

He Ara Oranga – Report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addictions states ‘The estimated reduction in life expectancy of people with severe mental health or addiction challenges is 25 years.’

It is estimated that around 70% of these premature deaths are due to poor physical health. Often, the medications used to manage mental health issues promote weight gain and fatigue as side-effects.

Comcare’s Activelinks service supports individuals to improve their wellbeing through physical activity and manageable, sustainable lifestyle changes.

Additional to the physical health benefits, participation in physical activity has a clear correlation with improved wellbeing. There is a sense of achievement with completing an exercise session which can improve self-esteem. Exercise has also been shown to offer protection against the emergence of depression.

The Activelinks team, work with people to design and complete customised wellbeing programmes typically lasting three to six months. People work towards physical health and wellbeing goals and can choose to participate in weekly Activelinks groups including an eight-week nutrition and healthy lifestyle course, Activelife, running four times per year.

The Activelinks team also offer support with smoking cessation and oral health with provisioning of Nicotine Replacement Therapy and oral care packages.



130 participants between 1st - 30th April 2023.



98 Tangata Whai Ora discharged into community activities from Activelinks Services in the last six months.

Activelinks Group Programme

Helps people connect with and create supportive groups to help achieve their lifestyle change goals. There are currently groups who meet in the gym, at aqua jogging, for a game of tennis, as a walk group, to play badminton, and more!

Feedback about Activelinks:

“Building self-confidence through exercise, time management and having routines helped me return to work.”

“Since engaging with Activelinks service I have gained so much knowledge about improving my physical health and nutrition.”

“So happy to find an exercise activity I enjoy improving my physical and mental health.”

“I never thought I would join a community gym, but with support I now attend 3 times a week.”

Activelife Programme

The Activelife programme is an eight-week healthy lifestyle programme including nutrition and health education, mini exercise sessions, and meal preparation skills. Each week the group will cook a healthy and affordable recipe for a shared lunch. Participants are provided with a 'participants manual' and 'recipe book'.

The key aims of the course are for participants to have fun and:

- ★ Increase activity
- ★ Improve wellbeing
- ★ Make healthy food choices
- ★ Meet new people

In the most recent evaluated Activelife programme participants self-reported improvements in areas of:



"Making positive changes."

"Staying well and focusing on my wellbeing."

"Being more active."

"Eating healthy foods."

"Overall, Activelife has helped me get back on track with food and exercise. I love the recipes, very easy to make. I love the way things are explained - it's clear and easy to understand. I am now eating a lot better and feeling very good in myself." - December 2022 Activelife graduate

For more information about Activelinks, Activelinks Groups, or the Activelife programme please contact:

★ Phone: 03 377 7020

★ Free Phone: 0800 537 3464