Sustainable, healthy urban development: health working with others

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Cities globally

• 55% of population live in them
  – Many are healthy
  – Many are not
  – Many are vulnerable
• 85% of GDP produced in them – not evenly and often not not safely
• 70% of energy used and GHGs produced in them
• Are very complex (eco)systems
‘Health’ is an interventionist discipline

– We help individuals to be healthier

– We create environments that make it easy for individuals to be healthier
Features of the city

- Urban sprawl
- Land zoning
- Freeways
- Neglect of public space
- Neglect of public transport
- Car dependency
- Loss of peri-urban agricultural land
- Inadequate or late infrastructure and services
Features of the streets

• Loss of grid street patterns
• Cars – moving and parked
• Loss of pavements
• Unfriendly building facades
• Antisocial behaviour
• Loss of ‘life between buildings’ and 'eyes on the street'
Effects on physical activity

• Less manual work
• Less daily physical activity
• Less use of public transport
Effects on the food supply

• Less home growing, cooking and eating
• Less local production
• More restaurants, fast food and take away
• More food miles
Effects on social life

• Less life on the streets
• More perceived danger – home & streets
• Distancing work, education and home
• More commuting
• Less family time
• Less community identity and mixing
Effects on the environment

- Fossil fuel consumption: air pollution; carbon gas emissions; climate change
- Consumption of scarce natural resources
- Damaging storm water run off
- Urban ‘heat islands’
- Loss of biodiversity
- Waste generation
Healthier built environments

- Limit sprawl
- Medium-high density communities
- Mixed use neighbourhoods
- Reduce car dependency
- Active transport: walking, cycling, mass transit
- Grid street patterns
- People friendly streetscapes
- Well maintained public space
- Retain agricultural land and community gardens
- Environmentally sustainable buildings
1. Buildings
2. Transportation and mobility
3. Electricity
4. Industry
5. Biological resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mitigation</th>
<th>Environmental benefits</th>
<th>Health benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy efficient buildings</td>
<td>Less fossil fuels used</td>
<td>Less resp. &amp; cardiovasc. disease</td>
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<td>Cleaner air</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Less damp &amp; mould</td>
<td>Less infect. disease</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better public transport</td>
<td>Cleaner air; less CO2</td>
<td>More activity</td>
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<td>Fewer RTAs</td>
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<td>More (local) fruit and veg</td>
<td>Less water &amp; oil used</td>
<td>Less CVD and cancer</td>
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<td>Less meat</td>
<td>Less deforestation</td>
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<td>More green space</td>
<td>Less UHI effect</td>
<td>More activity</td>
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<td>Less run off: floods</td>
<td>Better mental health</td>
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<td>Less pollution</td>
<td>More social activity</td>
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<td>Waste management</td>
<td>Less landfill</td>
<td>Less infectious disease</td>
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<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>Environmental benefits</td>
<td>Health benefits</td>
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<td>Early warning systems</td>
<td>Less environmental damage</td>
<td>Less death and injury Less post-disaster disease</td>
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<td>Resilient hospitals</td>
<td>Less infrastructure damage</td>
<td>Better services for patients</td>
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What have we done?

1. Input to local and state governments on planning policies and development plans
2. Health impact assessments (HIA) on planning proposals
3. Partnerships with local councils on specific projects
4. Partnership with NSW Housing on regeneration of public housing estates
5. Worked with disadvantaged and affected communities
6. Evaluated health changes after plans implemented
7. Research on health’s inclusion in planning processes
8. Looked at our own facilities and services
Healthy Urban Development Checklist
A guide for health services when commenting on development policies, plans and proposals

- Food
- Physical activity
- Housing
- Transport
- Employment
- Community safety
- Public open space
- Infrastructure
- Social cohesion
- Air, water, vectors
- Env. sustainability
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Creating change isn’t easy
Remember

• We have sufficient information
• We have sufficient technology
• We have sufficient money
• We don’t have the collective decision making capacity

URGENCY URGENCY URGENCY URGENCY
But the laws of physics don’t negotiate
Take away messages

• Cities influence human health
• Cities are major influences on climate change
• Climate change damages human health
• Climate change affects cities
• Health services and workers are mostly in cities
• We can build healthier, environmentally sustainable cities
• Doctors can and should play a significant role