

# WELL WAIRARAPA

Through

# HEALTHY NEIGHBOURHOODS

HAUORA MŌ TĀTOU  
WE ARE



Wairarapa DHB

Wairarapa District Health Board

Te Pōari Hauora a-rohe o Wairarapa

# FOREWORD

Tēnā koutou katoa

Evidence shows that where people live plays a pivotal role in their health. Housing, workplaces, street design, and transportation all influence individual and community health factors such as safety, physical activity, access to healthy food, community engagement, and affordable living.

The purpose of this plan is to support the implementation of Hauora Mō Tātou, Wairarapa DHB's Strategic Direction 2020 – 2030 through supporting the development of healthy neighbourhoods across Wairarapa. It aligns with the vision and mission outlined in Hauora Mō Tātou and supports several of the actions identified.

Wellness through healthy living is a significant contributor to wellbeing. The Global Wellness Institute describes wellness as the pursuit of activities, choices and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health. Wellness embraces physical, mental, social, and community health and is impacted by lifestyle habits, the environment – both natural and built, the quality and accessibility of services, and individual and social factors.

Physical activity provides a great platform for achieving wellness. This plan emphasises the role that being physically active can play

in achieving wellness. At the same time it recognises the opportunities this may create to influence other related healthy behaviours such as healthy eating and cigarette smoking.

The Global Burden of Disease Study estimates that 39 percent of New Zealanders' health loss is due to risk factors that can be modified. Physical activity is both a preventative and restorative factor in wellness and is recognised as a modifiable health behaviour. There is a high correlation between lower levels of physical activity and lower levels of wellbeing. The World Health Organisation (WHO) identifies that physical activity is now a 'must have' and an essential component of public policy to achieve healthier populations and a healthier planet.

While New Zealanders by and large enjoy good health, high levels of wellbeing are not universally experienced by all. To address this requires a community-led approach working with neighbourhoods to find local solutions and opportunities as well as collaboration from key influencers and organisations from a variety of sectors including Iwi, Māori health providers, local government, public health, central government organisations, Nuku Ora, sport and recreation providers, and funders.

# INTRODUCTION

Wellbeing is first and foremost about people.

Wellbeing is hard to define succinctly because it means different things to different people, it is subjective and nuanced depending on who you talk to.

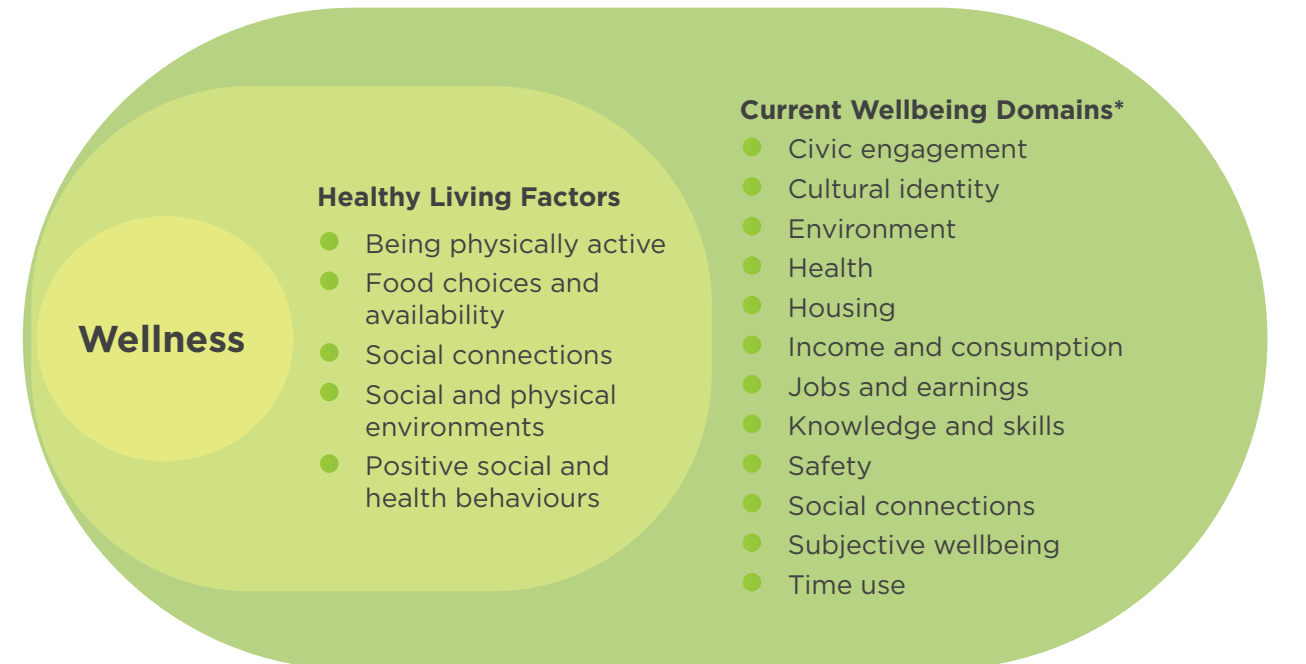
There is no sole determinant of individual wellbeing, but in general, wellbeing is dependent upon good physical and mental health, positive social relationships, and good spiritual health. When we consider wellbeing in this way, we see that there are many dimensions underpinning wellbeing including having a job and access to regular income, somewhere warm and affordable to live, access to the natural environment, safe communities and neighbourhoods, being connected with our community, access to transport, availability of healthy food, and our ability to access a range of support services as and when we need them.

