



Media Release

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Extensive work needed to achieve health equity for Māori, say public health experts

Action must be taken to address the factors contributing to an unhealthy Māori population, the NZ College of Public Health Medicine (NZCPHM) urges Government.

The NZCPHM have just released their Māori Health Policy, which states the health inequities between Māori and non-Māori New Zealanders are large, pervasive, and persist across the lifespan and over time.

The College Council's Māori Fellow, and spokesperson, Dr Paula King, says these issues must be addressed in the final version of the New Zealand Health Strategy.

"The College strongly believes a national commitment to addressing the factors leading to inequities, such as housing, income, education, and access to high quality health services is needed" she says.

"We recognise that Māori have lesser access to the vital resources that support health and wellbeing, and that this occurs because of how these resources are distributed in the first place."

Dr King also says professional development programmes in the health system must have a focus on cultural competence and health literacy.

"This is about people receiving high quality healthcare no matter what their culture," she says.

"All health care workers have both professional and moral obligations to address the inequities we see in health care and health outcomes.

Health professionals must be responsive to the health needs and aspirations of their patients. This requires understanding and knowledge about their patients, their culture and about the things that matter to them.

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For further information contact Dr Paula King 021 040 8404