Submission on Waimakariri District Development Strategy

To: Waimakariri District Council
   Private Bag 1005, Rangiora 7440

Submitter: Canterbury District Health Board

     Attn: Geraldine McGettigan
     Community and Public Health
     C/- Canterbury District Health Board
     PO Box 1475
     Christchurch 8140

Proposal: Council is seeking early community input on a draft district development strategy.
<table>
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<th>Details of submitter</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB).</td>
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<td>2. The submitter is responsible for promoting the reduction of adverse environmental effects on the health of people and communities and to improve, promote and protect their health pursuant to the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and the Health Act 1956. These statutory obligations are the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and, in the Canterbury District, are carried out under contract by Community and Public Health under Crown funding agreements on behalf of the Canterbury District Health Board.</td>
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<td>3. The Ministry of Health requires the submitter to reduce potential health risks by such means as submissions to ensure the public health significance of potential adverse effects are adequately considered during policy development.</td>
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<th>General Comments</th>
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<td>4. The CDHB welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Waimakariri District Development Strategy. The future health of our populations is not just reliant on hospitals, but on a responsive environment where all sectors work collaboratively.</td>
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<td>5. While health care services are an important determinant of health, health is also influenced by a wide range of factors beyond the health sector. Health care services manage disease and trauma and are an important determinant of health outcomes. However health creation and wellbeing (overall quality of life) is influenced by a wide range of factors beyond the health sector.</td>
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<td>6. These influences can be described as the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and are impacted by environmental, social and behavioural factors. They are often referred to as the social determinants of health. The diagram below shows how the various influences on health are complex and interlinked.</td>
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http://www.bne.uwe.ac.uk/who/healthmap/default.asp
7. The most effective way to maximise people’s wellbeing is to take these factors into account as early as possible during decision making and strategy development. Initiatives to improve health outcomes and overall quality of life must involve organisations and groups beyond the health sector, such as local government if they are to have a reasonable impact.

8. The CDHB commends Council for its efforts to plan for the growth and demographic changes predicted in the Waimakariri District. The vision and themes identified in the consultation document reflect many of the wider determinants of health, noted in the diagram above.

9. The CDHB supports the proposal and has a number of recommendations for consideration which would further improve health outcomes for the community.

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Specific comments

Theme 1: Our Growing Communities

10. The CDHB recommends concentration of residential growth in order to avoid urban sprawl. When residents can live close to the goods, services, education and employment opportunities available to them in urban centres, it improves social connectedness, sustainability and general wellbeing through greater opportunities for active living and reduced stress.

11. Council have clearly considered the ageing population in the Waimakariri District. The CDHB recommends that Universal Design principles and Life Mark design standards be encouraged through the growth strategy and subsequent District Plan and Long Term Plans, in order to meet the housing needs of this ageing population. As the population ages, the economic and social wellbeing of individuals, families and communities will be influenced by the social and economic contributions of older people. The ability to continue in paid employment is impacted by the functionality of people’s homes. Poor housing exacerbates existing health conditions and heighten the impacts of impairment. This triggers dislocation from their communities, admission to an unnecessarily high level of care and support, and shifts the cost of what is primarily a housing problem onto the health and social services sectors. Incorporating the simple principles of life-time design into housing designs now allows for housing to cater for people at all stages of life in the future.

12. The CDHB also recommends that planning rules provide for smaller dwellings and multi-family dwellings within urban centres. This will enable older people to downsize and live independently within their community, or live with family members in multi-generational units. Suitable housing options will enable Waimakariri residents to age in place, contributing to social connectedness and reducing social isolation.

13. The CDHB supports sustainable building solutions and recommends that Council encourage this through the growth strategy.
Theme 2: Our Connections

14. Transport is an important determinant of health. The CDHB recommends that the Strategy make provision for active and public transport infrastructure in order to reduce reliance on driving private vehicles. Increased use of alternative transport such as walking, cycling, carpooling, rail and bus use has the potential to increase physical activity and improve air quality. This recommendation links closely to Point 10 above, around concentrating residential growth to allow residents to live close to the goods and services available in urban centres.

15. The CDHB supports the development of park and ride facilities, express bus services, car pool lanes, cycleways and improved pedestrian facilities. The proposed projects contained in the draft Waimakariri Walking and Cycling Strategy, which was recently consulted on, are the types of improvements that are required to create a supportive environment that supports alternative transport options. This also links with Point 15 and Point 16 below, the CDHB’s support for greater employment opportunities and services within the region to reduce overall travel.

