

PEOPLE

Taradale Observer

Pink therapy helps recovery

Many of us know someone who has suffered from breast cancer," says physiotherapist Rachel Ward.

"That's why it's so rewarding to be able to help these women."

Rachel and fellow physiotherapist Julie Foster, both of Havelock Physiotherapy, have just begun offering the therapeutic programme "Pink Pilates" in Hawke's Bay.

Pink Pilates was developed and founded in Auckland in 2006 by physiotherapist Lou James, who saw a need to help women recovering from breast cancer surgery and treatments.

The programme is funded by the Pink Pilates Trust and the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation which provide subsidised rates for women who are within two years of their diagnosis. After three years of success in Auckland, the trust wanted to make Pink Pilates available to more women throughout the country, says Rachel.

"Breast cancer research has

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found that exercise can help boost the immune system, limit weight gain from chemotherapy, ease treatment related side effects and contribute to an improved quality of life," Rachel says.

Rachel and Julie became certified in October last year and since January 2009 the programme has been available at Havelock Physiotherapy Clinic.

Pink Pilates blends physiotherapy with pilates, massage, stretching and breathing techniques. "It can also help reduce the risks of treatment-related side effects such as shoulder problems, scar tissue, lymphodema, fatigue and weight gain," says Rachel.

"All these women are so different," says Julie. "They have different experiences, different goals and different needs — which can change weekly — and we take all that into account."

Women qualify for subsidised Pink Pilates treatment from two weeks post-surgery up until two

years post-surgery. They can be referred by their surgeon, doctor, nurse or they can self-refer. The programme is suitable after any type of breast surgery or treatment and accommodates all fitness levels. It is designed to help recovery from mastectomy, lumpectomy, and breast reconstructive surgery including TRAM flap, LAT flap and breast implant reconstruction. Each session is designed to suit the needs of each woman, on that day.

Women who qualify for the subsidy get 10 individual treatments for \$10 per session. Women who do not meet the criteria are welcome to take part at a cost of \$55 per session.

There is also a gift voucher system whereby people can buy Pink Pilates sessions for friends and relatives.

"It's a great gift to give when sometimes you don't know how to help."

Julie and Rachel have had "Really good feedback" from their Pink Pilates clients

■ For information on Pink Pilates contact Havelock Physiotherapy on



FLEXIBLE: Physiotherapists Julie Foster (left) and Rachel Ward are introducing Pink Pilates to the Bay.

8777 100 or go to

www.pinkpilates.co.nz