

# SUSTAINED HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPACTS OF THE HEALTHY HOUSING PROGRAMME

*Faith Mahony*  
MPH, NZRN  
Research Fellow  
University of Auckland

---

On behalf of Dr Janet Clinton, Dr Chris Bullen, Professor Robin Kearns, Dr Gary Jackson

---

The aim of this paper is to present findings from a longitudinal evaluation over three years of the Healthy Housing programme, with a focus on its impact on the health and wellbeing of households. The Healthy Housing programme is a joint initiative between Housing New Zealand and the District Health Boards (DHBs) of Counties Manukau, Auckland and Northland. The programme aims to reduce the risk of diseases associated with housing and overcrowding and to improve wellbeing.

Using a joint assessment process Healthy Housing programme team members visit households in selected areas to review housing needs, occupancy numbers and health status. Housing needs that are addressed include installing active and passive ventilation, retrofitting insulation and design alterations. Overcrowding is addressed by extending existing homes or transferring households to houses of appropriate size. Families with health needs are linked into health and social services.

Evaluation of the programme has been underway for the last three years. Concurrently Counties Manukau DHB has monitored hospital admission rates for housing related diseases of residents. The evaluation has identified ongoing positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of the households. Hospitalisation rates for housing related conditions have reduced significantly. Case studies will be presented to demonstrate a variety of outcomes for households following the intervention with examples of dramatic improvements in health, reduced sibling rivalry and increased academic involvement, and innovative design approaches to address the needs of people with disability.