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AGEING WELL

Kia eke kairangi ki te
taikaumātuatanga

National
SCIENCE
Challenges

Pānui Newsletter

Issue 3, 2023

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Ngā mihi maioha

Tēna koutou katoa.

Ageing Well started with a vision of what our older age could look like: healthy, connected, thriving. Our mission, after all, was harnessing science and research to sustain health and wellbeing into the later years. The beautiful thing is, that much like our lives, it doesn't always turn out quite as planned. This turned out far better than we had initially hoped.

The initial vision for Ageing Well changed as we forged ahead. We added new people to our collective, we started to look at things from different perspectives, we developed research alongside those who will use the tools we created. We opened our ears, hearts, and minds to our whānau and communities, listened, asked questions – of ourselves, our organisation and what it stood for. And we evolved into something much greater than the sum of our parts.

As the time has come to finish the Challenge, there is so much more we wish to say. About our research, our impact, the strength and dedication of our whānau. We wish to talk about the strength of collaborating with a multitude of organisations, the novel way we opted to govern ourselves, and the courage our leaders took in addressing inequity in ageing head on.

We have formed fruitful collaborations with the two other health-focused Challenges (such as the [Lifecourse project](#) and [ACTIVATION](#)), as well as larger funders like the Accident Compensation Corporation and the Health Research Council ([Taurite Tū](#)), and with [Te Atawhai o Te Ao](#), an independent Māori institute for health and environment and health ([Te Roro](#)).

We have produced films that build connection ([Elder Birdsong](#)) and reject ageist stereotypes of older people ([Manawaroa](#)); developed new ways of understanding the brain in culturally specific ways ([Pacific Cultures](#), [Te Roro](#)); utilised [Big Data](#) to help

predict loneliness and prevent poor outcomes before they develop; and highlighting Pacific voices and experiences.

Our research has led to the development of the Frailty Care Guides with the Te Tāhū Hauora Health Quality & Safety Commission, an early warning system for nurses in aged care facilities, and a Frailty Index to be applied to interRAI assessments; developed the concept of 'ngā pūngāwerewere' - webs of connection – to describe support for kaumātua; and a suite of tools to help older renters.

This is only a fraction of what we have achieved by doing science differently. I encourage you to read through the research pages on our website for illustrations of our innovative approaches to helping older New Zealanders age well.

Ageing Well has also been on a journey toward Te Tiriti partnership, making the bold move to co-governance in 2016. By championing innovative research funding, collaborative governance, and a decisive shift in power dynamics, we committed in Phase Two to a 50/50 research funding allocation centred on Māori perspectives and leadership. These strategic choices have catalysed profound changes for our organisation and the way we value mātauranga Māori alongside western science.

As we have been recording these outcomes and decisions to honour and acknowledge the mahi of our whānau, we're still mindful of the whakataukī:

Kāore te kumara e kōrero ana mo tōna ake reka - The kumara does not brag about its own sweetness.

However, it is important to say how proud we have been to be part of a group that set the goal of living their values and actually achieving it. We call our researchers, community partners, and advisors 'our whānau'. It has been a real gift to acknowledge the vast network of people who have made it all happen.

As we heard from many who attended our symposium, though this may be the end of Ageing Well as an organisation, this is not the end of the Ageing Well kaupapa. Our whānau will continue building the relationships and collaborations created over the last 10 years. They will also secure new collaborations and funding sources, applying the learnings from Ageing Well in their future work for a better Aotearoa – New Zealand.

As such, we sign off this final newsletter with sincerest thanks to you for coming along with us on this journey.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Dr Will Edwards, Chair

Professor David Baxter, Director

Associate Professor Diane Ruwhiu, Co-Director

Associate Professor Tracy Perry, Co-Director

Professor Louise Parr-Brownlie, Director (immediate past)



Strategic Summit report issues clarion call



In July, we held a **Strategic Summit** to provide a forum for discussion about the future direction of ageing research in Aotearoa New Zealand. From this event, Ageing Well has produced a summary report that shares vital knowledge and insight about the ageing research sector and the critical need for continued investment in this area.

Those participating at the event issued a clarion call: Aotearoa needs further research into ageing and ageing-related conditions, as well as secure funding to bolster these endeavours. While Ageing Well has successfully delivered a range of positive and impactful outcomes, there remains a need for further research and development in this space.

