

Submission to the Health and Disability System Review

From Healthy Families Lower Hutt Strategic Leadership Group

1. What are the most important values for our future public health and disability system?

This submission focuses on the single biggest challenge and failure of the health and disability system – health disparity and inequity of Māori. This is all the more unacceptable given the Treaty partnership and the obligations of the Crown to Māori. The Ministry needs to accelerate its efforts to ensure the attainment of Māori wellbeing. We recommend the Ministry works in partnership with Iwi and Māori to identify and adopt a “Wairua Centred” approach that understands and supports wellbeing from a Te Ao Māori lens.

2. Think about how the best health and disability system for New Zealand might look in 2030. How would that be different from the system we use today?

The best health and disability system for New Zealand in 2030 is one that has been designed with Iwi and Māori, and as such, will have seen a drastic reduction in health disparity. The holistic approach and world view of Māori will be at the heart of investment, planning, design and delivery. We say this with the conviction that what works for Māori will work for all New Zealanders.

3. What changes could make our health and disability system more fair and equal for everyone?

We recommend the Ministry adopt a partnership approach with Iwi and Māori at the highest decision making level and invest in Māori led solutions and holistic approaches that are adopted across the public sector. Communities are best placed to fully understand their challenges and therefore need to also be driving the solutions. Locally led solutions that hold Māori at the centre have the best chance in creating a more fair and equitable system for everyone. This will require the health and disability system and workforce to adapt to better reflect and engage with the communities they serve as well as provide funding mechanisms which are targeted to where the need is the greatest compared to a population-based funding formula.

4. What changes could most improve health for Māori?

The development and adoption of a Wairua centred approach would ground our way of working in cultural strengths and beliefs. This would benefit all New Zealanders and indeed the planet as a Wairua centred approach addresses all things in relationship to each other and human wellbeing as inextricably linked to the natural and spiritual environment. Indigenous systems thinking holds the solutions for the grave threats of sustainability and climate change.

5. What changes could most improve health for Pacific peoples?

The development and adoption of Pasifika frameworks and world views should inform approaches and practices that build on Pasifika strengths and values. Pasifika too hold solutions not only for their communities but for communal wellbeing and the health of the planet.

6. What changes could make sure that disabled people have equal opportunities to achieve their goals and the life they want?

Not answering

7. What existing or previous actions have worked well in New Zealand or overseas? Why did they work, and how might they make things even better in the future?

Not answering

8. What are the most important changes that would make the biggest difference to New Zealanders?

- Greater investment in a prevention system that unites to create the conditions for wellbeing
- In partnership with Māori indigenous knowledge holders, develop a Wairua centred approach and framework to inform health creation
- With Pasifika knowledge holders, develop Pasifika approaches to wellbeing that inform health creation.
- The Ministry role modelling and leading the united efforts of the public sector, private sector, NGO's in supporting community identified and led solutions. Demonstrating the benefits of collaboration for collective impact.
- Capability development in the health sector that creates the mind-set and skill-set required for effective systems change.
- Develop the capability of the health sector to access and privilege the lived experience of those who experience health disparity.
- Investment in entities that have mana enhancing relationships with communities impacted by health disparity.
- Learn from Māori and Pasifika systems change leaders within the Healthy Families New Zealand initiative.
- Consider a greater role for Local Government in health creation.

9. Is there anything else you wish to add?

Towards health creation

It takes a village to raise a child.

Our village of Aotearoa requires the united effort of all those who have the resources to create the conditions that enable our people to be well and thrive. A radical review of what we fund and how

we work should begin with a paradigm shift in thinking. The concepts below compliment the Wairua centred approach but written from a British health system viewpoint.

The Young Foundation produced a report in July 2017 entitled 'Transforming Health: Shifting our health systems from illness treatment and prevention to health creation'. Below is the introduction which describes a 'health creation' approach:

'In spite of recent overall advancements in our society's health and wellbeing, we are experiencing a crisis of major health disparities driven by growing inequalities. Experts recognize that while the NHS has much to be celebrated, its design is not well suited to addressing these complex issues. The medical model defines health pathogenically, by referencing illness as the starting point and health as the goal. The Young Foundation is calling for a fundamental change in the way we understand health by changing our focus to systems that create health instead of just mitigating illness. We call this new approach to health innovation "Health Creation".

