

**Media release Wednesday 19 September, 9.30pm.**

**Public health experts urge government to invest in public health**

The NZ College of Public Health Medicine (NZCPHM) urged the government to prioritise public health at the College's 10-year Anniversary Dinner in Wellington.

The event was attended by the Minister of Health, Hon David Clark, as well as public health experts from all over the country.

In her introduction to the Fellowship ceremony, the College president, Dr Felicity Dumble, said that spending on public health shouldn't be viewed as a drain on the economy but as an investment in the health, wellbeing and productivity of New Zealanders.

"Public health interventions are cost-effective and contribute to improvements in health outcomes in both the short-term and the long-term, with estimated median returns on investment as high as 14:1."

Although New Zealand has seen improvements, our health system continues to face challenges.

"Health equity continues to be a concern and health outcomes continue to be impacted by issues such as childhood poverty, poor housing, and poor nutrition.

"Climate change will adversely impact our health, antimicrobial-resistance is increasing, and long-term conditions, such as obesity, place a large burden on the health system.

"Maintaining and increasing our public health medicine workforce will be critical to enable New Zealand to deal with the challenges it currently faces."

The College also marked the occasion by launching a history book: Guardians of the nation's health and well-being: The history of the Public Health Medicine Colleges in New Zealand 1977 - 2018

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