Wellbeing is also linked to feeling loved and respected, the status of our physical and mental health, feelings of achievement and fulfilment, our social connections and the quality of our relationships, and the extent of the control, agency, and choice we have in our lives. Social connectedness is a key driver of wellbeing and resilience. Socially well-connected people and communities are happier and healthier and are better able to take charge of their lives and find solutions to the problems they are facing.

Wellness is an active process of making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life. It is about our individual health behaviours and is an important contributor alongside other factors to enhancing wellbeing. Wellness equates to living a healthy lifestyle. Wellness is about our habits and factors that individuals have some agency over, although individuals and groups vary in their level of control over some of them creating inequity. To change these behaviours requires a supportive system that removes barriers and provides for individual and community agency around provision in an equitable way.



Healthy living requires a focus on those behaviours that enhance health, both physical and mental, including nutrition, physical activity, smoking, alcohol and drug use, and stress management amongst others.





# OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

Our desired outcome is: Well communities and high levels of wellbeing across Wairarapa.

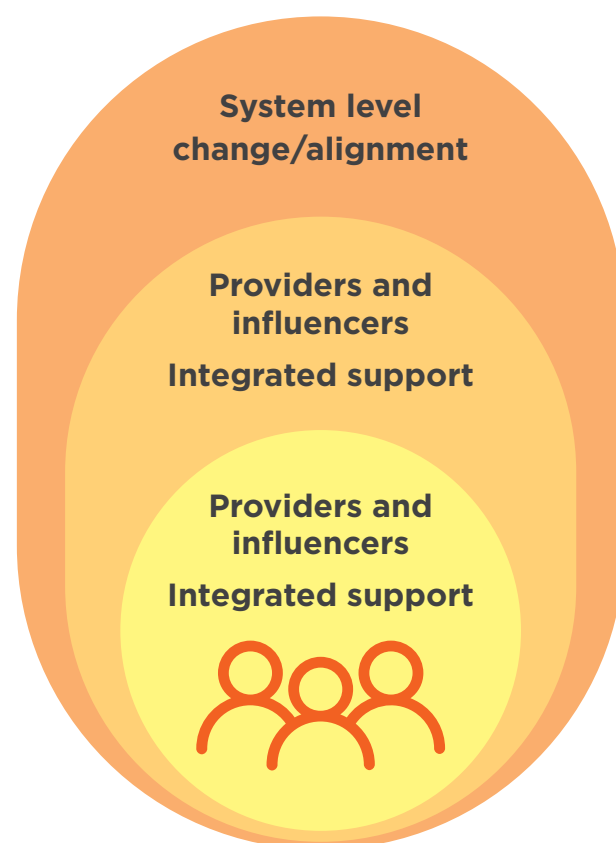
Our aim is to: Support neighbourhoods to develop and maintain healthy behaviours that lead to improved wellbeing and decreased disparity between neighbourhoods.