Health creation isn't about "doing health to people", nor is it about telling them what to do in order to be healthy and prevent disease. It's about empowerment and fostering community agency. Health creation is about walking alongside people with humility and at their pace to discover the realities of their lives in relation to their health. Using a health creation approach means working with them to generate new ideas that they will drive to create better health. It's radical because it isn't easy or straightforward, but it's important and necessary. We believe that with the right support and facilitation, the answers to our health crisis lie with communities themselves.'

The same document includes a quote that describes the things that make us **feel** healthy:

'The health sector defines health as the absence of disease. Health and disease are primarily understood through biological measures, with the prevention, treatment and management of disease provided by professionals. Yet when people talk about feeling healthy they include things like relationships, financial security, safety, nurturing home and place, having purpose, happiness, and being able to do what matters most to them. These things go beyond our physical and mental health but also play important roles in their maintenance and stability over time.'

Source: <https://www.healthandcommunity.org/the-field/>

"Health cannot be owned by the health care system. Health happens through the many interactions in society; within communities, between communities, with systems, and between systems. No single entity can set the agenda. All must be brought to the table, and with an equal voice." - A Manifesto for the UK: We'd like to talk about health...An invitation from a group of practitioners

Through this review, the Health and Disability Sector has the opportunity to lead a step change in its practice and approach to wellbeing. This involves addressing the root causes of ill health by taking a systems approach that has the goal of creating the conditions that allow New Zealanders to thrive. This 'health creation' approach goes beyond illness, treatment and prevention. The question we should ask of ourselves and our people is 'what is it that makes us live well and how do we get there?' This needs to be an ongoing conversation with Māori and Pasifika communities as we re-design the health and disability system.

A systems change approach places people and the environment at the heart of design and decision making. It seeks to understand the relationship between the social, built and natural environments and identify and transform those aspects that do not enhance wellbeing. Māori and Pasifika models of wellbeing can show us the way.

Healthy Families New Zealand

Healthy Families NZ has been applying systems thinking to create health promoting environments that help people be well and thrive. The Ministry of Health developed Healthy Families New Zealand in 2014 as a large-scale prevention initiative to bring community leadership together in a united effort for better health. It aims to improve people's health where we live, learn, work and play by taking a systems approach to the reduction of risk factors for major health loss and increasing equity.

The goal is for all New Zealanders to enjoy health promoting social and physical environments that enable healthy food and physical activity choices, being smokefree, drinking alcohol only in moderation and increasing mental health resilience and wellbeing. These environments include, but are not limited to early childhood education settings, schools, workplaces, food outlets, sports clubs, marae, businesses, places of worship, local governments, and more to create healthier environments for all.

Healthy Families NZ is a move away from disconnected, short-term projects and programmes towards a more collaborative, whole of community approach to prevention. It aims to make sustainable and long-term changes to the systems that influence the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Healthy Families NZ reflects the unique context of New Zealand communities, and the special relationship between Māori and the Crown, including obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The Healthy Families NZ Principles include an explicit focus on equity, improving Māori health and improving health equity for groups at increased risk of chronic diseases.

There are [10 Healthy Families NZ communities](#) across Aotearoa with lead providers that include iwi, Runanga, Sports Trusts and TLA's. Examples of their work can be accessed through national newsletters on the Health Families NZ webpage: <https://www.healthyfamilies.govt.nz/showcase>

Foundations of the Healthy Families NZ approach are the **Building Blocks** and the **Principles**.

The Healthy Families NZ Building blocks



Healthy Families NZ Principles

Implementation at Scale: Strategies are delivered at a scale that impacts the health and wellbeing of a large number of the population, in the places where they spend their time – in schools, workplaces and communities

Collaboration for Collective Impact: Long term commitment is required by multiple partners, from different sectors, at multiple levels, to generate greater collective impact on the health of all New Zealanders. Knowledge is co-created and interventions co-produced, supported by a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, ongoing communication and a “backbone” support organisation

Equity: Health equity is the attainment of the highest level of health for all people. Healthy Families NZ will have an explicit focus on improving Māori health and reducing inequalities for groups at increased risk of chronic diseases. Māori participation at all levels of the planning and implementation of Healthy Families NZ is critical

Adaptation: Strengthening the prevention system requires constant reflection, learning and adaption to ensure strategies are timely, relevant and sustainable

Experimentation: Small scale experiments provide insight into the most effective interventions to address chronic disease. These experiments are underpinned by evidence and experience, and are monitored and designed to then be amplified across the system, if they prove effective

Leadership: Leadership is supported at all levels of the prevention effort including senior managers, elected officials, and health champions in our schools, businesses, workplaces, sporting clubs and other settings in the community

Line-of-sight: The line of sight provides a transparent view on how investment in policy is translated into measured impacts in communities, ensuring best value from every dollar spent on prevention.

