

Auckland Regional Public Health Service

Rātonga Hauora ā Iwi o Tamaki Makaurau



Working with the people of Auckland, Counties Manukau and Waitemata

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28 November 2008

Housing New Zealand Corporation
PO Box 2628
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NEW ZEALAND

Submission from the Auckland Regional Public Health Service on the Housing Strategy for Pacific People

1. Thank you for the opportunity for the Auckland Regional Public Health Service to provide a submission to Housing New Zealand Corporation.
2. The following submission represents the views of the Auckland Regional Public Health Service and does not necessarily reflect the views of the three District Health Boards. Please refer to Appendix 1 for more information on ARPHS.
3. ARPHS understands that all submissions will be available under the Official Information Act 1982, except if grounds set out under the Act apply.
4. The primary contact point for this submission is:

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Executive summary and proposed key recommendations

5. Auckland Regional Public Health Services (ARPHS) fully supports Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC) in the development of an engagement process to support the production of a strategy that focuses on meeting the housing needs of Pacific people.
6. **Q1. What is your vision for a housing strategy for Pacific people?** 'Healthy and stronger Pacific families in New Zealand living in affordable, sustainable and good quality housing' or 'Healthy futures for Pacific families living in affordable, sustainable and good quality housing'¹.
7. **Q 2. Have we identified the right challenges, issues and problems to be tackled in a Housing Strategy for Pacific People? If not what is missing?**
ARPHS is generally supportive of the issues that have been regarded as key challenges. However, ARPHS recommends that substandard housing and household crowding be recognised as independent challenges. ARPHS suggests house maintenance be included in this section.
8. **Q3. Of the six outcomes on page 6, what are the top three?**
ARPHS considers that priority should be given to outcomes 1 (state housing); 4 (improve the quality of housing in the private rental market) and 5 (home ownership). However, some changes are suggested:
 - Outcomes 1 and 4: ARPHS suggests using the same criteria of quality and suitable houses for both; Housing New Zealand Corporation dwellings and the private rental market.
 - Outcome 5: Sustainability of home ownership and increased security of tenancy should be regarded as critical part of this outcome.
9. **Q 4. For the top 3 outcomes, what do you think can be done to achieve these?**
Please refer to questions 5 and
10. **Q5. What role can Pacific communities and other organisations play to achieve improved housing outcomes?**
ARPHS proposes distinct options for Pacific communities and organisations to participate in improving housing outcomes:
 - Churches as leadership centres. ARPHS suggests that at least two mechanisms could be presented to Pacific churches to encourage them to explore:
 - 1) What future role Pacific Island Churches and religious congregations could play as possible third party social housing providers?

¹ Parts of these sentences have been taken from the following two sources: the New Zealand Housing Strategy (<http://www.hnzc.co.nz/hnzc/dms/380D2C40C069A4CE4665F55A8C4523D1.pdf>. On November 26 2008) and some programmes of the Ministry of Social Development for Pacific families (<http://www.nzfvc.org.nz/acan/papers-presentations/abstract183v.shtml>. On November 26 2008).

2) What future role could Pacific churches play in a possible scheme where a portion of income raised goes to support sustainable rent, or contribute to mortgage payments of a family or individual of their own congregations?

- Pacific community advisors/trainers

ARPHS suggests that an extended education programme could target community leaders to become advisors for their own population in issues related to asking for credits towards home ownership, understand the dangers of approaching lenders of the type commonly known as “loan sharks” and delivering education sessions regarding financial literacy.

11. **Q6. How can Housing New Zealand help Pacific communities achieve these housing outcomes?**

1) Pacific specific possible actions:

- Implementing homeownership programmes that indeed meet the Pacific profiles.
- Meeting the needs of Pacific people when planning the state housing stock.
- Exploring the possibility of an agreement for Pacific families in tenancy problems.
- Setting up Pacific tenant advice services.
- Developing financial literacy skills development programmes.
- Forming and maintaining partnership with Pacific communities, leaders and churches.
- Developing or advocating for a crowding standard definition that involves Pacific community input.

