

Ngā wāhi hei arotahi | Areas to focus on

Across this guide we have noted gaps that existed in the support available for older New Zealanders.

Some of these gaps are well known, difficult and intricate problems. Many others have been noticed but not recognised widely – these may be unintended consequences, the result of impacts not being considered, and/or challenges that we will face due to changing demographics.



We believe that it's crucial that these gaps are researched, understood, and addressed to ensure an equity of support for all.

On the next page we highlight major, overarching gaps, through our Te Whāriki lens. After that, you can see specific gaps identified by our membership in working groups convened for the development of this report. These will not be all the gaps in the structures currently working to empower older people in New Zealand.

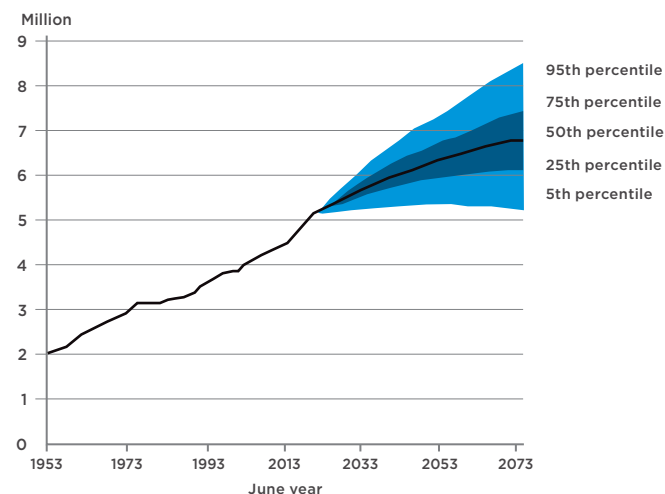
We genuinely believe that we are currently facing a national lack of preparedness for the growing cohort of older people.

Stats NZ have created the graphs below to highlight just how much we expect our population distribution to change. We also believe that this inaction is driven by structural ageism - a failure to consider and address the needs of older people at a systemic level. We don't suggest that this is intentional or by design, however our failure to address it is leading us to a crisis. **The time to act, is now.**

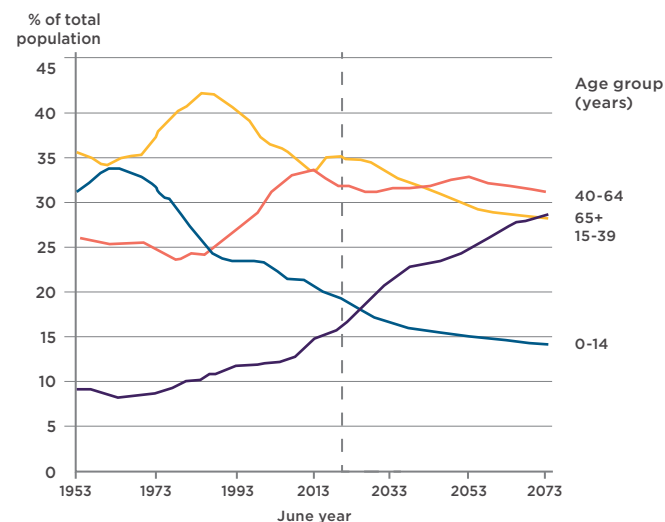
Long-term projections

from Stats NZ

New Zealand population (1953-2073)



Age distribution of population (1953-2073)



Major areas to focus on

We see the following opportunities for positive change, within each of the Te Whāriki principles.

Whakamana | Empowerment

1. Commitment to including older people in making decisions that impact them
2. Greater consideration and visibility of this cohort in decision making, key strategies and policy settings
3. Better implementation and utilisation of what exists in legislation, strategies and frameworks.

Kotahitanga | Holistic development

4. Increase accessibility and reach of research, and value and fund innovation
5. Increase accessibility to evaluation
6. Support scaling up of therapies and practices, research and resources.

Whānau Tangata | Family, whānau and community

7. Address needs of a more effective continuum of care for older people
8. Strengthen intergenerational relationships at a social and community level
9. Create communities with older people's needs at the centre.

Ngā Hononga | Relationships

10. Increase understanding of and responses to elder abuse and isolation
11. Focus on and act to solve entrenched workforce issues
12. Develop and deliver targeted education and training.

Other gaps to be addressed

These issues are being seen by our members who are working within their communities.

Kaupapa Māori models need more investment

More investment and research into intersectional models / models that respond to aspects of culture at this age stage, especially for Pacific peoples, refugee migrants, rainbow people

Need for more recognition of different stage of “old age” and then appropriate responses

Lack of recognition of workforce - value of care

Social isolation

Momentum that was building for intergenerational connections and other social meetings seems to have been lost during the pandemic.

Siloed thinking doesn't connect health and social needs

The cost of inaction, and the crisis we seem to be walking into having not prepared for so long

Superannuation is not a living income – doesn't meet needs of those without assets. Not needed for those with plenty of assets.

Older people not valued members of our community

Postcode lotteries for services

Age-friendly/20minute cities are crucial

Respite care not available or not appropriate, not available to book

Funding, funding, funding

Older disabled people do not have service specific options to age in place

Digital divide / ability to access information – and prevalent expectation that training is the answer (some may not wish to)

Housing modifications – especially difficult when renting

Mental health – lack of awareness and access to support

NFP Aged Residential Care in crisis

Lack of accessible, safe, affordable housing

Lack of suitable transport – especially in regards to grocery shopping

People living longer means higher levels of dementia and other health conditions

Need to understand that not everyone 65+ is financially secure and that this will increase

Rationing of health services (e.g. home help) – a massive reduction = increased complexity

Spiritual dimension not being acknowledged or addressed in standard assessments

Lack of free or fully-funded community activities and services for older people

Addressing the cost of older people and the ageing workforce – including/especially in the health sector

Increase resources to fund community based care – particularly medical

Under-funded, under-resourced and stretched aged-care services

Ageism