

Healthy Communities, Healthy Lives: New Zealand Public Health Nutrition and Physical Activity Sector Vision 2024

Vision: All New Zealanders live, learn, work and grow in environments that support healthy eating and physical activity.

Why do we need a sector vision?

Since 2003 the nutrition and physical activity sector in NZ has had a government led strategy called Healthy Eating Healthy Action (HEHA). This strategy provided a focal point for those working to promote nutrition and physical activity. However in 2012 this program ceased. In 2011, we asked the nutrition and physical activity sector in NZ if there was support for a sector-led vision/strategy. The response was a resounding yes!

The journey...

While recognising that no one strategy would resolve the challenge of poor nutrition and physical inactivity, to create a realistic starting point, we asked the sector to prioritise some “start here strategies”. These were taken from a list of 12 strategies seen as vital to promoting physical activity and nutrition as set by the [Public Health Advocacy Institute of Western Australia](#).

Three priority areas were selected and we called for volunteers from the sector to help develop each area. Since late 2011 these groups have been working to develop high level strategies for their area.

From the outset the groups knew they needed to approach the vision from a completely different angle than traditional strategies. As a result [Whenu Tangata – Human Strands](#) was developed as a foundation for the vision. The document reframes public health nutrition and physical activity promotion from the perspective of Māori values and positive health models.

Sector vision purpose...

The vision pulls together the strands of work being undertaken by a number of groups and agencies passionate about healthy living, nutrition and physical activity. It describes three priority areas and suggests strategies to achieve gains in these. It is intended to stimulate discussion, research and further action within the health, education and recreation sectors and other sectors with influence in these areas.

Priority areas...

We seek a future in which three priorities are achieved:

- All people living in New Zealand have sufficient access to food that is affordable, healthy and safe to eat.
- Children are free from exposure to food and beverage marketing messages.
- Being active is the norm and people avoid sitting for too long.

Key messages...

Healthy living is everyone's business – we all benefit when we get it right.

Toiora toi tangata – Ko te toi o ngā ora ko te whānau ora

We all need access to healthy, affordable and safe food for ourselves and for our families. *He nui kai, he iti kawenga tapu (a lot of food but very little sacred substance)*

Let's keep schools and places of recreation, sport and other activities free of messages marketing foods and beverages to our children. *Ruia taitea toitū ko taitaka (strip away that which is useless)*

We will be healthier if we spend more time standing and on the move. *Tama tū tama ora, tama moe tama mate (he/she who stands lives)*

Families are the right people in the right place to encourage children to eat healthily and be active. *Ko te toi o ngā ora, ko te whānau ora (the pinnacle of health is whole family wellbeing)*

By working together, we can make a difference. *Mā pango, mā whero ka ora ai te iwi*