“Our summit offered a unique opportunity to capture the thinking of a wide range of specialists in the ageing-related space. We sought to synthesise knowledge about the future direction of ageing-related research in Aotearoa, provided by those who know it best,” said Professor Baxter.

[Read more about the event and download a PDF copy.](#)



Celebrating a decade of mission-led, community-based research



On 14 August, the two National Science Challenges hosted at the University of Otago – Ageing Well and Healthier Lives – collaborated for the final time in a **Legacy event** for the university community. The Legacy Event featured different perspectives of the mahi of Ageing Well and Healthier Lives: from directors, to Chairs, and to the research teams themselves.

We gathered at Tūhura Otago Museum to hear presentations from featured speakers, as well as representatives from some of the research programmes funded by the two Challenges. On behalf of Ageing Well, our lead speakers were Dr Will Edwards (Chair), and our two Co-Directors, Associate Professor Diane Ruwhiu and Associate Professor Tracy Perry.

Katrina Bryant, principal investigator of the Ageing Well-funded [Taurite Tū programme](#), spoke about the project. As part of her presentation, she turned the floor over to a group of kaumātua who still participate in the Taurite Tū programme.

Ageing Well Director, Professor David Baxter said, “Hearing the personal stories of transformation and improved wellbeing was exactly what we had hoped for when we made the call to fund innovative, community-based mahi like Taurite Tū.”

“We are proud of how Ageing Well has done science differently, with our focus on addressing inequity and community-centred research. We have shown that making a positive impact for kaumātua around the motu can be achieved,” he added. On behalf of Ageing Well, we would like to say a heartfelt ngā mihi nui to the University for hosting our organisation for the last decade. It has been a pleasure to paddle our waka alongside the University and its community.

[Read more about the event.](#)

For those unable to make the event, we have a video of the event to view:

[View the Ageing Well portion of the event](#) | [View the full event](#)



NSC Te Tiriti Journey



Over the past decade, each of the 11 National Science Challenges has charted individual paths toward honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi. These journeys have ensured research deeply grounded in rangatiratanga and mana motuhake.

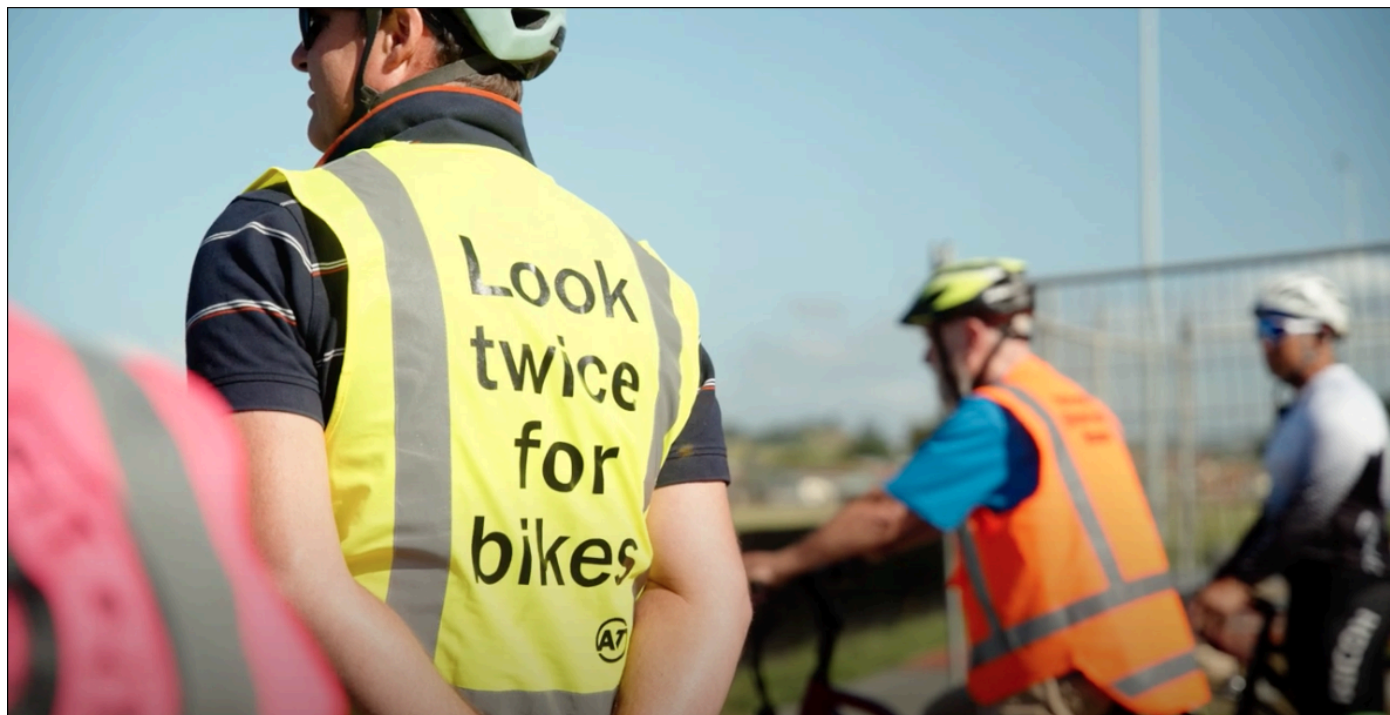
These remarkable journeys feature in a new report: **Te Tiriti O Waitangi Partnerships Enhances Research Science and Innovation** by Jo-Anne Hazel and Peta-Maria Tunui.

