

Active and healthier through a Green Prescription

Annabelle Phipps had given up on being pain-free and was hoping for a hip replacement when she was referred to Sport Canterbury's Green Prescription programme.

Annabelle's GP referred her for 12 weeks of physiotherapy where she learned that it was necessary to build a cushion of muscle around her hip joint. Her physiotherapist then referred her to the Be Active programme where she went once a week for group activities on the Green Prescription programme for 30 minutes of exercise followed by a group discussion.

She also did aqua-jogging through the programme and was given information on nutrition and mental wellbeing.

Annabelle still can hardly believe that her hip pain has gone – having started the Green Prescription in May this year.

"I just want to spread the great news. It's wonderful to be free of pain; it's like a miracle."

The Green Prescription is a programme funded by the Ministry of Health that supports people to lead active healthy lives. A Green Prescription works well as part of a person's overall health management and has been shown to improve physical, mental and social wellbeing.

People need to meet some basic criteria before they will be referred. They must be:

- 16 years or older,
- generally inactive,
- medically stable, and
- able to engage in low to moderate activity.

Annabelle (70) says if you had asked her prior to the programme whether she was depressed, she would have said no.

"But my daughters tell me I am a different person now. I wasn't really grumpy before, just not my usual self."

Annabelle has now finished her Green Prescription but can receive ongoing support at any time. She exercises every day, cycling around 5km on her exercycle and continuing with the exercises she was taught, as well as aqua-jogging.

To anyone who has been recommended for Green Prescription but is feeling unsure, Annabelle says: "Please do it. I was a non-believer because my hip was so painful. I really didn't think it would help. I thought that I would never, ever be any different and I was just going to have to suffer it. Now I am sold."

Sport Canterbury manages the Green Prescription programme for the Canterbury and West Coast regions through handling referrals and providing programme support. Green Prescriptions have, over the past 14 years, proven to be a highly effective and low-cost way of increasing physical activity.

[Find out more about the Green Prescription Programme.](#)