2) Wider population possible actions:

- Social allocation policy. Preventing affordable housing being marginalised to specific geographic locations.
- Advocacy for a concise definition of acceptable quality.
- Advocacy for setting up a requirement that all properties display an energy-efficiency warrant of fitness or rating before being rented out or sold.
- Maintain, further develop and evaluate current initiatives.
- Develop other initiatives.

12. **Q7. Who do we need to work with to achieve better housing outcomes for Pacific people in the strategy?**

ARPHS wishes to participate as a stakeholder throughout the process of commenting on the draft of the housing strategy for Pacific people.

13. ARPHS recommends that formal health impact assessment (HIA) to be performed. ARPHS suggests that the most useful time for HNZC to undertake this health impact assessment on its final policy proposals would be after feedback on the draft strategy has been received (second phase). This will help ensure that the effects on Pacific health are explicitly considered.

Introduction

14. ARPHS reaffirms its support for HNZC's engagement process to assist in the development of a strategy that focuses on meeting the housing needs of Pacific people.
15. Housing, by virtue of its impact on health, is of key interest to ARPHS. Poor housing conditions are associated with a wide range of health conditions including respiratory infections, meningococcal disease, rheumatic fever, asthma, lead poisoning, injuries, and poorer mental health.^{2,3}
16. The Auckland region faces a large burden of health problems related to poor housing conditions. Children from low socioeconomic positions, particularly those of Māori and Pacific ethnicity, are disproportionately suffering from poorer health. ARPHS recognises the special place that Pacific communities have in the Auckland region, and the unique challenges they face. These challenges are approached from a framework of reducing inequalities.
17. ARPHS has published two reports on the relationship between housing and health in Auckland. In its 2006 Report "Improving Health and Wellbeing: A Public Health Perspective for Local Authorities in the Auckland Region"⁴ (the SOPHAR Report) ARPHS explored the linkages between a range of factors and population health. This builds on material from an earlier ARPHS report "Housing and Health: A Summary of Selected Research for Auckland Regional Public Health Services"⁵.
18. Some key ARPHS activities on housing include⁶:
 - The Healthy Housing Programme – an intersectoral collaboration between Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC), ARPHS (Auckland District Health Board), Counties Manukau and Hutt Valley District Health Boards.
 - Warm 'n' Well – A Waitemata District Health Board Programme providing eligible families with home insulation and a family health and social assessment. Marketing strategies aim to specifically reach Māori and Pacific families. Housing New Zealand homes are not included.
 - Policy analysis and advice, including submissions on: The Draft New Zealand Housing Strategy, the review of the Residential Tenancies Act, the review of regulations Under the Building Act, the review of the Unit Titles Act, Review of the Building Code, Territorial Authorities Affordable Housing Bill, amongst other pieces of legislation.
 - Promoting insulation retrofitting initiatives across the Auckland region, and working with DHBs, the Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority, PHOs and community retrofit groups.
 - Providing public health input into community renewal and design.

² Krieger, F. Higgins, D. Housing and Health Time Again for Public Health Action *American Journal of Public Health*, May 2002 p.758 Washington.

³ Wilson N. Mould in New Zealand houses; its relevance to health and potential policy responses. A report prepared for the Ministry of Health, 2005 cited in Imlach F. (2006). Housing and Health: Improving Health through the Built Environment. Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences-10th Public Health Summer School Course Book.

⁴ Improving Health and Wellbeing: A Public Health Perspective for Local Authorities in the Auckland Region, 2006, ARPHS http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/Sophar06/Sophar_report06.asp Printed copies can be made available to the Corporation if desired.

⁵ Housing and Health - A summary of selected research for Auckland Regional Public Health services, 2005, ARPHS http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/HealthyHousing/Healthy_Housing.asp

⁶ Ibid

- Representation on the Waitakere Housing 'Call to Action' Collaboration.
 - ARPHS is a signatory to the Urban Design Protocol.
 - ARPHS had input into the national Users Reference Group for the development of the national housing conditions survey.
 - Promoting implementation of the Auckland Regional Affordable Housing Strategy.
 - Health Impact Assessments of Avondale's Liveable Communities Plan, Mc Lennan Housing Development, Ranui Concept Plan, Mangere Growth Strategy and Pershore Precinct.
19. ARPHS has decided to make its comments using the form provided with the engagement document.