Sustainability: Initiatives are undertaken that create make sustainable and long-term changes that become business as usual beyond the original investment of time and resource.

Evaluation

Healthy Families NZ is being evaluated by public health researchers within the School of Health Sciences, Massey University who produced a Summative Evaluation Report in September 2018. Below are conclusions and recommendation that may have relevance to the population health sector in general:

Summary conclusions of changes

- The strong focus on equity within the initiative has shed light on the need to enable and amplify diverse local perspectives on health issues and solutions.
- There has been significant evolution in the initiative.
- There was a common view expressed that the initiative was just coming into its strides and had significant potential to meet its goals longer term.
- There was a continuing strong focus on relationships and networks for collective action.
- An important issue highlighted has been the impact of public health and social investment strategies for enabling action on collective goals.
- Prevention is clearly in need of strengthening in New Zealand and there are some significant system barriers to addressing the risk factors for chronic diseases at both the community and national level. For example, in South Auckland poverty has only been increasing over the last decade, despite the amount of resource going into this community. Addressing alcohol harms was particularly difficult for the Healthy Families NZ teams because of the systems set up nationally which disadvantaged community voice. Mental health was also seen as an underlying and critically important issue within communities, but has to date been poorly addressed.

Recommendations:

- Continue prioritisation and purposeful focus on supporting and resourcing Māori ownership, participation, and use of Māori world views within the initiative.
- Retain and strengthen the Principle of equity as an underpinning value and goal of the initiative.
- Undertake a review to identify other regions that would benefit from increased investment in prevention through this approach.
- Review government funding and contracting for health and social services and outcomes in communities to consider their impact on communities' ability to work towards shared goals – especially the impact on cooperation and trust.

- Review how health data and knowledge is managed and accessed to enable better insights into local community contexts and community advocacy.
- Build upon the qualitative and quantitative indicator development within this evaluation to improve measurement of systems change.
- Urgently consider barriers to community voice and action on the availability of alcohol.
- Review the Principles in light of the growing sophistication in understanding the approach to systems change being taken across Healthy Families NZ.
- Continue to develop a suite of professional development opportunities to support use of a range of co-design and systems change methods and related skills.
- Ensure flexibility remains in how Healthy Families NZ locations determine the workforce needed and enable the employment of staff to fill particular skill gaps and identified needs, and provide tailored professional development.
- Ensure all Healthy Families NZ location teams have the right mix of skills, and are empowered, to carry out two functions that have been identified as important:
 - work with leaders within organisations and communities to facilitate ongoing engagement and collective action; and
 - meaningfully engage members of the community to ensure diverse voices are included in identifying needs, opportunities and designing initiatives.
- In any changes to the initiative, ensure that the ability of the initiative to be adaptive and responsive to context and change in local and national circumstances is retained and enhanced.
- Establish a national level Strategic Leadership Group, similar to locations, that could bring in wide perspectives and spheres of influence to support the Healthy Families NZ national team within the Ministry of Health, and the initiative, including strong Māori leadership.
- Strengthen the ability of the Healthy Families NZ national team within the Ministry of Health, to support local level change through acting on national level barriers.

Here is a link to the full report:

https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/healthy-families-report_-_main-report-091018.pdf.

Locally led systems change

The lead providers of the Healthy Families NZ communities across Aotearoa were chosen because they had strong relationships with and spheres of influence within their communities. This model has also provided the opportunity to demonstrate indigenous systems thinking and solutions, particularly through iwi, runanga and NGO lead providers. There is much to be learnt from these communities and we encourage the Review Panel to see, hear and experience this mahi for themselves and we are happy to facilitate this.