This book captures the narrative of a striking innovation from a significant proportion of the science community, who have collectively developed and reflected upon their Te Tiriti o Waitangi journey.

Ageing Well was proud to contribute to this vital kaupapa.
Read the report at our website.



Active transport choices make a difference



The ACTIVATION project, funded by Ageing Well and Healthier Lives, trialled several new transport initiatives to increase active transport opportunities in lower income and residential communities.

The study has produced two short films by filmmaker Ollie Dawe that demonstrate the wide-ranging benefits of this multi-disciplinary research.

Read more about the outcomes of this research and watch the short films.



Ageing Well is now on Wikipedia

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Ageing Well (Māori: *Kia eke kairangi ki te taikaumātuatanga*) was one of [New Zealand](#)'s eleven collaborative research programmes known as [National Science Challenges](#). Running from 2015 to 2024, the focus of Ageing Well National Science Challenge (AWNSC) research was sustaining health and wellbeing towards the end of life, particularly in Māori and Pacific populations in New Zealand.

Establishment and governance [\[edit \]](#)

The New Zealand Government agreed in August 2012 to fund [National Science Challenges](#): large multi-year collaborative research programmes that would address important issues in New Zealand's future. The funding criteria were set out in January 2014, with proposals assessed by a Science Board within the [Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment](#) (MBIE).^[1]

After a planning phase in 2014, MBIE approved the University of Otago was approved as a host for the project. AWNSC was launched on 4 March 2015 by Minister for Science and Innovation [Steven Joyce](#), one of three health-based National Science Challenges.^{[2]:8–9} The Māori name of Ageing Well was *Kia eke* (to strive for) *kairangi* (something esteemed) *ki te taikaumātuatanga* (of being elderly).^[3]

Ageing Well's governance and science leadership teams as well as a Kāhui Rōpū (Māori advisory group) and international science advisory panel were all established in 2016. [Di McCarthy](#) was appointed chair of the science challenge, a position she

Ageing Well National Science Challenge



| | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Established | 2015 |
| Type | Research programme |
| Location | New Zealand |
| Director | David Baxter |
| Budget | \$34.9 m NZD |
| Funding | MBIE |
| Website | www.ageingwellchallenge.co.nz |

We are pleased to announce that the [Wikipedia entry for Ageing Well](#) is now live.

It has been a pleasure working with [Dr Mike Dickison](#), our resident Wikipedian, on an independent page that will live on post-Challenge.



Research Inventory updated



The teams at Ageing Well, Healthier Lives, and A Better Start National Science Challenges have finished the final update to our inventory of our research outputs.

This document [updated August 2024], **Ngā taunakitanga mō te hauora me te toiora i Aotearoa New Zealand | Evidence for health and wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand**, highlights some of the key research projects led by Challenge researchers and their impact on the wider community.

