

# Auckland Regional Public Health Service

Rātonga Hauora ā Iwi o Tamaki Makaurau



Working with the people of Auckland, Waitemata and Counties Manukau

## Auckland Regional Public Health Service

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Auckland's Housing for Older People Partnering Proposal

Auckland Council

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### Submission on Auckland Council's Housing for Older People Partnering Proposal

Thank you for the opportunity for Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) to provide a submission on Auckland Council's Housing for Older People Partnering Proposal.

The following submission represents the views of the ARPHS and does not necessarily reflect the views of the three District Health Boards it serves. Please refer to Appendix 1 for more information on ARPHS.

The primary contact point for this submission is:

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Yours sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Jane McEntee, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'J' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Jane McEntee  
General Manager  
Auckland Regional Public Health Service

A blue ink signature of Dr. David Sinclair, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a cursive 'S'.

Dr. David Sinclair  
Medical Officer of Health  
Auckland Regional Public Health Service

## Recommendation

1. ARPHS considers the Partnering Proposal provides an opportunity for Council to formalise its intentions to provide accommodation at a suitable standard that meets the rental Warrant of Fitness.
2. ARPHS recommends Council include a clause in the proposed service agreement that requires all housing managed under the contractual agreement to meet and maintain the rental Warrant of Fitness standard.

## Council proposal

3. Following changes in relevant central government legislation, Auckland Council is considering how to arrange the management of its housing for older people stock. Council has developed a new 'Partnering Proposal' which involves forming a new 'Community Housing Provider' (CHP) jointly with an established provider of care for older people, potentially The Selwyn Foundation.
4. Council's proposal states:

*"We believe that by changing how we manage this portfolio, we can provide better housing for older people across Auckland. This portfolio is identified as a Council "strategic asset" under the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, so it forms an important part of the council activities."*
5. Council proposes to contribute to the new CHP a \$32.5 million capital grant which is equivalent to the expenditure already planned for in the current budget for the portfolio renewal maintenance. If accepted, this proposal would be added into the council's Long-term Plan 2015-2025 (LTP).
6. Council is planning to instigate a number of controls to ensure that Council assets are used to provide the best possible outcomes for tenants, the Council and all of Auckland. These controls include:
  - a) Ensuring that Council is still involved in some decision-making, by maintaining minority representation in the new Community Housing Provider.
  - b) Placing contractual obligations in the management agreement and lease to ensure compliance with Council's current policies and the new partnering policy.
  - c) Putting in place key performance indicators and service level agreements to ensure tenancy services and contractual agreements are met.

### **An opportunity for Auckland Council to lead the way**

7. ARPHS supports Auckland Council finding effective and efficient ways to manage its portfolio of housing for older people.
8. ARPHS notes Council's commitment through this Partnering Proposal to provide better housing for older people across Auckland.
9. ARPHS believes the creation of the proposed "contractual obligations in the management agreement", as outlined in point 5 b) above, provides a strategic opportunity for Auckland Council to further contribute to the work across New Zealand to lift minimum rental housing standards by formalising Council's commitment to achieving rental Warrant of Fitness standards.
10. ARPHS acknowledges Council has done significant work in trialling the implementation of the rental Warrant of Fitness.
11. ARPHS further notes that Auckland Council recently made a strong and relevant submission on the Healthy Homes Guarantee Bill No.2, stating that:

*"The Council provides affordable and quality rental housing for around 1400 older Aucklanders in 62 villages. In 2015, an ongoing capital improvements programme focused on insulation. The dwellings are now being reviewed against the **Warrant of Fitness** standards, and will be upgraded on a staged basis."*
12. Accordingly, Council now has an opportunity to restate its commitment to quality rental housing standards, and in particular to achieving the rental Warrant of Fitness standard.
13. Council could now decide to put into the contractual arrangements a requirement that all properties achieve the rental Warrant of Fitness standard.
14. Such a resolution would show leadership, and establish a reference point for further progress towards warmer homes across New Zealand.

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### **Conclusion**

15. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute a Submission on Auckland Council's Housing for Older People Partnering Proposal.

## **Appendix 1 - Auckland Regional Public Health Service**

Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) provides public health services for the three district health boards (DHBs) in the Auckland region (Auckland, Counties Manukau and Waitemata District Health Boards).

ARPHS has a statutory obligation under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities in the Auckland region. The Medical Officer of Health has an enforcement and regulatory role under the Health Act 1956 and other legislative designations to protect the health of the community.

ARPHS' primary role is to improve population health. It actively seeks to influence any initiatives or proposals that may affect population health in the Auckland region to maximise their positive impact and minimise possible negative effects on population health.

The Auckland region faces a number of public health challenges through changing demographics, increasingly diverse communities, increasing incidence of lifestyle-related health conditions such as obesity and type 2 diabetes, infrastructure requirements, the balancing of transport needs, and the reconciliation of urban design and urban intensification issues.