**Chapter 5: Local government as champion and activator of wellbeing**

*We seek your feedback on Recommendation 14*

1. *That local government, in partnership with central government, explores funding and resources that enable and encourage councils to:*
2. *Lead, facilitate and support innovation and experimentation in achieving greater social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing outcomes.*
3. *Build relational, partnering, innovation and co-design capability and capacity across their whole organisation.*
4. *Embed social/progressive procurement and supplier diversity as standard practice in local government with nationally supported organisational infrastructure and capability and capacity building.*
5. *Review their levers and assets from an equity and wellbeing perspective and identify opportunities for strategic and transformational initiatives.*
6. *Take on the anchor institution role initially through demonstration initiatives with targeted resources and peer support.*
7. *Share the learning and emerging practice from innovation and experimentation of their enhanced wellbeing role.*

**Free text box one suggested.**

This submission is by the Cancer Society of New Zealand. We are a registered Charity focussed on reducing the incidence and impact of cancer in New Zealand. We are providing comments in support of Local Government's pivotal role in shaping safe and healthy environments.

**We strongly agree with the recommendations that local government, in partnership with central government, explore funding and resources that enables and encourages councils to:**

* Lead, facilitate and support innovation and experimentation in achieving greater social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing outcomes.
* Build relational, partnering, innovation and co-design capability and capacity across their whole organisation?
* Review their levers and assets from an equity and wellbeing perspective and identify opportunities for strategic and transformational initiatives.
* Take on the anchor institution role initially through demonstration initiatives with targeted resources and peer support?
* Share the learning and emerging practice from innovation and experimentation of their enhanced wellbeing role?

Local Government plays a crucial role in championing wellbeing in place and has immense potential in enabling and activating wellbeing of their residents not just in the infectious disease space but in the space of non-communicable diseases prevention and a global experience of wellbeing for their resident populations.

The communities that we live, work, learn and play in are part of the foundations of good health and wellbeing [1]. There is strong evidence to show that environments influence wellbeing across the life course and are central in both understanding and addressing health inequities. Local Government in serving the needs of communities can be described as place shapers [2] – their diverse responsibilities in providing services and developing communities are integral to achieving “good places” to live.

Reflecting this, over the past decade there has been a growing alignment between cancer prevention and the work of Local Government [3] The adoption of smokefree public open spaces and provision of shade in recreational areas serve to illustrate how individual councils can contribute to building safe and healthy communities – integral to their responsibility for “improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities set out under the Local Government Act.

Over the next decade New Zealand, like other countries is facing the challenge of increasing demand for health care and specifically a forecast 50% increase in those registered with a cancer diagnosis. Released in February 2022 Pūrongo Ārai Mate Pukupuku, Cancer Prevention Report [4] indicates half of all cancers are potentially preventable by addressing risk factors in our environments, a fact that amplifies the role for local government. We applaud The Future for Local Government interim report vision for local government as being part of an “ecology of wellbeing” alongside other stakeholders or partners such as whānau and community networks. The Cancer Society strongly identifies itself as one of these stakeholders.

Implicit in this model will be the increasing need to support local government decision makers and especially those elected as mayors, councillors, or community members with a greater understanding of their potential role in cancer prevention.

References

1 Nathan A, Villanueva K, Rozek J, et al. The Role of the Built Environment on Health Across the Life Course: A Call for Collaboration. American Journal of Health Promotion. 2018;32(6):1460-1468. doi:10.1177/0890117118779463a

2: Lyons, M (2007) Place-shaping: a shared ambition for the future of local government Lyons Inquiry into Local Government. Stationary Office, London.

3: Cancer Council of Australia: Local Governments, public health, and cancer prevention. Taking action to improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities 2022.

4: Te Aho o Te Kahu. 2022. Pūrongo Ārai Mate Pukupuku, Cancer Prevention Report. Wellington: Te Aho o Te Kahu, Cancer Control Agency.

