

## Utilising behaviour change theory to promote physical activity for healthy ageing

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### Background

There is strong evidence demonstrating that protective factors for healthy ageing and falls prevention can be developed through participation in common recreational activities. Translation of this evidence and adapting the message for the target audience through different modalities is necessary for effective communication of health messages. The application of behaviour change theory supports the development of interventions, understanding what motivates the target audience behaviour. This presentation describes the application of the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) for older adult participation in common recreational activities to promote the benefits of healthy ageing.

### Activity

Injury Matters, funded by the Department of Health through the Stay On Your Feet<sup>®</sup> program, developed recreational videos promoting healthy ageing in partnership with five state-sporting organisations. The SCT was used to understand older adult behaviours with falls prevention and physical activity. Constructs from the theory were utilised to develop the interview schedule and video direction. Five recreational activities were selected based upon evidence to support falls prevention. Employing peer engagement strategies the videos featured older adults participating in golf, tennis, swimming, lawn bowls and dancing.

### Conclusion

Key themes from the SCT included; behavioural capacity (their knowledge and skills to do the activity), expectations (physical, mental and social outcomes of participating), observational learning (modelling to others) and self –efficacy (belief that they have the ability to participate). The SCT also highlighted the social benefits of common recreational activities as key motivators to participation. Application of these concepts in the videos supports Injury Matters to promote healthy ageing through life-long physical activity.