

CHECKLIST

Consumer Safety - General purchasing advice

- Know your rights regarding the Consumer Guarantees Act and Fair Trading Act.
 - The Consumer Guarantees Act gives you rights when making purchases including: door to door sales, buying online and unsolicited goods.
 - The Fair Trading Act prohibits misleading and deceptive conduct, false representation and unfair practices. It covers advertising and selling of goods and services. It does not cover private sales.
 - For more information contact Citizens Advice Bureau or see:
 - <https://www.consumers.org.nz/articles/consumer-protection>
 - <https://www.consumer.org.nz/articles/fair-trading-act>
 - <http://www.cab.org.nz/vat/consumer/bcr/Pages/home.aspx>
- Compare similar products or services and obtain comparative quotes.
- Do not allow yourself to be 'talked into' purchasing unwanted or unnecessary services or products.
- As a consumer you do have 'a choice'. Your custom is valuable and you can take it elsewhere if you are not satisfied.

Note: To access Consumer articles online you may have to join up. There is a free membership option.

Key points regarding services and products displayed on Eldernet:

- Never give an open cheque or pin number to those who provide you with a service or product.
- Ask for and check references (particularly if a service is unknown).
- Obtain a written quotation where there isn't a set price.
- Protect you PIN number from the view of others. When you are entering it onto a device shield it with your hand if necessary.
- Always read anything you are asked to sign. If you don't understand it ask for it to be explained in plain language. If you don't agree with it, don't sign it.
- If you have purchased a service or product ask for a receipt. Keep it and any other documentation relating to your purchase.
- Ask what your rights are if things go wrong and who you can contact if you are not satisfied (these must align with your rights under the Consumers Guarantees Act 1993).
- Is everything about the product or service clearly shown (i.e. transparent) in the information you see or are given. (If not, make a note of the things you need to know and ask questions. Be suspicious if you do not get clear answers to your questions.)
- If you are purchasing a product or service that claims to help you with your disability look for references from appropriately qualified people (preferably from New Zealand) e.g. a physiotherapist, occupational therapist, doctor, chemist etc.
- If you are purchasing a mobility aid then assessment by a qualified health professional such as a physiotherapist is advised. Different aids suit different conditions.
- Ask for identification from unknown callers (ideally don't open the door to unexpected callers).
- Do not discuss any of your personal or financial affairs with strangers.

Connecting with a community group - considerations

The contribution made by volunteers to our community are immense. Most community group operate on a tight budget and often their funding is vulnerable. Many are also run by and/or assisted by volunteers. These factors mean that sometimes a service is short-term and the skills of the coordinators may be variable. Match your expectations to the situation.

Most groups wish to offer the very best service to you, so if your needs are not being meet, speak to the coordinator and ask for what you need. If they can't offer it to you they may know someone who can.

- How can you find out what groups you could join? (See also: Citizens Advice Bureau or Age Concern)
- How will this group meet your needs?
- Can others vouch for it? Do you know anyone who is currently in the group, or has engaged with them in the past?
- Once you've made a commitment to the group how easy will it be for you to leave?
- Can you offer something to the group (e.g. your time, skills, experience, assistance)?
- Can you learn something new, make new contacts?

Making enquiries

- When you make contact with the group are they welcoming?
- Can you contact other group members to discuss the benefits of joining the group?
- Do you understand how the group works and if there are any 'rules'?
- Is there a single person you can go to if you have any issues or need assistance?
- Do you understand the group's expectations of their members?
- Are there any costs?

Timing and location

- Does the frequency, time of meeting and venue suit you? Does this change at all?
- How will you travel to and from the meetings? If transport is an issue for you do they offer assistance? If you are still driving can you offer assistance to others in the group?

Health and other considerations

- Do you need to make anyone at the group aware of any medical conditions?
- How does the group let you know about events, meeting changes etc.?