

# Media Release

# South Island Alliance



## **New Report on Determinants of Health for South Island Children**

27/10/2015

A report on the determinants of health for children and young people living in the South Island has been published by the South Island Alliance's Child Health group (CHSLA).

The comprehensive report was prepared by the New Zealand Child and Youth Epidemiology Service (NZCYES) at Otago University, the fourth annual report on child health to be published on behalf of the CHSLA and part of a new three-year reporting cycle which aims to provide data and information to assist South Island DHB staff to plan and implement health services for children and families in the region. The reporting focus builds on a similar three year reporting-cycle undertaken between 2011 and 2013 by NZCYES for the child health workstream, (available on the [South Island Alliance website](#)). Similar reports are also being developed for North Island DHBs.

This latest report is available to view on the South Island alliance website [here](#) or visit [www.sialliance.health.nz](http://www.sialliance.health.nz). It is also available on the South Island HealthPathways website. It provides a detailed overview of the underlying determinants of health for children and young people living in the South Island, including child poverty and living standards, housing, early childhood education, oral health, tobacco use, alcohol related harm, and children's exposure to family violence. Each report also has an in-depth topic, and the issues covered include:

- A close look at the complex ways in which maternal health and wellbeing during pregnancy and even before conception can affect child health.
- The effectiveness of integrated services and how such programmes should be delivered to provide optimal benefit for children and their families.

This report is the first of a three part series on the health of children and young people in South Island and will be followed by:

- Year 2 (2015): The Health Status of Children and Young People

In agreeing a collaborative regional direction, the South Island DHBs have committed to a *best for people, best for system* alliance framework to negotiate a way into the future.

- Year 3 (2016): Children and Young People with Chronic Conditions and Disabilities

It is anticipated the report will support South Island DHBs to plan and design for treatment of children and young people, particularly in the area of interagency and cross-sector collaboration as David Barker, Chair of the CHSLA and Clinical Director, Children's Health for Southern DHB explains: "This latest report reinforces to us how crucial it is that health services collaborate with other social agencies to influence the determinants of health and it urges us as health professionals to consider undertaking an inter-agency approach to addressing health-related issues experienced by children and young people in the region. We are not going to achieve the outcomes we want if we try and work on these issues in isolation."

It is hoped that those working in the region will utilise this latest evidence when developing programmes and interventions to address child and youth health issues. The report is an important one in terms of its potential to deliver positive outcomes explains Dr Barker: "The implementation of some of the approaches outlined in the report may deliver significant health gains for children and their families living in the South Island. By working together, collaboratively we can go further in helping every child in New Zealand to grow up to reach their full potential."

The South Island Alliance's child health workstream consists of experts in child health, alongside representatives from the consumer and Māori communities. Dr Jean Simpson, author of the report and her colleagues are visiting South Island DHBs over the next few months to deliver presentations on the report's findings. Details are available on the South Island Alliance website [here](#).

## Ends

For more information contact Anna Dorsey, South Island Alliance Communications Advisor on 021 78 22 66 or email [anna.dorsey@southerndhb.govt.nz](mailto:anna.dorsey@southerndhb.govt.nz)

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