Specific comments

20. **Q1. What is your vision for a housing strategy for Pacific people?**

To be aligned with some New Zealand Government's vision for both housing and Pacific families as detailed below, ARPHS proposes, as a vision for a housing strategy for Pacific people:

"Healthy and stronger Pacific families in New Zealand living in affordable, sustainable and good quality housing"

or

"Healthy futures for Pacific families living in affordable, sustainable and good quality housing"

Parts of these sentences have been taken from the following two sources: the New Zealand Housing Strategy⁷ and some programmes of the Ministry of Social Development for Pacific families⁸.

21. **Q 2. Have we identified the right challenges, issues and problems to be tackled in a Housing Strategy for Pacific People? If not what is missing?**

ARPHS has perused the content of "Key housing challenges for Pacific people" and is generally supportive of the issues that have been listed. However, ARPHS wishes to make the following comments on some central issues for Pacific peoples:

22. Some issues on the relationship between health and 1) substandard housing and 2) crowding, were identified on the engagement document (page 5) under the headline "Coordination with other agencies and Pacific communities". However, ARPHS believes they deserve recognition as independent challenges, given the deep inequalities that Pacific children and Pacific people face in terms of health outcomes related to poor housing.

⁷ <http://www.hnzc.co.nz/hnzc/dms/380D2C40C069A4CE4665F55A8C4523D1.pdf>. On November 26 2008

⁸ <http://www.nzfvc.org.nz/acan/papers-presentations/abstract183v.shtml>. On November 26 2008

23. Household crowding

ARPHS suggests that because of its extent, this issue be recognised as a key challenge. ARPHS acknowledges that information on this subject is included in the discussion document provided alongside this submission form - on page 28. Vast evidence has been shown by diverse organisations such as ARPHS^{9,10}, Ministry of Social Development¹¹ and the Centre for Housing Research and The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs¹².

24. Substandard housing

ARPHS suggests that because of its extent, this issue be recognised as a key challenge. ARPHS acknowledges that information on this subject is included in the discussion document provided alongside this submission form - on page 28. Vast evidence has been shown by diverse organisations such as ARPHS¹³, Ministry of Social Development¹⁴ and the Centre for Housing Research and The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs¹⁵.

25. Another dimension of substandard housing that merits attention for the Pacific population is the number of Pacific people living in garages, caravans and camping grounds¹⁶. Housing New Zealand may have some data and figures with this regard that informs the drafting of the strategy. There may be a lack of research into the numbers of Pacific households living in these conditions.

26. House maintenance

Closely related to the issue acknowledged on page 12 of the discussion document - financial literacy, and other financial constraints - is the issue of housing maintenance.

27. Often, policies are directed to getting Pacific people into home ownership, but do not consider the cost associated to owning a house in terms of proper maintenance. Some Pacific families struggle to keep their houses in good condition, and as a result, own a house but live in substandard conditions. This issue is identified in the discussion document (page 12).

28. Size and cultural appropriateness:

For Pacific peoples, housing is a form of expression of their cultural identity. It is the place where social and family life is preserved. Pacific families have specific needs in terms of space which are different from other cultures in New Zealand. Valuable information is already described in the discussion document on pages 41,42 and 49.

⁹ Improving Health and Wellbeing: A Public Health Perspective for Local Authorities in the Auckland Region, 2006, ARPHS http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/Sophar06/Sophar_report06.asp Printed copies can be made available to the Corporation if desired.

¹⁰ Housing and Health - A summary of selected research for Auckland Regional Public Health services, 2005, ARPHS http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/HealthyHousing/Healthy_Housing.asp

¹¹ The social report, 2008, Ministry of Social Development. <http://www.socialreport.msd.govt.nz/>.

¹² Pacific Housing Experiences: Developing trends and Issues, 2007, Centre for Housing Research and The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.

