



# Health Needs Assessment

## for the Central Region's District Health Boards

Introduction

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Central Region's Technical Advisory Services Limited (TAS)

***Health Needs Assessment - Introduction chapter only***

***for the Central Region's District Health Boards***

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This chapter is one of several contributing to the Central Region's Health Needs Assessment (HNA). The chapters included in this HNA are:

- **Introduction**
- Key Findings for Regional Action
- Demographic Profile of the Central Region
- Health Status of the Central Region
- Access to Services and the Utilisation of Services
- Risk and Protective Factors
- Chronic Conditions including Circulatory System Diseases, Diabetes, Renal Failure and Kidney Disease, and Respiratory Conditions
- Cancer
- Mental Health
- Child, Youth and Maternal Health
- Health of Older People
- Disability
- Injuries and Accidents
- Violence
- Data Quality

This chapter may be read in isolation but in order to gain a context of the Central Region, readers should in particular refer to the chapters 'Demographic Profile of the Central Region' and 'Health Status of the Central Region'.

For a summary of the findings for the region, their implications and some key areas for strategies readers should refer to the 'Key Findings for Regional Action' chapter.

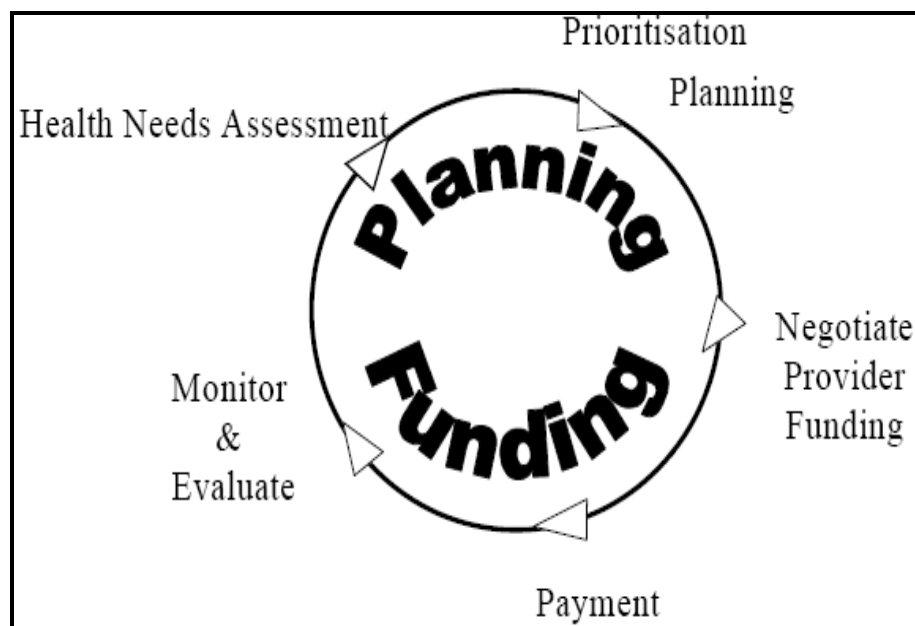
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## Background to the Regional Health Needs Assessment

District Health Boards (DHBs) are required under the Ministry of Health's Operating Policy Framework to update a Health Needs Assessment (HNA) for their local population at least every three years to inform their strategic plans. Figure 1 shows how an HNA fits into the Funding and Planning cycle.

Figure 1: DHB Funding and Planning cycle



Source: Adapted from *Health Needs Assessment for New Zealand: An Overview and Guide*. MoH, 2000.

Within the Central Region, the six DHBs (Capital & Coast, Hawke's Bay, Hutt Valley, MidCentral, Wairarapa and Whanganui) have engaged the services of the region's shared support agency (Central Region's Technical Advisory Services Ltd [TAS]) to deliver analytical services and products (data cubes) to inform the development of local HNA documents. In addition to this, the General Managers of Planning and Funding for the Central Region DHBs have agreed to TAS producing this regional HNA document.

## Reasons for looking at health needs regionally

It is important for DHBs to develop a regional strategy which addresses regional health needs so that they can collaboratively plan on key priority areas. Furthermore, across the Central Region there exist inequalities in access, utilisation and outcomes of services. It is vital to look at health needs regionally so that DHBs can plan to reduce inequalities and produce better health outcomes for the region's population as a whole.

