



Lakes District Health Board is committed to improving and protecting the health of the communities in the Lakes district.

Position Statement – Food Security

As a basic human right all New Zealanders should have sufficient access to healthy food that is affordable and safe to eat.

Lakes District Health Board supports and advocates for the collective responsibility of central and local government, agriculture and the food industry, and community groups to address and to improve affordable access to healthy, safe, and nutritious food.

The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “*when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life.*”

Food security is built on four pillars (Committee on World Food Security, 2015):

1. **Food availability:** sufficient quantities of food available on a consistent basis
2. **Food access:** having sufficient resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet
3. **Food use:** appropriate use based on knowledge of basic nutrition and care, as well as adequate water and sanitation.
4. **Food stability:** Stable access to foods at all times, without the risk of running out of food as a result of unexpected external circumstances

A New Zealand national nutrition survey in 2008 indicated that only three out of five households were classified as almost or fully food secure. Households in neighbourhoods with higher levels of deprivation were less likely to be food secure, as were Māori and Pacific households. A 2016 survey of the Lakes district indicated that 16% of the local population, including about 30% of Maori, worried about not having enough money to buy food.

Activities that help to improve food security range from short-term relief such as school breakfast programmes, to local government policies such as urban edible planting, and national policies on nutrition, food prices, income, and agriculture.

Food insecurity in the developed world is not a new phenomenon. However, approaching food security from a cross-sectoral and policy level is fairly new in New Zealand. There is strong evidence to support the formation of collaborative groups, typically referred to as Food Policy Councils, to undertake research, strategies and activities to improve food security. A Food Policy Council should include local representatives from public health, local government, Iwi, education, growers, manufacturers, distributors, food sellers, waste management operators and the community.



Lakes District Health Board advocates for, and supports:

- Access to affordable healthy, safe and nutritious food
- The establishment of local Food Policy Councils
- Food security issues being considered in local government policies and activities
- Research on the access and impact of the local food environment on food security
- Initiatives that promote community food resilience and support local food economies
- Emergency planning that ensures the availability of adequate and safe food and water
- Initiatives that promote safe and nutritious food gathering and preparation (including of wild foods and kaimoana)
- Initiatives to make fresh food and vegetables more affordable
- Initiatives that promote nutritionally adequate dietary intake
- Breastfeeding friendly environments.

References and further information

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Adopted by Lakes District Health Board Board at its October 2017 meeting

Review Date: This position statement will be reviewed in three years, or as necessary.

