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**The Royal Australasian College of
Physicians' submission to the Health
Select Committee**

**New Zealand Public Health and Disability
Amendment Bill**
Poutū-te-rangi 2020

Introduction

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) welcomes the opportunity to submit feedback to the Health Select Committee on the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Amendment Bill.

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.

Make Good Work the Norm

The RACP strongly supports the rights of family members to be compensated for their work in providing family care and support services. We believe that to achieve health equity, Good Work must be the norm for all people in Aotearoa NZ¹. This includes recognising the value of work that has previously been unpaid, and in the case of family care and support services, it is wholly appropriate that changes are made so that compensation is achieved for these families².

Response to the Bill

The RACP strongly supports proposed changes to eligibility for funded family care policies. These changes will lift a portion of the burden that is currently imposed on resident family members caring for ill or disabled family. Security of income through the provision of this care will improve general health and wellbeing for these families, and reduce stress resulting from income concerns. As such, these changes are commendable, and set right a policy setting which has for some time had a significant negative impact on vulnerable people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We also welcome the proposed reversal of the prohibition of claims to the Human Rights Commission on family care policies. It is fundamentally unjust for the rights of vulnerable people in Aotearoa New Zealand to be curtailed in circumstances such as this, and the ability for concerns to be raised at a higher level, such as at the Human Rights Commission, is key to ensuring a just society.

Upholding Aotearoa New Zealand's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and generally bringing our nation into line with international best practice is key to this, and the Bill, while small in the scale of changes it proposes, contributes to achieving this goal.

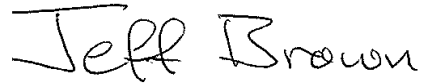
¹ The Royal Australasian College of Physicians. What is Good Work? Position Statement. [Internet]. Sydney: The Royal Australasian College of Physicians; 2013. Available from: https://www.racp.edu.au//docs/default-source/resources/afoem-pos-what-is-good-work-2013.pdf?sfvrsn=6a42311a_2. Accessed 6 March 2020

² The Royal Australasian College of Physicians. Make it the Norm: Equity through the social determinants of health. [Internet]. Sydney: The Royal Australasian College of Physicians; 2017. Available from: <https://www.racp.edu.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/make-it-the-norm-pres-letter.pdf?sfvrsn=4>. Accessed 6 March 2020

Conclusion

The RACP thanks the Health Select Committee for the opportunity to provide feedback on the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Amendment Bill. To discuss this submission further, please contact the Aotearoa NZ Policy and Advocacy Unit at policy@racp.org.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dr Jeff Brown
Aotearoa New Zealand President
The Royal Australasian College of Physicians