



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck
Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians
Minister for Youth and Sport

MEDIA RELEASE

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Walking Football to deliver one million active hours for seniors

The Morrison Government will use a new Walking Football initiative to deliver an additional one million active hours over the next two years for senior Australians.

Walking Football One Million+ is being delivered through a \$1.8 million grant from the Morrison Government and aims to improve physical and mental health for seniors.

Minister for Youth and Sport and Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians Richard Colbeck said Walking Football is a great initiative to help older Australians get more active, more often.

“Walking Football is a game designed to expand participation among senior Australians who love their football or those who just want a fun new way to get active,” Minister Colbeck said.

“Walking Football is a great version of the game that can be played by the whole family, irrespective of fitness levels or football experience. It’s non-contact and low-impact which makes it ideal for older Australians.

“The fun and social aspect is just as important as the physical health benefits. Pilot programs have shown it’s a great way to make new friends and reduce social isolation, with many of the participants meeting up outside game times.”

Walking Football will start soon with full programs in NSW, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and the ACT. Pilot programs will also commence in South Australia, Tasmania, Northern Territory and Northern NSW.

There will be 110 hubs established in the first 12 months, growing to 148 in the second year.

As well as structured matches, activity coordinators will be appointed in each hub to advise participants on training exercises for home which include stretching and balance exercises.

“With structured matches and the at-home exercises, we’re aiming to deliver more than one million active hours across Australia,” Minister Colbeck said.

The Government’s \$22.9 million *Move It Aus - Better Ageing* grants program is being managed by Sport Australia to deliver innovative ways to help older Australians across the country get more physically active.

Sport Australia Chair John Wylie said: “Sport needs to be adaptable so it can be enjoyed for life, at any age, and I congratulate Football Federation Australia and Active Ageing Australia for partnering on this initiative. Australia’s population is ageing and our grants program is helping Australians over 65 benefit from the health, wellbeing and social aspects sport provides.”

Football Federation Australia CEO David Gallop said Walking Football was adaptable and affordable.

“The time, location, venues and numbers on each team can be adapted depending on the needs of participants in each area,” Mr Gallop said.

“We also want to make this program affordable to encourage as many older Australians as possible to participate. It’s all about getting active, having fun and making new friends.

“In the United Kingdom there more than 800 Walking Football clubs and we’re optimistic Australians will love this modified version of the World Game too.”

For more information on Walking Football go to www.playfootball.com.au/ffa-walking-football

For more information on *Move It Aus – Better Ageing grants* go to www.sportaus.gov.au

How it’s played:

- Running is not allowed. A participant always has to have one foot on the ground.
- It is non-contact
- The ball cannot be kicked above head height
- There is no heading of the ball
- There are no ‘referees’ as such and participation is prioritised over competition