**Questions: What feedback do you have on the roles councils can play to enhance intergenerational wellbeing?**

*In this chapter we talk about a key shift towards councils putting wellbeing at the centre of what they do.*

* *We also talk about councils using their relationships, assets, and levers to unlock greater wellbeing outcomes in communities.*

*This will require councils to deepen and expand their roles as:*

* *an anchor institution – delivering core business activities such as procurement, hiring, investment and infrastructure differently. This is about equity, Te Tiriti and using local strengths to address local challenges.*
* *a systems networker and convenor – bringing people together from across sectors, organisations, hapū/iwi and communities to work together and come up with innovative solutions.*
* *a place-maker – strengthening the connection between people and the places they share.*

**Free text box two suggested.**

**Cancer Society NZ aspires to continue its close working relationship with Local Government on Cancer Prevention by building partnerships with local government for a Health In All Policies approach to greater wellbeing in place [Ref 1]. We believe as an independent, evidenced based and community embedded organisation Cancer Society (and community organisation like ours) is ideally positioned to help Local Government achieve the wellbeing potentials for resident populations implicated in the Local Government Review.’**

Health and wellbeing cannot be separated from the development and management of communities. How our future cities, towns and rural localities are planned, shaped and maintained will have significant impact on both physical and mental wellbeing and above all equity . The Cancer Society recognises that Local Government already reflects this awareness in their planning of "liveable" safe and healthy communities, evident in Long Term Plans LTPs , community outcomes and in their partnerships with agencies such as the Cancer Society. We consider that building on this in the forthcoming 2024 LTP process and beyond will be essential to address what Local Government New Zealand has identified as the major challenge facing their members in a post COVID world …

"*It is expected that COVID-19 will impact most seriously on inequality in areas such as health and disability unless there is a strong commitment to being creative in finding new ways for providers and communities to work and collaborate together*". [Ref 2]

References

1: Cancer Council of Western Australia: Local Governments, public health, and cancer prevention. Taking action to improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities 2022 accessed via <https://cancerwa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2022-02-10-LG-PH-Cancer-Prevention-Guide.pdf>

2: Local Government and Public Health: Natural Partners in a COVID-19 World Background prepared by: Peter McKinlay, Director, Local Government Think Tank accessed via <https://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Webinar/Local-Government-and-Public-Health-Natural-Partners-in-a-Covid-19-world-V3.pdf>

**Do you have any further feedback on Chapter 5: Local government as champion and activator of wellbeing?**

**Free text box 3 - text suggested.**

**‘The Cancer Society strongly identifies itself as a partner. Implicit in this model will be the increasing need to support local government decision makers and especially those elected as mayors, councillors, or community members with a greater understanding of their potential role in cancer prevention. ‘**

**The Cancer Society believes there is good evidence that local councils are already taking tangible steps toward being activators and champions of wellbeing. In support of this we wish to offer two areas of work undertaken with the sector**

**Local Government Candidates Survey September 2022**

In September 2022, the Cancer Society conducted a survey with all candidates running in the 2022 Local Government elections The Cancer Society asked candidates standing for the 2022 territorial election their views on harm reduction strategies on smoking, vaping, alcohol, the promotion of sun safety, physical activity and healthy food environments. Over 700 candidates responded to the survey of which 270 were from candidates subsequently elected or re-elected to office.

We request that this survey is accepted as part of this submission and in support of strengthening our partnership with Local Government in cancer prevention in Aotearoa.

**Smokefree Outdoor Environments – case studies of local councils showing leadership. Prepared 2021**

To support the mapping of council smokefree environment polices led by Mid Central DHB in 2021 we conducted a wholescale review of all council smokefree policies and prepared a set of case studies focused on local council roles promoting smokefree environments – part of the Government’s goal to achieve a Smokefree Aotearoa by 2025.

**Cyclone Gabrielle.**

We acknowledge the impact that Cyclone Gabrielle has and will continue to have on communities across many local councils in the central and upper parts of the North Island and the enormous changes to local government priorities now required after the immediate response to the emergency has abated. We recognise that some of the partnerships highlighted in supporting material will now be part of very different long term relationships with communities being rebuilt.