

Media Release

RACP: make good work the norm

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The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) is calling for politicians to take urgent action to make good work the norm.

RACP New Zealand President Dr Jonathan Christiansen said work is a key determinant of health and that all work should be 'good' work.

"Good work is, simply put, work that is good for you. Work that is free of negative health effects, and offers health improvement opportunities to the employee," explained Dr Christiansen.

"A person's employment status can have a significant impact on their health – as a positive and negative determinant – this creates and exacerbates health inequalities.

"Evidence shows that good work improves people's health and wellbeing, their relationships with whanau, friends and the wider community, and reduces psychological distress," he said.

The RACP's recommendations include a call to recognise workplaces as valuable venues for health promotion.

Occupational medical physician Dr David Beaumont said workplaces that promote the health and wellbeing of workers are more productive.

"Good work is good for business. Workers who feel valued are more engaged and give more discretionary effort. In general, \$1 spent on wellbeing produces a return on investment of \$3," said Dr Beaumont.

"Workplace programs that support employee health, including mental health, can facilitate early intervention, prevention and management of disease.

"The workplace is an ideal venue for workers to access health services or support, such as heart or diabetes checks, and resources for individual health and wellness activities, such as a gym membership or counselling," he said.

The RACP is also supports the promotion of the Living Wage in New Zealand, to provide people in work with an income that meets everyday expenses. A living wage provides a way out of poverty and enables workers and their whanau to participate in society

"Over 200,000 households report that their income is 'not enough' to meet essential every day needs," said Dr Christiansen.

"Paying people a living wage has physical and mental health benefits for employees and their whānau, including improved health and educational outcomes for children," he said.

To read the RACP's full statement visit <https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/resources/new-zealand-resources/new-zealand-election-statement-2017>

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Media contact: Steph Fink ph: (+64) 27 520 0003

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The RACP trains physicians, often referred to as specialists, in more than 33 medical specialities

Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patients. www.racp.edu.au