



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

MEDIA RELEASE

SPORTAUS

20 September 2018

PROGRAM LAUNCHED TO HELP OLDER AUSTRALIANS MOVE MORE

Sport Australia CEO Kate Palmer says a new \$22.9 million program will encourage sport and physical activity providers to focus on empowering older Australians to become more active.

Sport Australia will manage the Move It Aus - Better Ageing grants program, which was launched today by Federal Sports Minister Bridget McKenzie and is aimed at Australians aged 65 and over. The number of Australians aged 65 and over is projected to more than double in the next 40 years¹. Palmer said the Move It Aus - Better Ageing program would be an important step to encourage sport and physical activity providers to be adaptable and offer more options and products for older Australians.

“Australia’s demographics are shifting and while that presents a challenge in broader health terms, there’s a great chance for us as a sport industry to make a positive difference to the lives of older Australians through physical activity,” Palmer said.

“Sport Australia recently launched our overarching national Move It Aus campaign, which encourages Australians of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to try and find 30 minutes of physical activity per day. The Move It Aus - Better Ageing Program is one of the next steps in bringing that awareness campaign to life in a real and practical way. Sport Australia looks forward to partnering with sports and physical activity providers to get older Australians moving more often.

“Our research tells us older Australians are motivated to be active, but their choice of sport and physical activities change with age. Sport needs to be adaptable to these changes.”

Sport Australia’s AusPlay research shows that although overall physical activity levels drop as we age, the main motivations to be active remain almost the same. The main motivations for physical activity among Australians 65-and-over are: physical health and fitness (77.4 per cent); fun/enjoyment (39.4 per cent) and social reasons (26.1 per cent).

The most popular physical activities do change, however, with over 65s leaning more towards recreational activities than sport. The most popular activities among the over 65s population include: walking (60.9 per cent); fitness/gym (27.8 per cent); swimming (10.8 per cent); golf (9.8 per cent) cycling (7.3 per cent) and bowls (4.6 per cent). Among those Australians over 65 who don’t participate in sport and physical activity, more than half (50.7 per cent) cite poor health and injury as the biggest barrier.

“It’s undeniable that sport and physical activity are beneficial to physical and mental health so as a sport industry we need to challenge ourselves to come up with innovative ways to help older Australians benefit from an active lifestyle.



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

MEDIA RELEASE

SPORTAUS

“Sport Australia encourages sport and physical activity providers to consider partnerships that enhance the delivery of these projects.”

Australian tennis legend and former Davis Cup captain, John Fitzgerald, helped launch the grants today in Canberra and is also encouraging older Aussies to get moving.

“Sport is integral to health and wellbeing for people of all ages. The Move It Aus - Better Ageing grants program is a fantastic initiative that will enable more opportunities for older Australians to get out and get active,” Fitzgerald said.

“Tennis is a sport for life and can be played by people of all abilities; it’s great for keeping fit, healthy and socially connected,” he said, “I’ve been fortunate enough to play throughout my whole life and I hope that this funding means that more seniors get the opportunity to participate in tennis.”

Applications open for Move It Aus - Better Ageing grants on 20 September and close 31 October 2018. Guidelines are available at sportaus.gov.au/betterageing

For more information: Bridget Tilley 0410 304728 bridget.tilley@sportaus.gov.au

Physical Activity habits of Australians aged 65 and over

- **Fewer Australians participate as they age, but those that do participate do so more frequently.** 86.3 per cent of Australians aged 65 and over participate in sport or physical activity at least once a year, compared to 89.5 per cent of 50-64 year-olds. But when you look at those who participate more than three times a week, it’s 64 per cent for those aged 65+ and those aged 50-64.
- **18.9 per cent think age is a barrier to participation.**
- **More than half of participation is done through organisations/at venues** (52.5 per cent)
- **Participation in sport-related activities drops as we age, with a preference for recreational activities.** Top 10 activities are: Walking (60.9%); Fitness/Gym (27.8%); Swimming (10.8%); Golf (9.8%); Cycling (7.3%); Bowls (4.6%); Tennis (3.6%); Bush walking (3.6%); Pilates (2.8%); Yoga (2.6%)

Notes for Editors

¹2015 Intergenerational Report – Australia in 2055, Treasury (2015)

