



7 November 2019

Submission to New Zealand Parliament: Resource Management Amendment Bill

The New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine would like to thank New Zealand Parliament for the opportunity to make a submission on the Resource Management Amendment Bill.

The New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine (the College) is the professional body representing the medical specialty of public health medicine in New Zealand. We have 222 members, all of whom are medical doctors, including 185 fully qualified Public Health Medicine Specialists with the majority of the remainder being registrars training in the specialty of public health medicine.

Public Health Medicine is the branch of medicine concerned with the assessment of population health and health care needs, the development of policy and strategy, health promotion, the control and prevention of disease, and the organisation of services. The NZCPHM partners to achieve health gain and equity for our population, eliminating inequities across socioeconomic and ethnic groups, and promoting environments in which everyone can be healthy.

The College recently submitted on the Ministry for the Environment's consultation on the Action for Healthy Waterways discussion document. In its submission the College emphasised the inextricable link between the health of New Zealand's freshwater and the health of its citizens.¹ Decisions made about New Zealand's freshwater have the potential to promote good health outcomes, achieve health equity across the population and uphold the obligations of te Tiriti o Waitangi.^{2,3} The quality of our freshwater is critical to the health of our nation.

The involvement of public health expertise in freshwater hearing is crucial to ensure that water quality is suitable for health and consumption. In addition, there is considerable knowledge and expertise already available within the public health workforce which should be drawn upon the management of freshwater resources. We strongly believe that provision must be made to mandate the inclusion of public health expertise and knowledge in all levels of freshwater decision-making, including in the composition of freshwater hearings panels.

Along with other public health colleagues, we propose the insertion of a new part (d) to clause 58 (1) of the new schedule to read as follows:

58 1 (d) Where the Chief Freshwater Commissioner considers that a panel's recommendations are likely to have more than minor effects on Public Health the relevant regional council will be required to consult with the relevant Medical Officer of Health prior to nominating commissioners for the Freshwater Hearings Panel. In the event that the regional council and the Medical Officer of Health cannot agree on a nomination, the Medical Officer of Health will

be able to nominate a commissioner independently of the regional council. In the event that a commissioner is nominated by the Medical Officer of Health in addition to the two nominees of the relevant regional council, the Chief Freshwater Commissioner will decide which nominees are appointed.

Thank you for the opportunity for the NZCPHM to submit on the Resource Management Amendment Bill. We hope our feedback is helpful and are happy to provide further clarification on matter covered in this submission.

Sincerely,



Dr Felicity Dumble, President, NZCPHM

References:

¹ New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine. Submission to the Ministry for the Environment: Action for Healthy Waterways. Wellington: NZCPHM, 2019.

(https://www.nzcphm.org.nz/media/133210/final_nzcphm_freshwater_submission.pdf)

² New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine / New Zealand Medical Association. NZCPHM Policy Statement on Health Equity (adopting the NZMA Position Statement on Health Equity 2011). Wellington: NZCPHM, 2016.

(https://www.nzcphm.org.nz/media/58923/2016_11_17_nzcphm_health_equity_policy_statement.pdf)

³ New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine. Māori Health Policy Statement. Wellington: NZCPHM, 2015.

(https://www.nzcphm.org.nz/media/89786/2015_11_30_m_ori_health_policy_statement.pdf)