

2 May 2017

Hon Phil Twyford
Minister of Transport

Hon Julie Anne Genter
Associate Minister of Transport

Hon Shane Jones
Associate Minister of Transport

C/- GPS Policy Team
Ministry of Transport
PO Box 3175
Wellington 6140

Via email: gps2018@transport.govt.nz

Dear Minister and Associate Ministers

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) welcomes the opportunity to submit feedback on the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS).

The RACP works across more than 40 medical specialties to educate, innovate and advocate for excellence in health and medical care. Working with our senior members, the RACP trains the next generation of specialists, while playing a lead role in developing world best practice models of care. We also draw on the skills of our members, to develop policies that promote a healthier society. By working together, our members advance the interest of our profession, our patients and the broader community.

The RACP welcomes the multiple references to health, wellbeing and key Government health policy statements and strategies, such as the NZ Health Strategy – All New Zealanders live well, stay well, get well and the NZ Disability Strategy 2016-2026. The RACP supports a land transport system for New Zealand which is equitable, safe, accessible and environmentally sustainable. The RACP strongly supports policies and regulations which enable health equity to be the norm for all New Zealanders. Our #MakeItTheNorm campaign called for neighbourhoods to be safe and health-promoting environments for whānau as they grow, learn, develop and age¹.

¹ The Royal Australasian College of Physicians. #MakeItTheNorm: Equity through the social determinants of health. 2017. Available from <https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/resources/new-zealand-resources/new-zealand-election-statement-2017>.

The prioritisation of safety and access in the strategic direction is an aspect that is particularly encouraging, as it recognises the need to provide land transport options which are safe to use and easily accessible for people with different needs, as well as enabling a transport system which is integrated into existing and planned infrastructure, housing and urban design elements. The lens applied to safety incorporates health-promoting transport options (such as footpaths and cycleways) and reduces harm by mitigating risk factors, such as through the improvements in safety features across the road network.

Our statements on obesity (forthcoming – 2018), climate change and health (2016), and Health in All Policies (2016) all recognise the need for a connected, sustainable transport system which provides people with a range of active transport options, which will have a direct impact on the prevalence of noncommunicable disease and make positive contributions to reducing overall carbon levels, and population health and wellbeing^{2 3 4}.

The RACP supports the reprioritising of land transport funding to projects which are designed to complement urban development and support good connections with housing, green space, employment and entertainment, sports and recreation opportunities. Rail transport links to places where people live, work and play will continue to build on the popularity for rail, particularly in locations where demand has exceeded current capacity, as highlighted in the GPS.

The RACP thanks the Ministry of Transport for the opportunity to provide feedback on this consultation, and looks forward to the final draft of the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport. To discuss this submission further, please contact the NZ Policy and Advocacy Unit at policy@racp.org.nz.

Yours sincerely



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The Royal Australasian College of Physicians

Dr Jeff Brown
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² The Royal Australasian College of Physicians. Action to prevent obesity and reduce its impact across the life course. Forthcoming – 2018.

³ The Royal Australasian College of Physicians. Climate change and health position statements. 2016. Available from <https://www.racp.edu.au/advocacy/policy-and-advocacy-priorities/climate-change-and-health..>

⁴ The Royal Australasian College of Physicians. Health in All Policies position statement. 2016. Available from <https://www.racp.edu.au/advocacy/division-faculty-and-chapter-priorities/faculty-of-public-health-medicine..>