## Considerations

- The greatest gains in individual, family/whānau, and community health will be made when we focus on those neighbourhoods within our broader community where good health is not currently enjoyed or widely experienced, and where disparities currently exist.
- We know from the 2019 Health and Independence Report that 30 percent of our health and wellbeing is determined through our health behaviours.
- Behaviour change is complex and doesn't occur simply because something is good for us. It requires sustained action over time.
- WHO identifies three key drivers for physical activity behaviour change: sustained physical activity communication campaigns and messages; a physical environment that provides easy access and is safe and affordable; and programmes, events, and services that are affordable and inclusive across all life stages.
- A community-led approach requires engagement with neighbourhoods to co-create solutions that build from the strengths within that community.

*The need to work in three different but connected contexts*

Just focusing on neighbourhoods will only take us so far on the change journey. To support sustained change, we also need to connect with providers and influencers to create an integrated support system, and effect change in the system to ensure that there is greater alignment in policy, funding, leadership, workforce capability and capacity, research and knowledge, and innovation.



# OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

There are four key areas of focus required to support neighbourhoods to develop and maintain healthy behaviours that lead to improved wellness, and these are articulated in the diagram below. Key actions relate to each of these areas of focus.

## Objective: Engaged neighbourhoods

### Actions: We will ...

1. Use data and evidence to identify priority neighbourhoods. From this we can create a thorough understanding of the interests, challenges and opportunities for local people.
2. Identify a key leader(s) in each neighbourhood and work with that person (people) to learn more about the neighbourhood.
3. Apply community-led principles and community-led change practices as we build relationships.
4. Design with locals initiatives and opportunities for increased physical activity across all four of its domains (play, active recreation, active transport, and sport).
5. Create opportunities to develop capacity and capability.

## Objective: Create a Connector workforce

### Actions: We will ...

1. Create neighbourhood 'connector' roles whose purpose will be to:
  - a. Engage with neighbourhoods
  - b. Connect local needs with available opportunities and services
  - c. Facilitate collective action between providers and locals
  - d. Distribute and reinforce key messages about the value of physical activity
  - e. Advocate for neighbourhoods with key stakeholders.



## Objective: Easily accessed spaces and places

### Actions: We will ...

1. Work with providers of community infrastructure to ensure there are spaces and places that enable people to be active in a variety of ways and across all domains, with appropriate water sources present for hydration.
2. Advocate for the inclusion of active design principles in the development of new and existing community infrastructure.
3. Work with providers to consider ways to reduce barriers to accessing spaces and places where barriers exist.
4. Encourage activity that connects neighbourhoods and the people in them to the various activities of their daily lives such as home and work, home and school.
5. Encourage active transport as both an activity and a provider consideration.





## Objective: Provider network development

### Actions: We will ...

1. Work with the providers of physical activity opportunities to develop collective action that will benefit local people to enjoy great experiences while also ensuring there are a diverse range of opportunities to match different interests and life stages.
2. Connect the physical activity provider network with other providers of healthy lifestyle initiatives to ensure an integrated array of healthy lifestyle services and activities.
3. Connect providers with neighbourhoods to create co-design and community-led opportunities.
4. Advocate for inclusive practices in planning and delivery.

## IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES

How this work is implemented is extremely important. The following are core principles for guiding this work.

- A **locality** approach to planning and provision to enhance community engagement
- Ensuring that **individuals**, their **families/whānau** and **neighbourhoods** are front and centre
- **Equity** and **equitable** access to services through consideration of different needs and barriers
- Preserving the **mana** of the person in front of you – acknowledging their **mauri** and their specific context and enhancing these through a strengths-based lens
- Working **better together**: cross- sector collaboration and connectivity (including with local people).

