



# Walk puts focus on glaucoma

Lindy Laird | 4th July 2011

Doug Wilson doesn't let glaucoma or arthritis slow him down when he goes for a walk - even one that will take him from Cape Reinga to Bluff.

The 75-year-old from Tauranga arrived in Whangarei last week, a few days after leaving Cape Reinga on his quest to raise funds and awareness about the eye condition glaucoma.

Glaucoma is possibly the world's most common cause of vision impairment, Mr Wilson said.

"Yet a simple test from an eye specialist can diagnose it and eyedrops usually halt the progress," he said.

Mr Wilson said he intended calling on mayors, RSAs, clubs and medical clinics in the main centres he passed through during his trip south - not just to shake his collection jar but to talk about the prevalent and often "sneaky" eye condition that, if untreated, leads to loss of sight.

"I'm asking mayors to lobby central Government for more research because so many people in their communities are affected by glaucoma."

Meanwhile, in between the rides he gets offered when motorists see him with his heavy backpack, Mr Wilson finds all the walking a bit of a doddle thanks to his Nordic walking sticks.

They took the stress off his joints, worked out the upper body, burned calories and kept him on his toes without arthritic pain, he said.

The sticks helped him regain strength and become mobile after an accident a couple of years ago, he said.



**VISBLE CAUSE:** With his bright safety gear and colourful flags, Doug Wilson is making sure he is seen during his long walk for glaucoma awareness.

Only six weeks ago he walked the 42km Rotorua Marathon.

July is Glaucoma Month.

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