Our collective aim with this document is to ensure our outputs are easily accessible by policy makers, service providers, carers, and our wider communities. It is organised according to the priority areas set out in Te Pae Tata Interim New Zealand Health Plan 2022 with the addition of two other important priorities: ageing well and climate change.

[Read the updated document here.](#)



A change of pace for Director



As today we say haere rā to the organisation of Ageing Well, we will also be saying the same to our Director, Professor David Baxter. He is retiring from his academic career, though not for long, as he has been appointed Emertius Professor at the University of Otago.

Professor Baxter has continued his association with our organisation throughout the lifespan of the Challenge. He served as Director of Ageing Well at the beginning of the Challenge (2015-2019), then as Co-Director (2020-2023), and again as Director for the final year (2023-2024). He has been a leader in the field of physiotherapy and care, serving as Dean of the University of Otago School of Physio, on the Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand, and numerous other organisations.

We are so very fortunate to have a strong leader, key ally, and keen editor at the helm of Ageing Well. His insight, guidance, and encouragement have enabled the team at Ageing Well to grow and thrive. Ngā mihi nui, Dave.

Professor Baxter is looking forward to spending more time with his whānau and researching the contribution Princess Alexandra has made to health and medical care around the world.

We also wish to thank his wife and whānau for sharing him with us over the past decade.



Website and Archiving information



What happens to Ageing Well from July 2024?

In the lead-up to the end of Challenge, we received varied questions about our kaupapa. In order to allay any fears, we published a guide on our website about [what happens next for Ageing Well](#).

Website

We are proud of our [website](#) and it is a valuable resource for many of our researchers and community partners. As such, our website will continue to be hosted for another five years, through to June 2029. With some minor changes, the site will be kept in a static state from 2026 onwards, with content still accessible to the general public, until 2029.

Archiving

As our host organisation, the University of Otago is housing our collection in the [OUR Archives](#). This ensures all the publications and associated data that is linked to Ageing Well can be easily accessed in one place. Additionally, the [National Library](#) will be harvesting our website in the latter half of 2024 for their collection.

Newsletter

This is our final newsletter and we thank you for your readership and support of our kaupapa.

Copies of our older newsletter issues and email communications can be found on our website under the [resources](#) tab. Please note: due to some technical difficulties using Mailchimp, we have recently migrated our data to a new email service called SendGrid.



The End of the Challenges: what next?



An analysis was published recently by Claire Concannon and Ellen Rykers about the end of the National Science Challenges.

The article focused on the end of the funding, the potential 'brain drain' that a lack of subsequent funding will have on the science and research sector, and the outcome of the government's plan for the future of the sector.

[Read the full article.](#)



Helpful links to our mahi

Research Books

[Celebrating Ageing Well: the first five years of the Ageing Well National Science Challenge \[2021\]](#)

[Launch story | PDF](#)

[Ka Mua Ka Muri: a decade of ageing well in Aotearoa \[2024\]](#)

[Launch story | PDF](#)

Reports and Submissions

[Strategic Summit Report \[2024\]](#)

[Research outputs inventory \[updated 2024\]](#)

[Ageing Well Submission to the Science Sector Advisory Group review \[2024\]](#)

[Te Roro Project: *Te Whare o Oro: A mātauranga Māori framework for understanding the roro* \[2023\]](#)

[Aged Care and Housing Symposium Report \[2023\]](#)

[Reflections on Kaumātua, Pakeke, and Seniors' Housing \[2022\]](#)

[Rauika Māngai Wai 262 Report \[2022\]](#)

[Ageing Well Submission to Te Ara Paerangi Green Paper \[2022\]](#)

Te Putahitanga: A Te Tiriti-led Science-Policy Approach for Aotearoa New Zealand [2021]
Ageing Well publication published in the The Gerontologist [2020]

Other

Ageing Well Research

[Ageing Well Publications and Proceedings](#)

[Ageing Well Year in Review \[2017-2023\]](#)

[Ageing Well Videos](#)

[Well Balanced Exhibit](#)

[Ageing Well Newsletters](#)

[Ageing Well - About](#)

[Ageing Well homepage](#)

[Ageing Well Wikipedia page](#)

[OUR Archives - Ageing Well National Science Challenge](#)



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