¹³ Improving Health and Wellbeing: A Public Health Perspective for Local Authorities in the Auckland Region, 2006, ARPHS http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/Sophar06/Sophar_report06.asp Printed copies can be made available to the Corporation if desired.

¹⁴ The social report, 2008, Ministry of Social Development. <http://www.socialreport.msd.govt.nz/>.

¹⁵ Pacific Housing Experiences: Developing trends and Issues, 2007, Centre for Housing Research and The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.

¹⁶ Housing and Health - A summary of selected research for Auckland Regional Public Health services, 2005, ARPHS http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/HealthyHousing/Healthy_Housing.asp

29. **Q3. Of the six outcomes on page 6, what are the top three?**
ARPHS considers that priority should be given to outcomes 1 (state housing), 4 (improve the quality of housing in the private rental market) and 5 (home ownership). However, some changes are suggested. Outcomes 2 (cultural appropriateness), 3 (partnership with communities and other agencies) and 6 (partnership with government agencies) are essential strategies to fully achieve the outcomes aforementioned.
30. Outcome 1 and 4
ARPHS suggests that the requirements of housing need to be consistent regardless of the type of sector in which the housing is sited (private or public). ARPHS recommends the outcomes be rearranged as follows:
31. Outcome 1. Housing New Zealand provides healthy, suitable houses and appropriate security of tenancy for Pacific people.
32. Outcome 4. Housing New Zealand works collaboratively with other agencies to improve the quality of housing in the private rental market to ensure it provides healthy, suitable houses and appropriate security of tenancy for Pacific people.
33. Outcome 5. Increased home ownership opportunities for Pacific people. However, attention needs to be paid to avoid policies that increase ownership but do not consider sustainability. Unintended results may include Pacific families living in substandard households, or having less money for other items essential to good health such as a nutritious diet, primary health services, winter heating, education and transport. Healthy Pacific homes are healthier Pacific families.
34. ARPHS recommends this outcome to include “increased security of tenancy” as a core outcome as well.
35. **Q 4. For the top 3 outcomes, what do you think can be done to achieve these?**
Please refer to questions 5 and 6
36. **Q5. What role can Pacific communities and other organisations play to achieve improved housing outcomes?**
37. ARPHS supports Housing New Zealand in acknowledging that, while exploring policy options and strategies, the involvement of Pacific stakeholders is vital.
38. Knowledge transfer and community ownership of any programme is recommended, as well as working collaboratively with other governmental organisations, NGOs and community organisations. Strengths based approaches are recommended.
39. Churches as leadership centres
Churches are a cultural and social focal point for Pacific communities. This is the place where a sense of community is strengthened. Pacific ethnic groups have high levels of religious affiliation. In 2001, at least 9 out of 10 people in the Tuvaluan (97 percent) Tongan (92 percent), Tokelauan (91 percent) and Samoan (90 percent)

ethnic groups were affiliated with a Christian religion¹⁷. Positive leadership from churches have the potential to make a real difference.

40. Most Pacific churches in New Zealand have a key role in providing information and services. They also hold communal assets in the form of buildings, finance and skills which have the potential to play a significant role in the economic life of the community¹⁸.
41. However, it is important to recognise that the role of churches is likely to vary among different Pacific groups and in different locations. Also, they have different approaches to paying clergy,¹⁹ and it is been documented that some may place significant financial strain on parishioners.^{20,21,22}
42. ARPHS suggests that at least two mechanisms could be presented to Pacific churches to encourage them to explore, by themselves and in conjunction with their own congregations, the role they could play:
43. 1) What future role Pacific Island Churches and religious congregations could play as possible third party social housing providers? Readiness, access to capital and management skills to administer property maintenance and tenancy agreement need to be looked at. Partnership with Housing New Zealand is central.
44. 2) What future role could Pacific churches play in a possible scheme where a portion of income raised goes to support sustainable rent, or contribute to mortgage payments of a family or individual of their own congregations?
45. Pacific community advisors/trainers
46. The housing strategy for the Pacific peoples' working group (discussion document, page 12) identifies factors that impact on the ability of Pacific people to own their house, including how the banking system works, and processes involved when purchasing and maintaining a house.
47. Given that Pacific communities have strong and well established networks, and there is Pacific capacity already developed through the Welcome Home Next Steps (Pasefika Pulse and CareerWorks), an extended education programme could be developed to train community leaders as housing advisors to assist Pacific people when asking for credits towards home ownership, or when making changes to their existing accommodation. Community advisors could work closely with the Citizens Advice Bureau or existing Church based Health Networks such as Healthy Village

