exercise in maintaining good health. This event was better than ever, with over 150 people participating

North Hagley Park was filled with Society members and their families as well as by members of the public who had also registered for the event. They were joined by Christchurch Mayor Lianne Dalziel and the Society's Patron, Hon. Ruth Dyson, who opened the event with a warm address and set the participants off.

It was very rewarding to see so many people supporting the Society and everyone had a great time taking part in the walk/run. While some chose to walk 2km, others pushed themselves to complete 5km and still others rounded the park twice for a 10km run.

There were games for the kids and a range of refreshments for everyone. We raised over \$2,000 through registration fees, raffles, the sale of food, and sponsorship.

We would like to thank our volunteers for giving so generously of their time to help marshal the event and run the games and sausage sizzle, as well as our fantastic sponsors.

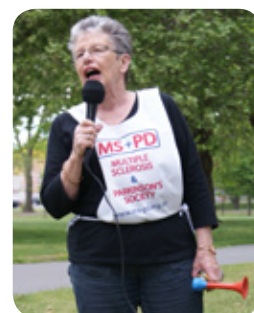
Thank you to all who participated in the Footloose Fun Walk and we look forward to seeing you again next year!

### SPONSORS

We are enormously grateful to the local businesses that sponsored this year's Footloose with fantastic raffle prizes:

- **Christchurch Casino**
- **Clip 'N Climb**
- **Hanmer Springs Hot Pools**
- **Hell Pizza**
- **Hoyts Cinema**
- **Mitre 10 Rangiora**
- **Orana Wildlife Park**
- **St Martins Pharmacy**
- **Sushi Express**
- **The Breeze**
- **SuperValue Wairakei (Bryndwr)**
- **Willowbank Wildlife Reserve**

Most of them are regular sponsors of our society's events and we encourage you to direct your business their way so that they may be able to continue to lend a hand to community organisations such as ours.



# LINK BETWEEN PARKINSON'S AND SKIN CANCER RAISED

By Bronnie Alexander, RN (Parkinson's Resource Nurse)

A review published in the journal Neurology in 2011 suggested that people with Parkinson's may be more likely to be diagnosed with the skin cancer melanoma but appeared to be at lower risk for most other types of cancer.

The research team at the National Institutes of Health in the US analysed the data from 12 small studies together. They found that people with Parkinson's were being diagnosed with melanoma at twice the rate of people without the condition, but much larger and more detailed studies are required to confirm the relationship and to unravel the underlying cause of this increased risk for melanoma.

The Cancer Society reports that skin cancer is by far the most common cancer affecting New Zealanders, with the total number of new melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer cases amounting to around 80% of all new cancers each year.

According to Ministry of Health figures, in Canterbury there were roughly 52 males and 34 females per 100,000 population with melanomas registered in 2009.

As with other cancers, melanoma occurs most often in older people but it can also affect younger people.

Commenting on this review, the Parkinson's UK director of Research and Development said that "by far and away the most common risk factor for developing melanoma is exposure to the sun - all

of us should be cautious about our skin and aware of the dangers."

## Tips for Being Sun Smart

- **Slip** on sun protective clothing (shirt with a collar and long sleeves and trousers or long-legged shorts) and into shade whenever possible.
- **Slop** on SPF30+ sunscreen 15 minutes before you go outdoors and every two hours afterwards. Sunscreen should never be your only or main method of sun protection—wear dark, tightly woven clothing that covers your arms and legs.
- **Slap** on a hat that protects your face, head, neck and ears.
- **Wrap** on sunglasses that meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard.
- Avoid tanning beds; they emit UV rays and can increase your risk of skin cancer.
- Become familiar with your skin so you'll notice changes in existing moles, freckles, bumps and birthmarks.
- Avoid sun during the middle of the day; skin can burn in as little as 15 minutes in the midday New Zealand summer sun.

*Modified information taken from the Mayo Clinic and Cancer Society of NZ websites.*

## DISABILITY LEGAL ADVICE CLINIC

Community Law Canterbury launched a Disability Legal Advice Clinic earlier this year to provide quality free legal help to people in Canterbury who face barriers to accessing justice.

**The clinic is held at Aspire Canterbury (314 Worcester Street, Linwood) on the first and last Friday of the month from 9.30am to 3pm.**

Through the Clinic, Community Law Canterbury aims to play a role in identifying and removing systemic barriers for people living with disabilities in the Canterbury region by:

- Enforcing laws that protect the opportunities, choices and legal rights of clients with disabilities
- Taking on issues that have an impact on low income clients



- Addressing issues of marginalization and exclusion based on disability, gender, race, age and language
- Working in conjunction with community groups and support networks to facilitate advice and assistance

Additionally, Community Law Canterbury offers a general legal advice service as well as specialist advice and information services. They do not give advice over the phone and do not advise in commercial matters, or give advice to landlords or employers.

Phone Community Law Canterbury on **0508 222 6529** for more information or to make an appointment, or email **admin@canlaw.org.nz**.



## STAFF

Manager: Jenny Boyer  
 Office Manager: Annette MacFadyen  
 Resource Nurse: Bronnie Alexander, RN  
 Resource Nurse: Judy McKeown, RN  
 Administration  
 Assistant: Jan Saville  
 Project Coordinator: Michael Herman  
 Physiotherapist: Maree Stewart  
 Physiotherapist: Rachel Bladon  
 Exercise Group  
 Leader: Kim Veenings  
 Events Coordinator: Denitsa Stoeva

## OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Patron: Hon. Ruth Dyson, MP for Port Hills  
 President: Malcolm Rickerby  
 Vice President: Don Parlane  
 Treasurer: Ann Morrison  
 Committee: Lew Airey  
 Dawn Baker  
 John Davies  
 John George  
 Mike Johnson

*A special thanks to the following organisations for their continued support!*


## MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AND PARKINSON'S SOCIETY OF CANTERBURY (INC)

314 Worcester Street  
 (PO Box 32-135)  
 Linwood, Christchurch

Phone: (03) 366 2857  
 Fax: (03) 379 5939

Email: [support@ms-pd.org.nz](mailto:support@ms-pd.org.nz)

*The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily be the views of the Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's Society of Canterbury (Inc) or its members.*

