

Unlocking the Potential of Active Ageing



New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

Long-Term Insights Briefing, December 2024

Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on this Long-Term Insights Briefing. We tautoko the kaupapa to focus on this aspect of our health sector and welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on behalf of our membership and the older people they support.

Our main points are:

Item One – The most significant barrier to active or healthy ageing is ageism.

Ageism is the last socially acceptable form of discrimination. Without valuing the inherent humanity of older people and combatting ageism, healthy ageing is a difficult goal.

Item Two – Contribution to society is not a requirement to receiving care and support.

Tying investment in people to their ability to contribute denies their inherent human value and blurs the distinction between enabling people to remain in work and forcing them to do so.

Item Three – No consideration in this document is given to mental wellbeing.

Mental health is critical to physical health and overall wellbeing. Intersections with supports for mental health and how they intersect with cognitive decline and disease is critical.

Item Four – No consideration in this document is given to spiritual wellbeing.

In older age, spiritual wellbeing is critical to overall wellbeing. For holistic wellbeing, wairuatanga must be accounted for, especially when considering drivers of active and healthy ageing.

Item Five – We tautoko direct reference to Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The Crown's responsibility to Te Tiriti must be explicitly referenced in such documents.

Item Six – Multiple lenses must be applied to ensure that this LTIB is valuable.

Regionality, rurality, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, and strata of age must be used to give nuance to what it can mean to age in a healthy, active, and well way.

Item Seven – 'Active Ageing' is outdated terminology.

The World Health Organisation updated its terminology to Healthy Ageing in line with the Decade of Healthy Ageing, commencing in 2021.

Item Eight – Not everyone can achieve healthy ageing. They also deserve consideration.

Through injury, illness, life course events and demographics, some people cannot and will not age in a way that will be considered healthy or active. They still deserve to have access to supports.

Item Nine – Healthy ageing requires a cross-ministry, multidisciplinary, lifespan approach.

By the time someone is older and requires engagement with the Ministry of Health services, there have been a myriad of missed opportunities to improve wellbeing.

Item Ten – The impact on health of legal functions cannot be ignored.

The impact of wills and Enduring Powers of Attorney, or specifically their absence or inaccessibility, have enormous impacts for individuals as they age and must be addressed in any strategy relating to health in later years.