¹⁷ <http://www.stats.govt.nz/products-and-services/Articles/pacific-profiles-Mar03.htm>. On November 26,

2008

¹⁸ Ministry of Economic Development: On: http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/MultipageDocumentPage_1910.aspx.

Consulted on November 13 2008.

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Tiatia, J. 1998. Caught Between Cultures: a New Zealand-Born Pacific Island Perspective. Auckland: Christian Research Association

²² Bathgate M, Pulotu-Endemann FK. 1997. Pacific people in New Zealand, ch. 4 in Public health report number 3: Mental Health in New Zealand from a public health perspective / Pete M. Ellis & Sunny C. D. Collings (eds.), p 104-135.

action Zones (Auckland District Health Board) and Lotu Moui (Counties Manukau DHB) Health Committees

48. Community advisors could also deliver sessions, targeting members of their own population and transferring the knowledge and skills they have acquired. In order to design educational programmes, a needs assessment is required to identify what the community requires in terms of knowledge about the topic, and session delivery. Approaches such as 'train the trainers' at community level, mentoring programmes, and one-to one sessions could be considered.
49. Many issues around home ownership, sustainable rental payments, domestic violence and mental health for Pacific people are related to the stress of payments to lenders of the type commonly known as "loan sharks". Frequently, vulnerable Pacific families do not understand the contract they are signing with these lenders and the potential consequences if they default.
50. Community advisors and church leaders could play an active role orienting their communities or congregations to help them understand the dangers of approaching these sorts of lenders.

51. **Q6. How can Housing New Zealand help Pacific communities achieve these housing outcomes?**

ARPHS has decided to structure its comments in two sections. Firstly, ARPHS covers Pacific-specific strategies that require HNZN involvement. Secondly we list initiatives that could impact positively on Pacific housing issues but aimed at the wider population.

1) Pacific specific possible actions:

52. Home ownership programmes
Set up and sustain home ownership programmes for Pacific women on low incomes. Initiatives such as "Welcome Home Loan" need to be in line with the market prices of the Auckland region, where the Pacific population is highly concentrated. Prices of up to \$280,000 may not meet the market in the Auckland Region. Programmes like this one leave out a high percentage of the Pacific population.
53. Planning and state housing stock
Housing New Zealand can ensure they meet the needs of changing Pacific population demographics²³. Also, HNZN can make sure that new state housing includes sufficient large houses to meet the needs of Pacific families and sets Key Performance Indicators to measure its progress. Cultural Pacific needs include not only extra bedrooms, but also spacious lounges and more than one toilet and bathroom. These design features are briefly described on page 49 of the discussion document.
54. Agreement for Pacific families in tenancy problems
In order to provide Pacific children with stable and secured tenancy arrangements and to support Pacific families to build up and strengthen communities, an option for those Pacific families on full or partial benefits and in tenancy hardship may be

²³ Housing and Health - A summary of selected research for Auckland Regional Public Health services, 2005, ARPHS
http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/HealthyHousing/Healthy_Housing.asp

explored. With the support from Pacific organisations (community or pastoral), families in hardship related to gambling, alcoholism or drugs consumption agree rental payments be made directly from Work and Income New Zealand to their landlord (public or private). Existing schemes, if any, between Work and Income New Zealand and HNZN can be considered. Alternatively, other international experiences which include universal strategies can be looked at. For instance, the housing benefits in England for tenants in the public sector are paid to the land lord (local authority) directly. The tenant pays no rent or a reduced rent²⁴

