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MEDIA RELEASE

3,000 precious reasons to Move it in May

Arthritis & Osteoporosis NSW is calling all walkers, runners, swimmers and cyclists in the state to Move It In May.

The Move It In May campaign challenges people to get moving and raise funds to improve the lives of the one in five people in NSW who live with arthritis, including 3000 children.

CEO of Arthritis & Osteoporosis NSW Sandra Vincent said that Move It In May asked people with and without arthritis, to set themselves a physical challenge or even to extend their current exercise regime and bring their networks on board to sponsor their efforts, which they would complete in May.

‘The money raised will support our current programs, such as our children’s camps, webinars, warm water classes and Infoline, and enable us to develop more community health services where they are needed most, such as rural areas,’ Sandra said.

‘However, for us, Move It In May isn’t just about raising money, we want to raise awareness of the impact of arthritis, on the individual and the wider community. We also want to share the ways people can self-manage their condition to help improve their lives and overcome the challenges they face every day.’

Sandra said that the organisation wanted to dispel some of the myths about the condition. ‘It’s widely believed that arthritis is an inevitable factor of ageing, but people of any age and any background can develop it. And if diagnosed and treated early, the patient is more likely to lead a full and active life.

‘Lifestyle modifications such as losing weight, staying active, eating a nutrient rich diet and getting enough sleep can help as well,’ she said. ‘Staying physically active is important for everyone. However the benefit for people living with arthritis is that helps produce the natural feel good hormones that also dampen pain.’

Other benefits of exercise for people with arthritis:

1. Relieves joint stiffness and helps to maintain range of motion
2. Improves the strength and flexibility of muscles around the joints, relieving some of the pressure on the joint itself and easing pain and inflammation
3. Boosts the production of the fluid inside the joints which keeps them lubricated, acting as a buffer against injury
4. Helps to improve balance and prevent injury-inducing falls.

For media enquiries or images, please contact **Lindy Sivyer** on **02 9857 3300, mob: 0408 730 446** or lsivyer@arthritisnsw.org.au.

People are already signing up to Move It In May for Arthritis & Osteoporosis NSW. One participant is challenging herself to walk 50,000 steps per week as part of her rehabilitation for a broken ankle that has required full reconstructive surgery. The mum of a 10 year old girl who suffers from juvenile arthritis is raising money with help from her eldest daughter. A 20 year old whose mother suffers from ankylosing spondylitis arthritis is planning to walk 15,000 steps a day to raise her goal of \$800.

The Arthritis NSW team has been inspired by Move It In May to design their own challenge – a virtual walk up the coast from their North Ryde office to Port Macquarie. The simulated 370km trek will be undertaken by 16 members of the team who will each walk 1km per day for the 23 working days of May.

How you can Move It In May

If you're ready to Move it in May, simply register at moveitinmay.org.au. Here you can choose an activity such as walk/run/cycle/hike and nominate your fundraising goal. If you would like to support Move It In May but you are not able to take part, you can also support the Arthritis NSW team by going to: www.mycause.com.au/events/moveitinmay/donate.

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