The Central Region's current strategic priorities relate to sustainability of a number of clinical services across the region. A combined picture of demographic trends and health needs of the region's population will inform the DHBs' efforts to ensure sustainable health service development going forward.

The Central Region has also developed a regional clinical services plan and a regional mental health services plan. This regional HNA document complements these plans and together the three provide a very informative resource for strategic planning.

By providing a compendium of health needs for the DHBs in the Central Region, the respective DHBs can also use this report as an informal means of benchmarking. This will support sharing of initiatives which have resulted in different trends for respective DHBs.

## Our approach to Health Needs Assessment

The methodology used to develop this report included meetings with the relevant stakeholders, research and data collection, developing data cubes, undertaking analysis and report writing, employing the services of an epidemiologist and engaging various clinical experts to review relevant subject areas.

**Meetings with the relevant stakeholders** occurred at the initial phase of this project and then at regular times throughout the project. The content of this HNA document and of the data cubes was discussed and agreed with the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) which is comprised of DHB analysts. This was further discussed with the project's sponsor.

**Research and data collection** involved reviewing international and national literature. It also involved collecting data from national collections, national surveys and other relevant agencies e.g. Statistics NZ and Women's Refuge.

**Analysis and report writing** was undertaken by TAS staff with epidemiological input and interpretation provided by a Public Health Specialist.

**Engaging various clinical experts** involved the report being reviewed by experts in relevant subject areas. Their feedback has been incorporated into this report.

## What are the limitations of this report?

- The health needs focus of the report is at a regional and DHB level and does not drill down to the detail of Territorial Local Authority (TLA). Determination of health needs at TLA level was outside the scope of the project and it is anticipated that this will be addressed by local DHB HNAs. The current report is very comprehensive and inclusion of analysis at TLA level for six DHBs would have made the report unmanageable.
- The availability and quality of health information was limited for some subject areas, e.g. mental health data, disease prevalence data and access to primary care. In many cases, available data, particularly data

on hospital admissions sourced from the National Minimum Dataset (NMDS) has been used as a proxy for health status.

- The analysis and findings of this report are only as accurate as the underlying data sources will permit.
- No patient perspective has been presented (this could have been achieved through real life patient stories but due to time and resource limitations this was not possible).
- There is no analysis of unmet needs.
- The style of this report is largely descriptive (as opposed to evaluative).

## About this document

This report details the health needs of the Central Region and was undertaken in 2007/08. It provides an overview of some of the critical/main health issues as well as analysis of the region's population, general health status and health outcomes, access and utilisation of services. Covered in this report is information on health outcomes, hospital admissions and key health areas that include primary health, mental health, child health, and health of older people. Particular conditions of interest included in this report are cancer and chronic conditions such as circulatory system diseases, diabetes, renal failure, and respiratory diseases. This HNA will be a valuable tool for the region and for all

community public health providers for strategic planning in the short and medium term.

The report has the following structure:

- **Introduction** – describes the background of the HNA.
- **Key Findings for Regional Action** – where to from here for the Central Region taking into consideration issues identified in the below chapters.
- **Demographic Profile** – details the population structure of the region.
- **Health Status** – outlines the health status of the population in the Central Region and includes life expectancy and mortality analysis.
- **Access to Services and Utilisation of Services** – identifies whether people are accessing services such as GPs and nurses at practices. Also analyses elective admissions, acute admissions and avoidable admissions as proxies for access to services.
- **Risk and Protective Factors** – an analysis of factors influencing health such as smoking, nutrition, obesity, physical activity and others.

- **Chronic Conditions** – provides an in-depth analysis of four conditions, circulatory system diseases, diabetes, renal failure and kidney disease, and respiratory conditions.
- **Cancer** – outlines issues around cancer incidence, outcomes, screening coverage, and treatment.
- **Mental Health** – very high level analysis of mental health issues nationally and in the region.
- **Child, Youth and Maternal Health** – analysis of the health of children and youth. Included in this chapter is analysis of births, infant mortality and issues affecting youth.
- **Health of Older People** – population growth of older people and issues affecting the older population
- **Disability** – a look at the prevalence of disability in children and adults. Also includes types of disability and severity.
- **Injuries and Accidents** – a brief look at injury mortality and hospitalisations. Also includes ACC claims.
- **Violence** – an examination of several sources of data related to violence including hospitalisations and deaths from assault, family violence referrals by Plunket, utilisation of Women’s Refuge services and prosecuted violence charges.
- **Data Quality** – a brief summary of the datasets and sources used for this HNA.