55. Pacific tenant advice services and community housing advisors
Housing New Zealand could play a leading role, alongside the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, setting up Pacific tenant advice and advocacy services, as well as supporting its maintenance. Also, working in partnership, the corporation could provide training to community leaders. Thus, they would be able to run and support Pacific tenant advice services.
56. The Department of Building and Housing currently provides support to landlords and tenants through tenancy Services. However, it has been indicated that some tenants may need additional help to understand and enforce their rights and responsibilities under the Residential Tenancies Act²⁵. It has also been suggested that illiteracy, language difficulties and cultural differences may be involved in cases where tenants are unwilling or unable to deal with issues with their landlord²⁶
57. Financial literacy skills development programmes
ARPHS concurs with the housing strategy for Pacific peoples' working group, which identifies that financial literacy policies and programmes are main priorities (Page 13 of the discussion document). Housing New Zealand can ensure this priority will be included and addressed when the Pacific strategy for Pacific people is developed.
58. Forming and maintaining partnership
Housing New Zealand has a major role in forming partnership with Pacific leaders, communities and churches. The organisation can explore Pacific trust as a third party, and other options to provide social housing.
59. Housing New Zealand can support the training of community leaders in becoming community advisors.
60. In association with the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Housing New Zealand can support research on assessing the extent of Pacific people living in garages and caravans
61. Crowding standard definition
Housing New Zealand can work on standards for overcrowding of households in consultation with Pacific stakeholders and tangata whenua²⁷.

²⁴ http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/life/benefits/help_with_your_rent_-_housing_benefit.htm#how_is_housing_benefit_paid

²⁵ Department of building and housing. Website: <http://www.dbh.govt.nz/ta-long-form-themes-and-issues11>. On November 13 2008

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Housing and Health - A summary of selected research for Auckland Regional Public Health services, 2005, ARPHS http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/HealthyHousing/Healthy_Housing.asp

62. Ensure that communication meet the needs of the Pacific audience
Ensuring that services and programmes are communicated in accordance to their Pacific audience. To gain buy-in from the Pacific communities, messages, translated education resources, Pacific icons and images are important.
2) Wider population possible actions:
63. Social allocation policy
Housing New Zealand can play a role in preventing affordable housing being marginalised to specific geographic locations where exclusively low income families are located. This may have positive impacts in terms of building sustainable communities that provide a safe social environment. Safety, and perceptions of safety, are directly linked to wellbeing and quality of life. Educational advancement, wider employment options and community development can be fostered as well.
64. Often, affordable housing is situated in geographic clusters on the periphery of the pre-existing urban area. This requires the occupants to travel further to access work, schools and community and other facilities. The impact of greater distances travelled (unless public transport is used) also impacts on the wider community through increased air pollution, greater requirements for roading infrastructure, increased transport congestion and greater production of greenhouse gases. Many of these costs fall directly on the business community and impact on New Zealand's economic development.
65. Acceptable quality home definition
At present there is no set of agreed criteria by which housing quality can be assessed. While legislation provides standards that houses must reach for people to be allowed to live in them, they do not provide a clear definition of what constitutes acceptable quality²⁸. Housing New Zealand has a major role in advocating for a concise definition of acceptable quality, for example in the Residential Tenancies Act.
66. Housing warrant of fitness
Strengthen the Residential Tenancies Act to provide more proactive and effective monitoring and enforcement of housing standards²⁹.
67. HNZC could advocate for setting up a requirement that all properties display an energy-efficiency warrant of fitness or rating before being rented out or sold³⁰.
68. Introducing incentives (renewal grants, loan or others) to encourage private landlords to rectify structural problems and maintain their rental houses may be required³¹.
69. With those options ARPHS is looking to increase quality while ensuring affordability. Therefore, it is fundamental to set mechanisms that guarantee that a warrant of fitness or any incentive will not be used to increase rents.
70. Develop other initiatives
- It is recommended that HNZC set a quality standard, and ensure that its housing stock is up to that standard.

²⁸ Housing and Health in Auckland fact sheet. ARPHS Website:

http://www.arphs.govt.nz/Healthy_Environments/downloads/healthy_housing_factsheet.pdf On November 13 2008.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Ibid

- Expand and upgrade the state housing stock.
- Develop rent-to-own mechanisms for state tenants, keeping enough stock to match the changing housing demand.
- Maintain strong relationships with Territorial Local Authorities.
- Matching emergency accommodation to meet the immediate needs of people in housing crisis³².

