



Media release
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Government decision seems senseless

Cutting funding and significantly reducing the size of the Growing Up in New Zealand study will drastically affect its potential to improve the health of New Zealanders and reduce health and social inequities, says the College of Public Health Medicine.

“This study is an important investment that will provide a huge richness of data that can help to determine the interventions most likely to be cost-effective and achieve the best outcomes for current and future generations,” president, Dr Caroline McElnay, said.

“Cutting funding into this study will cost the country far more in years to come because we won’t have the necessary data to deal with major societal and health issues like housing, child poverty and health equity.”

Dr McElnay said that longitudinal studies such as the Growing Up in NZ study and the Dunedin study are worth their weight in gold.

“We know how valuable these longitudinal studies are. So why now, when we have some major and escalating issues facing our communities, would government forego further investment in the Growing Up in New Zealand study?”

“It doesn’t make sense, given how much valuable data we have already gained, and how much more we can get from this initiative; data that will highly likely enhance the lives of our children and their children.”

Dr McElnay said the full cohort of Growing up in New Zealand had important representation of Māori, Pacific Island and Asian communities, which is a point of difference with previous studies of its kind.

“We need to know as much as we can about our population. We also need to know how to improve health and health equity for groups that do not experience the same benefit from the services we currently provide. We need our decisions to be based on robust, independent evidence.”

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