

23 March 2016

Celebrating south west Sydney's seniors

South Western Sydney Local Health District will celebrate the valuable contributions of older people during this year's NSW Seniors Festival.

From Friday 1 April to Sunday 10 April, the District will hold a variety of activities as part of the Seniors Festival, which will be an opportunity for people of all ages to come together to recognise the positive impact older people have in our local community.

The District is embracing this year's *Healthy Living* theme and encouraging seniors to exercise to grow young. Throughout the week there will be free exercise demonstrations and classes on offer to the community.

South Western Sydney Local Health District's Health Promotion Service Director Mandy Williams stressed the benefits of embracing opportunities to stay physically and socially active.

"Regular physical activity is important for all adults, and the rewards are more than just physical," Ms Williams said.

"While being physically active helps reduce the risk of falls, heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and stroke, it also improves mental health and helps you stay in touch with your community.

"Many people stop exercising as they get older, but research shows we need to keep physically active no matter what our age. The message we need to get out is that it's never too late to start exercising.

Ms Williams said there were an array of Active Over 50 classes and programs led by qualified and experienced instructors across south west Sydney year round.

"The classes aim to inspire seniors to get healthy, stay socially engaged, and meet new people. Participants can choose from Tai Chi, gentle exercise, aqua fitness, Pilates and strength training," said Ms Williams.

Health Service staff will be attending each event with resources and information for seniors about the importance of staying healthy and active, and the programs available in their area.

Those looking to maximise their independence at home and reduce their risk of falls can register for Stepping On – a free seven week program offered by the SWSLHD Health Promotion Service.

For more information or to find an exercise class call 8738 5911 or visit www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au.