



# Good work

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 #MakingGoodWorkTheNorm 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 WORK MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S HEALTH

- 1** Increasing the minimum wage
- 2** Supportive return/entry to work programmes – Te Ara Mahi and He Poutama Rangatahi
- 3** Increases to Paid Parental Leave

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

### Income inadequacy remains for many whānau

- While the Minimum Hourly Wage has risen to \$17.70, it is well below the 2019 Living Wage of \$21.15.
- The *Whakamana Tangata* Report found income inadequacy was entrenched for many people receiving government benefits.
- There were few programmes to support entry into or return-to-work for people with disabilities, or with common mental health conditions.

## WHAT RACP MEMBERS SAY:

“Support the living wage, introduce legislation and tax breaks for companies who offer living wage.”

“The pay has to make it worthwhile for people to go to work.”



# Our case study whānau

When we met our case study whānau, some were working multiple minimum wage jobs while others dealt with redundancy and the Jobseeker Benefit. In 2019, we still find that the adequacy of income and work and employment are shaped by health conditions, access to secure housing, and access to entitlements and support. Income continues to be a key determinant in how people can meaningfully participate in their communities.



I like the programme [He Poutama Rangatahi]. It's going to help me with my future. I liked the idea of construction, roading, engineering. I wanted to be working outside.

Matthew is now part of He Poutama Rangatahi, an initiative to connect NEETs (Not in Employment, Education or Training) with vocational education and employment opportunities. Through the scheme, Matthew is hoping to become an apprentice in construction or roading.

**MATTHEW, NOW 17 YEARS OLD**

I only just qualified for the government's paid parental leave – I worked an average of 20.2 hours a week before I had Mia. I didn't qualify for any additional support from my job because I was a contractor.

Tania works evenings as a cleaning contractor, but the hours per week can vary. As a contractor, she was ineligible for additional leave entitlements from her employer, so the introduction of up to 22 weeks paid parental leave was positive for Tania and her whānau.

**TANIA, NOW 28 YEARS OLD**



Being out of work and on the benefit... something goes wrong like the car or a big power bill and you need more money. I have debt to WINZ, to payday loans, to family. Often I have no money for food, and I have to go to the food bank.

Food banks around Aotearoa NZ have reported significant year-on-year demand. A Ministry of Health report released in June found that nearly 20 per cent of NZ children lived in food-insecure households, where there is a limited or uncertain supply of healthy and nutritious foods.

**BRIAN, NOW 50 YEARS OLD**