### The Value of Physical Activity

Physical activity is human movement. For this plan we have identified four physical activity domains: play, active recreation, active transport, and sport. While all involve movement, each domain has specific characteristics that make them unique.

Being physically active is a well-documented way of maintaining good health and wellness. Physical inactivity is a modifiable health behaviour and being physically active has proven to have a beneficial effect on several different aspects of health and wellbeing. The diagram below identifies some of these.

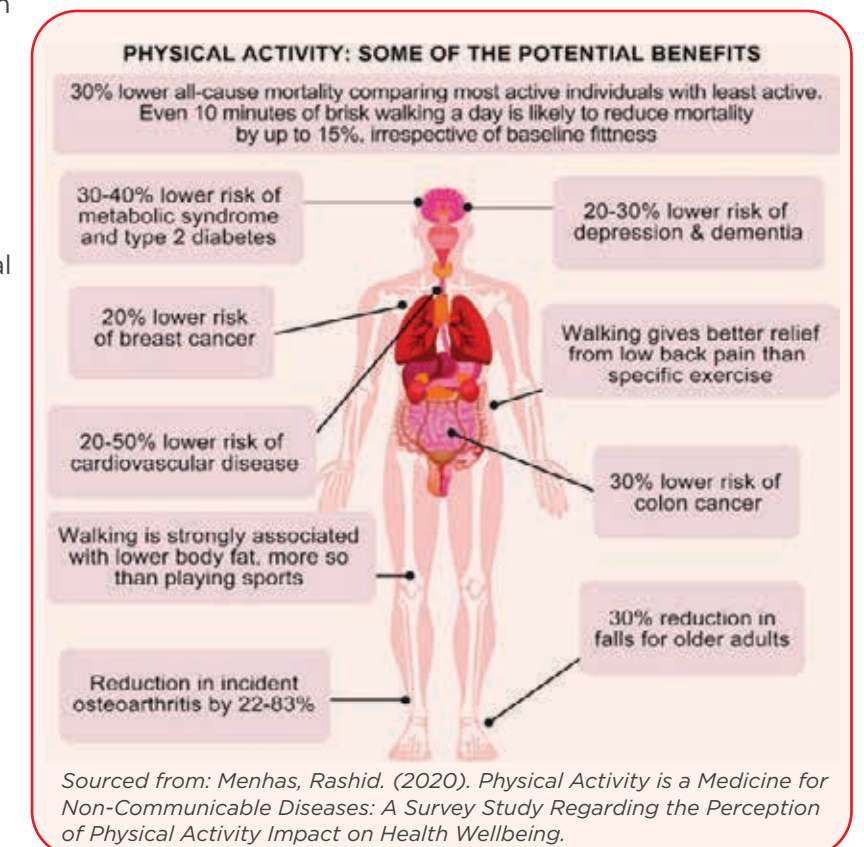
A physically active person is someone who meets the guidelines established by the Ministry of Health which outline the minimum levels of physical activity required to gain health benefits and include commentary around sedentary behaviour and sleep. The guidelines set out different requirements for different ages ranging from 30 minutes 5 days a week for elderly to 1 hour a day for

children and young people.

Changing physical activity behaviour may indirectly influence health behaviours such as overeating, smoking, substance abuse, stress management, and risk taking. Substantial evidence indicates that physical activity is positively associated with weight control and caloric intake. The data weakly supports the hypothesis that physical activity and smoking are negatively associated. Few data are available to evaluate the association between activity and alcohol consumption, alcoholism, substance abuse, stress management, preventive health behaviours, and risk-taking behaviour.

Other benefits of being physically active are well-documented. Being regularly active can contribute to:

- physical and mental wellbeing
- social development
- cultural connections
- community development
- sustainable transport
- economic growth
- employable skill development
- personal development.





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