71. Maintaining, developing and evaluating current initiatives

Continue developing, implementing and evaluating policy options and programmes as mentioned on pages 43-49. Those include central points such as shared equity loans, community renewal programmes, Pacific housing design and low cost housing design initiatives.

72. **Q7. Who do we need to work with to achieve better housing outcomes for Pacific people in the strategy?**

ARPHS wishes to participate as a stakeholder throughout the process of commenting on the draft of the housing strategy for Pacific people. ARPHS understands that you are seeking generic comments on the developing the strategy at this time, and at a later time will be seeking specific details to support the content.

73. **Assessing impacts on Pacific population health**

Health impact assessments (HIA)³³ is a policy tool that helps ensure that the potential health effects of policies are considered, and allows policy makers to consider how the positive impacts on health can be maximised, and the negative impacts minimised from any new policy developed. This will help ensure that the holistic impact of housing on society and Pacific communities is considered and given appropriate weight.

74. Decisions around housing for Pacific people are likely to have significant influence on the health of both individuals and communities. ARPHS suggests that once feedback on the draft strategy has been received it would be useful for HNZC to undertake a formal health impact assessment on its final policy proposals. This will ensure that HNZC's recommendations to Government have the best possible effect on Pacific health.

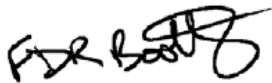
³² Housing and Health - A summary of selected research for Auckland Regional Public Health services, 2005, ARPHS http://www.arphs.govt.nz/publications/HealthyHousing/Healthy_Housing.asp

³³ See An Idea Whose Time Has Come. New opportunities for HIA in New Zealand public policy and planning <http://www.phac.health.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexcm/phac-idea-whose-time-has-come?Open>
Further information on health impact assessment can be obtained from the Health Impact Assessment Support Unit <http://www.moh.govt.nz/hiasupportunit>

Conclusion

75. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the engagement document "Working together to develop a Housing Strategy for Pacific People". ARPHS believes that a housing strategy for Pacific people has a substantial impact on Pacific population health outcomes. ARPHS looks forward to seeing the draft strategy outlined with the inclusion of a health lens.

Yours faithfully,



Frank Booth
Service Manager
Regional Public
Health Service



Simon Baker
Medical Officer of Health Auckland
Auckland Regional Public
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Appendix 1 - Auckland Regional Public Health Service

Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) provides public health services for the three district health boards (DHBs) in the Auckland region (Auckland, Counties Manukau and Waitemata District Health Boards), with the primary governance mechanism for the Service resting with Auckland District Health Board.

ARPHS has a statutory obligation under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities in the Auckland region. The Medical Officer of Health has an enforcement and regulatory role under the Health Act 1956 and other legislative designations to protect the health of the community.

ARPHS' primary concern is to improve population health rather than deliver personal health services. It actively seeks to influence any initiatives or proposals that may affect population health in the Auckland region to maximise their positive impact and minimise possible negative effects on population health.

The Auckland region faces a number of public health challenges through changing demographics, increasingly diverse communities, increasing incidence of lifestyle-related health conditions such as obesity and type 2 diabetes, outstanding infrastructure needs, the balancing of transport needs, and the reconciliation of urban design and urban intensification issues.

Policy to effect health gain is often marginalised to medical care. Health, however, is influenced by a broad range of policy decisions and is therefore a multi-sector responsibility and not solely the responsibility of the health sector. Statutes such as the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act, Local Government Act, Resource Management Act and Building Act (amongst many others) all have elements designed to deliver outcomes promoting, protecting and maintaining the health of the community. Planning and policy decisions by central government, local government, non-government agencies and the commercial sector can have a large impact on health outcomes. ARPHS, therefore, has a role to play in policy advocacy. Population health and wellbeing can be improved if policy decision makers are considering long term outcomes. ARPHS aims to influence public policy to create a supportive environment for the communities of Auckland.