Healthy Families Lower Hutt

A strength of the locally led systems change approach in Lower Hutt has been the reach and influence of Hutt City Council as the lead provider supported by a Strategic Leadership Group that include a wide variety of voices and influencers in the community. The Healthy Families Lower Hutt Strategic Leadership Group is chaired by Hutt City Council and membership includes representation from Iwi, DHB, PHO, Education, Sports Trust, Ministry of Health along with private sector representation from a New World owner and Director of Catalyst Pacific Ltd.

The Healthy Families Lower Hutt team sits in the Parks and Recreation Division of Hutt City Council and has leveraged off Council's spheres of influence to create the following examples of local systems change:

Healthy Active Streets and Spaces

Healthy Families Lower Hutt is providing leadership to a cross Council working group that is developing the **Streets Alive** framework. The framework will provide practical and measurable framework and indicators to inform design decisions for our streets and public spaces.

The research findings and insights from **Play in the Hutt** have been consolidated into a [visual snapshot](#) and [comprehensive report](#). This work is now informing the Streets Alive framework as well as being used by other local authorities and Healthy Families NZ sites to inspire their local approach and action.

Active transport

Healthy Families Lower Hutt is working closely with the community and Council designers and planners to ensure that our streets encourage and enable active transport, creating connections within our communities as well as to local and city destinations.

Increasing access to water

We have worked with our partners to reorient funding towards water fountains and enabling pro-water and water-only places where we live, learn, work and play by enabling:

- 65 water only/pro water settings including schools (reaching 3652 students), sports clubs and community facilities
- 12 large scale pro-water Council led events reaching 100,000 people each year
- 17 cafes and organisations where you can refill your water bottle for free

Player of the Day

Healthy Families Lower Hutt kaimahi worked with Hutt City Council and sports organisations to design an alternative certificate with a pool pass. To be eligible for the Player of the Day certificates, sports organisations must demonstrate their pro-water kaupapa. In return they get free pool passes for their junior players. The pool passes not only break the link between unhealthy food sponsorship of junior sport but also provide a free opportunity to be physically active at Council pools. What started in one sports organisation supported by one Council has now grown to have regional impact:

- Over 50 sports clubs, codes and regional organisations committing to be pro-water
- Over 15,000 certificates handed out each year
- 5 Councils supporting the initiative by accepting pool passes
- \$110,000 of investment by Councils to support pro-water sports organisations

Through the Player of the Day initiative we're creating a new normal where water is the drink of choice in sports settings and unhealthy food isn't linked to junior sport.

Smokefree environments

Healthy Families Lower Hutt has led the implementation of Hutt City Council's Smokefree Outdoor Public Places Policy:

- Hutt City Council has one of the most comprehensive Smokefree Outdoor Public Places Policies across New Zealand. The following areas in Lower Hutt became smokefree: Playgrounds, outdoor public swimming pools, parks and sports grounds, including skate parks, bus shelters, train stations, beaches, public areas around council buildings and facilities, council events, outdoor pavement dining areas and we are exploring areas in town centres as smokefree areas.
- Scott Court in Stokes Valley and Queen Street in Wainuiomata have been designated smokefree town centres.

Healthy Families Lower Hutt is also promoting voluntary smokefree spaces including:

- Supporting medical centres, cafes and community organisations to create smokefree spaces and proactively displaying smokefree signage.
- Working with Queensgate Shopping Centre to become completely smokefree. This is significant as Queensgate has over 7 million visits every year and is a place where our young people spend their time.
- Working with Upper Hutt City Council on extending their smokefree outdoor public places policy.

Local Government and systems change

Hutt City Council's leadership of a united effort has strengthened the local prevention system. Local Government has considerable influence on the built, social and natural environment as well as having direct relationships with the people that live, learn, work and play in its territory. This leadership role has strengthened partnerships with the health sector, in particular with Hutt Valley DHB and Te Awakairangi Health Network.

Attached is a briefing document developed for the 2018 Local Government New Zealand Conference entitled 'Imagine local government and community working better together to co-design healthier futures for all'. This document describes how Councils can use urban planning and community design to build successful cities that work for everyone and drive better health outcomes.

Embedding aspects of population health in Local Government that acts in partnership with the health and social sector is a model to be considered and grown.