



BUSINESS SCHOOL

Retirement Policy and Research Centre

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To: Ministry of Health

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Submission: New Zealand Health Research Strategy Discussion Document

The Retirement Policy and Research Centre thanks the Ministry of Health for the opportunity to submit on this important strategy.

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We give permission for our personal details to be released under the Official Information Act 1982.

We have responded only to those questions where we can make a contribution.

Questions about the health research strategy

1 Does the proposed vision capture what you see as the desirable future state for health research in New Zealand by 2026?

No

Reasons and comments below.

Stated vision: Our desired future state for health research in New Zealand.

Health research is far more than a mere academic exercise, and serves little purpose if it is not applicable in the real world.

2 Are there additional aspects that you think should be included in the vision?

Yes

Reasons and comments below.

Add to the vision so it becomes: Our desired future state for health research in New Zealand, with intersectoral evidence in policy, practice, and equity.

To achieve positive change in the general health of the nation, the research must be incorporated in policy and practice, and across all sectors, including housing and welfare.

3 Does the proposed mission capture key contributions and roles that are needed to achieve the vision?

No

If not, what do you think should be included?

Mission currently states: the contribution and main roles of the various contributors to the health research system in working toward the vision.

Add, so that Mission becomes: The contribution and main roles of the various contributors to the health research system in working toward the vision of providing an equitable, efficient and affordable foundation for a healthy population.

5 Do you think additional guiding principles are needed?

Yes

Reasons and comments below.

New Zealand is in the midst of massive demographic change with an ageing population, and with significant increases anticipated in the numbers of Māori and Pasifika children being born. There is nothing in the strategy that gives due recognition to this transformation.

6 Taken together, do you think the proposed vision, mission and guiding principles will set the framework for a more cohesive and connected health research and innovation system?

No

Reasons and comments below.

Strategic priorities need to include improvements to child health, particularly for Māori and Pasifika children, and supporting the health of the ageing population.

7 What do you think should be the focus of the strategic priorities in the health research strategy?

Promoting the health of the ageing population, and of children, particularly Maori and Pasifika children.

General comments:

- i) While there is great potential for benefit from digital innovations, some population groups lack access to technology and would be further disadvantaged by reliance on digital delivery of health services.

- ii) The care workforce is ageing. There is a need for the health sector to actively promote itself as a career choice. Ensuring fair employment conditions for this workforce is a necessary first step to solving the problem.
- iii) Increased income support to low income households would greatly improve the effectiveness of the health strategy to reduce inequities. Evidence supporting the relationship between low income and poor health outcomes is abundant.
- iv) In addition to the requirement for a larger 'care' workforce, the ageing of the population requires increased funding to health and hospital services. Research by the Ministry of Health has found that increased longevity means increased years of ill-health and/or frailty.