



## Media Release - 24 February - ExerciseNZ

### **New Zealand MPs Set to Get 'Fit For Office' in National Exercise Challenge**

Members of Parliament (MPs) from across the political spectrum in Aotearoa are preparing to lace up their sneakers and lead by example as part of the Fit For Office (F4O) Challenge, launching on March 5, 2025, at 8:15 AM on the Parliamentary Steps. Supported by Exercise New Zealand (ExerciseNZ), this three-week initiative aims to promote the importance of regular physical activity while adding a fun, competitive edge among MPs.

With fitness trackers strapped on, participating MPs will engage in daily movement and track their physical activity, showcasing the benefits of exercise not just for the public but for those in leadership positions. The event launch will be officiated by ExerciseNZ, which will kick off the challenge by distributing Myzone heart rate monitors to MPs ready to begin their activity journey.

ExerciseNZ CEO Richard Beddie emphasises the significance of this initiative:

“Fit For Office is about showing that no matter how busy your schedule, there’s always time to prioritise your health. Our MPs are leaders in many ways, and by actively engaging in this challenge, they are setting an example for all New Zealanders to incorporate movement into their daily routines.”

Scientific research continues to highlight the significant mental and physical benefits of regular exercise. Just 15 minutes of movement per day can lead to:

- 4% improvement in overall fitness
- 12% increase in energy levels
- 8% better sleep quality

Over the longer term, regularly meeting WHO guidelines of 150 minutes of physical activity per week brings even more significant benefits—including adding 10-15 years to life expectancy, lowering all-cause mortality by up to 20%, and reducing the risk of multiple conditions - everything from cancer to dementia.

A global report on the economic and health costs of physical inactivity by Deloitte found the NZ economy loses over 2.3 billion dollars annually due to inactivity, of which 650 million is by way of increased taxpayer funded healthcare costs.

This challenge encourages all forms of physical activity, from simple tasks like walking and gardening to high-intensity workouts, ensuring MPs can participate regardless of their current fitness levels.

Using Myzone wearable technology, MPs will track their movement and engage in friendly competition via a private leaderboard, with the ultimate goal of achieving 1,000 Myzone Effort Points (MEPs) in three weeks, aligning with World Health Organization recommendations for physical activity.

The initiative also focuses on practical ways to increase movement, including:

- Group Activities – Exercising with colleagues, family, or friends for motivation.
- Incidental Exercise – Walking, cycling, or taking the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Goal Setting – Encouraging MPs to set personal movement goals and track their progress.

The launch event will be open to the media, providing an opportunity to capture MPs embracing healthier lifestyles. MPs will also be encouraged to share their journeys on social media throughout the challenge.

*For media attendance at the launch, updates on MPs' progress, or interview requests, please contact Richard Beddie at [richard@exercisenz.org.nz](mailto:richard@exercisenz.org.nz) or P: 0800 66 88 11, M: 027-520-5744.*