Theme 3: Our Economy

16. The CDHB notes the important role that employment makes to wellbeing, both through income earned but also through contribution and connection to wider society. The CDHB recommends that opportunities to expand existing businesses and attract new businesses to the region are explored. Providing good local services, education and housing will lead to people having greater self-sufficiency in the region.

Theme 4: Our Centres

17. The community, civic, recreational and entertainment facilities and services available in urban centres contribute positively to quality of life, health and wellbeing. Accessibility of these services is important. The CDHB recommends that Council make accessibility a key consideration when identifying the location and direction of growth for urban and retail centres. They should be well linked to bus routes, cycleways and paths, as well as roads to ensure they can be easily accessed via multiple transport modes.
Theme 5: Our Community Spaces and Places

18. The CDHB supports Council’s acknowledgement that community spaces and places are critical to support community health and wellbeing, community cohesion and quality of life. The CDHB encourages Council to explore the range of services available in the District that are relevant to the ageing population predictions, in order to identify and address any potential gaps.

19. The CDHB recommends that Council continue to consider the predicted demographic changes in Waimakariri District when planning for the provision of future community spaces and places. Specifically, Universal Design principles should be incorporated into all developments to ensure they can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. Facilities should be located in areas that can be easily accessed by multiple transport modes.

Theme 6: Our Environment

20. The CDHB notes that the Waimakariri River and the Ashley/Rakahuri River are recognised as having high ecological, mahinga kai and recreational values. However, there is no reference to the fact that the rivers in the Waimakariri Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) Zone, particularly spring-fed streams, exhibit unhealthy ecological communities, poor habitat conditions and degraded water quality (noted in a recent report by Environment Canterbury). The CDHB acknowledges that this issue is currently being addressed under the CWMS process. However, any development in the district will likely increase this degradation. The CDHB recommends that Council carefully consider how the District Development Strategy will interact with the CWMS in the Waimakariri Zone. This will be especially important for Community Water Supplies and stormwater runoff if there is an increase in residential/commercial areas which may impact on the natural environment. The protection of groundwater and surface water resources for drinking water and recreation needs to be a priority when considering any development strategy for the district.

21. The CDHB note that Council have acknowledged the susceptibility of the district to the impacts of climate change and natural hazards. Overall drier conditions on the East Coast of the South Island and the demand on community drinking water supplies may have an adverse effect on ground water resources. In the 2016-2027
Long Term Plan, Council’s stated aim was to keep leakage at less than 22% for all their public water supplies. As suggested by CDHB at the time it would be appropriate to couple this with an education programme to enable residents and primary industry to reduce their groundwater water consumption overall to protect this resource.

**Theme 7: Rural Areas and Small Settlements**

22. The recent growth in dairying and other business activities, together with the large number of small holding populations has put increased pressure on the environment. The CDHB encourages council to consider how this growth will impact on drinking and recreational water quality. If small holdings use their own bores, they are likely to be shallower and more at risk to elevated nitrates and potentially microbiological contaminants.

23. The CDHB acknowledges that water is of major importance for Canterbury’s economic development. While economic wellbeing is necessary for good health, other social, recreational, cultural and environmental assets such as drinking water quality are also fundamental to health. A sustainable and thriving ecosystem is vital to supporting and sustaining the health of present and future generations in Canterbury.

24. There is potential for the cumulative effects of un-reticulated wastewater services to have an adverse impact on public health. The density of individual septic tank systems (domestic on-site wastewater management) in and around the district should be considered when assessing new applications for growth. There may be a need for Council to consider the installation of a reticulated sewage network which services the proposal.

25. The expansion and intensification of dairy activities is having an increasing impact on water quality in Canterbury. In the Waimakariri District one supply has already reached half the maximum acceptable value (MAV) for nitrate. Council should continually access the impact of approving dairying development against the adverse implications on the environment and public health.

26. The CDHB recommends that the Strategy provide for recreational spaces in rural areas. It is important that rural residents have the same opportunity as urban
residents to socialise, connect and be active in their local area. Recreational spaces must be accessible for all residents to benefit.

Conclusion

27. The CDHB does wish to be heard in support of this submission.

28. Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Waimakariri District Development Strategy.

Person making the submission

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