

Self Care Alliance New Zealand

Acknowledging & supporting self care practices in New Zealand

What is self care?

“Activities, individuals, families and communities undertake with the intention of enhancing health, preventing disease, limiting illness and restoring health. These activities are derived from knowledge and skills from the pool of both professional and lay experience. They are undertaken by lay people on their own behalf, either separately or in participative collaboration with professionals.” ~ World Health Organization

Self care practices in New Zealand need to be acknowledged & supported

The 20th century’s revolution in healthcare saw a slew of scientific and medical discoveries, technological advances in diagnostics, surgery and medicines, and the development of the healthcare professions. As a result, society witnessed the transfer of responsibility for a person’s health and wellness from the individual to the trained professional.

Despite this major change, the large bulk of care continues to be the things individuals and families do for themselves. Every day, in 1000s of New Zealand homes and workplaces, ordinary Kiwis are practising self care and looking after their own health.

Self Care Alliance New Zealand (SCANZ) acknowledges this and wants to further develop the self care culture in a sustainable, consistent and coordinated way. This will maximise benefits not only for individuals and families, but also for the health and related sectors.

Benefits of self care

1. Reduction of service visits.
2. Better health professional-patient relationships.
3. Improved ability for patients to cope.
4. Cost savings.
5. Less time off work.
6. Creates feeling of control.
7. Reduces anxiety.
8. Improves quality of life.
9. Improves disease outcomes.
10. Frees up health professional time.

Without improved self care NZ faces:

1. Epidemiological shift: unhealthy lifestyles, ageing population, comorbidities increase ++
2. Escalating costs.
3. Poor adherence; only 50% typically on long-term medications at 12 months.
4. Quality gap and safety concerns.
5. Health inequalities not improving.
6. Poor progress with supporting positive behaviour change.
7. Complexity increased ++.

What is SCANZ?

Self Care Alliance New Zealand is a not-for-profit network that adopts self care and its implementation as a core element of a sustainable health sector for New Zealand. Launched in October 2015 by a group of 10 founding organisations including DHBs, BNZ, Health Navigator Charitable Trust, the NZ Self Medication Industry Association (NZSMI), Heart Foundation, Pharmacy Guild, Green Cross Health and more, SCANZ reflects the work of the UK and Australian Self Care Alliance groups and links to both.

While self care is not the whole answer to the rise in demand and associated healthcare costs, it is nevertheless a fundamental pillar of any mid to long-term reform of the health sector. Implementing self care is beyond the capacity of Government to mandate or any single group to bring about. It requires input and action by participants from all aspects of the health sector. In this way, SCANZ supports New Zealand's development of a consistent and robust self care culture.

Vision

To improve health outcomes for all New Zealanders, which will also decrease health expenditure and increase productivity.

Mission

- A. Lead work in: policy & advocacy; workforce development; Self Care Week; and self care resources.
- B. Be the umbrella organisation to pool knowledge and expertise, and foster collaboration.
- C. Build a repository of expert advice and accurate information for stakeholders, media and the wider community.

Guiding principles

- SCANZ initiatives are New Zealand-focused, person and whanau-centred.
- We take an equitable, whole of care approach.
- Our solutions are evidence-based.
- Our partnerships are collaborative across a range of sectors.
- The focus of SCANZ workstreams is to improve self care knowledge and motivate every day Kiwis.

Who's on board?

We have a growing number of individuals and organisations aligning with our principles and taking an active interest in our discussions. To date there are 10 member organisations and a working group that includes representatives from DHBs, NZSMI, Arthritis NZ, Pharmacy Guild, GreenCross, Medical Technology Association NZ and Health Navigator Charitable Trust. The latter acts as an umbrella organisation for SCANZ to give it charitable status.

How to join SCANZ

Membership is open to individuals and organisations from all domains of the health and related sectors, consumers, healthcare professionals and providers, researchers, educators, policy makers, public and private funders and medicines industry. Members must have a genuine commitment to the concept of self care and be willing to contribute to SCANZ work.

If you are interested to join or have a question, please contact Tim or Janine:

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