

CANTERBURY DHB POSITION STATEMENT – CANTERBURY WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

1. The Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) believes that the health and wellbeing of current and future generations of Cantabrians should always take priority in water management decisions, particularly where there are competing interests for water uses.
2. The CDHB has responsibility under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities. Additionally there is a responsibility to promote the reduction of adverse social and environmental effects on the health of people and communities.
3. Consequently the CDHB supports the vision of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy:

“To enable present and future generations to gain the greatest social, economic, recreational and cultural benefits from our water resources within an environmentally sustainable framework.”

4. The CDHB acknowledges that the Canterbury Water Management Strategy can influence the health of Cantabrians now and into the future and is a key public health document. The identified fundamental principles and targets are, among other factors, important determinants of health.
5. The CDHB recognises the special relationship between Tangata Whenua and water resources especially in relation to spiritual connection, mahinga Kai and Wahi tapu. The Canterbury DHB acknowledges the role of Tangata Whenua as Treaty partners and values partnership as essential for informed water management decisions.
6. The CDHB understands that the current international literature on water governance advocates for collaborative approaches whilst highlighting that success is highly dependent upon the people involved, and the wider situation.
7. The CDHB believes that all efforts to protect and restore water quality should be supported by the most comprehensive and current scientific evidence.
8. The CDHB acknowledges that water is of major importance for Canterbury’s economic development. However, while economic wellbeing is necessary for good health, 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.

Adopted CDHB Board Meeting
21 October 2011