



# Whānau wellbeing

At the 2017 election, the RACP called for health equity: we said Healthy Housing, Good Work and Whānau Wellbeing must be the norm for all people. In 2019, how is Aotearoa NZ Making Health Equity the Norm?

## SUMMARY

The RACP's report cards check in on how our case study whānau are doing – what have been their successes, and where have they struggled? Together with their stories, we asked our Members – physicians and paediatricians across the country – what other actions they would take in #MakingWhānauWellbeingTheNorm in Aotearoa NZ.

## SURVEY OF NZ MEMBERS

In our survey of NZ members, members were asked to rank government initiatives from making the most difference to people's health, to making the least difference to people's health.

## TOP 3 POLICIES FOR WELLBEING MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S HEALTH

1

More people are eligible for low-cost GP visits

2

Child Poverty Reduction Act, whereby the government will report on progress to reduce child poverty in Aotearoa NZ

3

Families Package – extra support for whānau during baby's early years

## ARE WE MAKING #WHĀNAUWELLBEING THE NORM IN AOTEAROA NZ?

**Many whānau struggle to provide the basics and the non-government sector is under pressure to fill the gap**

- Food insecurity is a reality for around 500,000 New Zealanders.
- Lower-cost GP visits are an important start but more work to address other barriers like transport and availability of appointments is needed.
- Low-income whānau could be better supported through entitlements like the Winter Energy Payment.

## WHAT RACP MEMBERS SAY:

“Make GP visits free for all – or if you can afford, make it a donation.

“More money directly to the people in need will significantly and swiftly increase people's wellbeing.



# Our case study whānau

When we met our case study whānau, members were struggling: with addiction and mental health issues; with bullying; with the stress of food insecurity. While better connections and access to services and support has made a difference, the stress of having enough money and food to eat continues to worry whānau members of all ages.



“Living in the motel with a new baby and Josh out of hospital from being sick with rheumatic fever was overwhelming for me. Even though my Mum was there for support, I still felt like a bad mother. I couldn't do anything but cry some days.

Tania experiences chronic pain in her back and legs. She used to manage this with paracetamol if she could afford it. The physical nature of her job often exacerbated her pain. Getting the Living Wage means Tania can afford to visit her GP more often. She is looking to manage her pain better and talk through her postnatal depression.

**TANIA, NOW 28 YEARS OLD**

“I don't like the needles. It's sore! The nurse comes to my school to give me them. I have to have the injections for ages now.

Acute Rheumatic Fever diagnosis and asthma means Josh can't be as active at school as he wants to be, and feels left out of games. Since 2015, rates of rheumatic fever have risen; addressing housing quality and overcrowding is essential to reducing the impact of this devastating condition.

**JOSH, NOW 5 YEARS OLD**



“I know Mum doesn't have enough money and it makes me stressed... we had to buy a new uniform for this school and it cost a lot of money. I feel bad that my Mum worries about money so much.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner reports that parents or caregivers not having enough money for basic costs like housing, clothes and food, makes children and young people feel anxious and worried.

**AMY, NOW 11 YEARS OLD**

