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Prepared by: Graeme Stilwell

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For further information:

Ashley Harper, District Services Manager, Timaru District Council, (03) 687 7200
or Graeme Stilwell 0274 322 590. Email imagineprint@xtra.co.nz

‘Hot pools will be worth millions to me’

Timaru's new multi-million dollar Caroline Bay Aquatic Centre will be worth 10 times that amount to Trevor Swaney.

The Timaru man, who suffered a stroke a few years ago, has to do more than most of us when getting dressed each morning.

Mr Swaney's day starts with the fitting of a special knee brace followed by a tricky and time-consuming manoeuvre where a shoe and calf support that resembles a prosthetic is gently guided and strapped on to a weakened left leg and foot.

But an uncomplaining Mr Swaney is now well used to the daily procedure and has just one wish, one he values at “millions of dollars” – a twice-weekly soak in the caressing tepid waters of the Caroline Bay Aquatic Centre.

“I’ll be there with bells on every week, probably at least twice a week,” Mr Swaney said.

The soothing warm water pools provide “heavenly” relief from gravity’s relentless pressure on weakened limbs and Mr Swaney, once a regular user of Strathallan Lifecare’s pool until it closed to the public about two years ago, knows the benefits first-hand.

“You just feel so invigorated and it’s a feeling that can last for days afterwards.

“I’ve seen so many people improving after suffering strokes and gradually regaining some lost mobility in a soothing and non-stressful way,” he said.

“Now that there are currently no pool options, people have had to leave town for their aquatic experiences.”

Mr Swaney has regular contact with other people who have suffered strokes. He also works with the Blind Foundation distributing and maintaining the Talking Books programme.

“What’s a worry to me is the number of people, especially out Temuka way, who have gone backwards since they haven’t been able to have their regular pool exercise sessions. Their mobility has deteriorated.”

Mr Swaney said stroke could happen to anyone at any time.

“It’s difficult enough to deal with and a huge challenge.

“But when so much relief from the symptoms is as easy as floating away your troubles in a warm pool, I just cannot wait for our new aquatic centre. It’s long overdue.”

ENDS



Stroke sufferer Trevor Swaney’s day starts with the fitting of a special knee brace and a shoe and calf support. He has just one wish, one he values at “millions of dollars” – a twice-weekly soak in the caressing tepid waters of the Caroline Bay Aquatic Centre. “It can’t happen soon enough.”